REVIEWING LAW SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS: WHAT CAN
BUSINESS SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCHERS TEACH US?

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Be deliberate. Don’t leave it to chance. Don’t leave it to general
leadership theories full of platitudes. To increase the chances of success in
developing leadership talent, an organisation needs to be intentional about
leadership development.
—Duc V. Trang, Major, Lindsey & Africa

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1Duc V. Trang, Managing Director, Major, Lindsey & Africa.
INTRODUCTION

Lawyers serve as leaders in traditional law practice but also in the fields of business, education, politics, and public interest. Many lawyers also serve in leadership roles within community organizations. Despite this, law school leadership programs historically have been uneven across law schools and did not garner much traction. This contrasts with the rich tradition of leadership programs in business schools. More recently, law schools adopted new leadership classes and leadership development programs to help their students acquire the knowledge and skills to become better lawyers and community leaders.

Recent changes to the American Bar Association’s accreditation standards bring discussions of leadership programs back to the forefront. These new standards require law schools to offer training in professional identity (ABA Standard 303(b)(3)), cultural competency (ABA Standard 303(c)), and well-being (ABA Standard 508(b)). The law school professional development community long “identified these [topics] as important aspects of preparing well-rounded law students who are better equipped to assume the important roles they will be expected to play as leaders in relationship with clients and others and in formal leadership positions within organizations and communities.”

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2 American Bar Association, ABA CAREER CENTER, https://www.americanbar.org/career center/ (last visited Sept. 18, 2023) (website compiles resources for both legal and non-legal career paths for attorneys); Leah Teague, Growing Number of Leadership Programs and Courses Supports Professional Identity Formation, 62 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 149, 152 (2022).


4 See Leah Teague, Making Progress in Legal Education: Leadership Development Training in Law Schools, 73 BAYLOR L. REV. 1 (2021) [hereinafter Teague, Making Progress in Legal Education]. Professor Teague’s article chronicles the development of leadership development programs in law schools. See also Leah Witcher Jackson Teague, Training Lawyers for Leadership: Vitally Important Mission for the Future Success (and Maybe Survival) of the Legal Profession and Our Democracy, 58 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 633 (2018) [hereinafter Teague, Training Lawyers for Leadership] (chart listing schools and various leadership programs). E-mail from Leah Teague, Professor of Law, Baylor University, to author (Sept. 16, 2023, 09:45 CST) (on file with author).

5 Teague, Training Lawyers for Leadership, supra note 4, at 645.

6 STANDARDS AND RULES OF PROC. FOR APPROVAL OF L. SCHS., Standards 303(b)(c) and 508(b) (AM. BAR ASS’N SECTION OF LEGAL EDUC. & ADMISSIONS TO THE BAR 2023) [hereinafter 2022–2023 ABA Standard].

7 E-mail from Leah Teague, Professor of Law, Baylor University, to author (Sept. 16, 2023, 09:45 CST) (on file with author); see Leah Teague, Leading Change in the Legal Profession
leadership development programs celebrated these accreditation changes and are now contemplating whether and how those topics can be integrated into law school leadership programs.

Considering this renewed interest in leadership programs, the time is ripe to develop a framework to examine the content, methods, and evaluation of law school leadership programs. Prior studies, although few in number, acknowledged that many challenges and limitations exist in designing and implementing effective leadership programs in law schools. Some of these challenges include what to include in a leadership development curriculum, how to ensure broad-based faculty and student participation, and securing adequate resources.

This article seeks to update the research on how best to determine if law school leadership development programs are designed correctly and whether they are producing better leaders. To begin to answer this question, the first section looks outside of law school programs and examines current research focused on business school leadership development programs and whether they meet their stated goals and, if not, why not. The hope is legal educators can incorporate lessons learned from a study of top MBA leadership programs.

The article uses that study and research from other disciplines to offer suggestions on ways to improve law school leadership development programs. Specifically, the article suggests integrating the leadership program into the core law school curriculum, broadening the leadership

Rhode, supra note 3, at 1634–38; Westfahl & Wilkins, supra note 7, at 1671 (“[W]hat is needed is a new model of professional development that aligns with the new realities of the legal marketplace.”).


Roberta E. Sonnino, Health Care Leadership Development and Training: Progress and Pitfalls, 8 J. HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP at 19, 26 (2016); Hannes L. Leroy et al., Walking Our Evidence-Based Talk: The Case of Leadership Development in Business Schools, 29 J. LEADERSHIP & ORG. STUD. 5, 15 (“We don’t have the resources – like time but also money – to engage in a rigorous evaluation.”).
I. The Business School Experience

This research began by looking to other fields for guidance, specifically MBA programs, because of their long history of teaching leadership in their programs. In a recent article published in the *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, Dr. Leroy and a host of co-authors interviewed sixty academic leaders of business school leadership programs housed in the top ranked schools to evaluate whether business schools used evidence-based approaches in designing leadership development programs and curriculum and, if not, why not.¹²

As part of their analysis, the authors designed a very informative and helpful step-by-step process for developing research-based leadership development programs in business schools.¹³ Specifically as to mission and scope, in Appendix B the authors provide a schematic (below) illustrating how schools should visualize the leadership development curriculum in relation to leadership more generally.¹⁴ As part of this process, they caution schools against making “everything leadership” when developing the scope of the program.¹⁵ Deciding what to omit keeps the focus on a specific set of mindsets, skills, and competencies relevant to leadership development and not something else.

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¹¹This article only scrapes the surface of the literature on leadership development programs and is only an introduction to some of the concepts law professors should keep in mind when designing leadership development programs. Future research opportunities abound including coalescing on what should and should not be part of law school leadership development program, performing an empirical study on current law school leadership development programs, researching the most important mental models to teach law students and how to do that, and developing concrete ways to measure outcomes especially to determine if learning is transferring to behavioral change and results.

¹²Leroy et al., *supra* note 100, at 6.

¹³*Id.* at 29–32 app. B (Hallmarks of Evidence-Based Leadership Development in a Business School).

¹⁴*Id.* at 30.

¹⁵*Id.* at 13.
For example, Leroy and his co-authors specifically questioned incorporating mindfulness practices into business school leadership development curriculum. The research on its use failed to show a link to producing better leaders but rather found a link to better well-being. The research also concluded that educators fail to teach the subject well because most programs give it only surface coverage. Law schools, like business schools, must grapple with whether these topics best belong in a leadership development program or somewhere else and must be based on some evidence that these topics actually produce better leaders.

Looking again to business schools, Leroy and his co-authors found directors of leadership development programs often relied on anecdotal or untested assumptions rather than turning to scientific data and research to inform their design decisions including selection of content, methods, and evaluation. In reaching this conclusion, the authors reviewed past studies of business school leadership programs that flagged use of non-research-based practices. For example, one study they included focused on schools utilizing standardized personality and style inventories not grounded in science such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator assessment.

16 Id. at 30.
17 Id. at 10.
18 Id.
19 Id. at 9–11, 18–19.
20 Id. at 6.
21 Id.
The disconnect between the delivery modes selected to deliver content and the research concerning their effectiveness continued in the authors’ own study. To illustrate the disconnect the authors compiled common methods used in business leadership programs and compared those to what the research said about them.

**Table 1: Common Leader Development Practices in Business Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Use</th>
<th>Challenges in practice</th>
<th>What the evidence says</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>“Desk drop” approach used to jolt participants’ developmental readiness. Often not targeted at specific learning goals. Insufficient support in terms of interpretation and development.</td>
<td>Questionable effectiveness that depends on the use of sufficient “debriefing” to maximize readiness to change and on whether the 360 is targeted at specific learning goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Primary focus is on the business side of the challenge. Leadership side is often underrepresented and underdeveloped.</td>
<td>Effective when geared toward specific competencies and uses an experienced coach/facilitator to facilitate learning throughout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Coaches are often client-centered not organization-centered. Link to leadership curriculum unclear.</td>
<td>Limited evidence-base — wide variety of self-paced (often coached) outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>More an intellectual exercise than a developmental one. Little attention to individualized translation.</td>
<td>Paucity of empirical research that examines the effectiveness, with several authors critiquing the use of the case method. Little evidence available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Promoted as high impact.</td>
<td>Strong effects of mindfulness intervention, mostly on well-being outcomes (effects on leadership not well-established), highly depending on training length and intensity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The authors next turned to evaluating the effectiveness of assessments of business leadership programs. As background, in the 1950s Donald Kirkpatrick designed an evaluation method, popular to this day, for measuring effectiveness of training programs.\(^{23}\) This four-level evaluation model focuses on reactions, learning, behavior, and results.\(^{24}\)

\(^{22}\)Id. at 10.

\(^{23}\)Ann W. Frye & Paul M. Hemmer, *Program Evaluation Models and Related Theories: AMEE Guide No. 67*, 34 MEDICAL TEACHER 288, 293 (2012) (recognizing the many benefits of using the Kirkpatrick model but also cautioning researchers to use it in conjunction with additional models).

\(^{24}\)Id.
Figure 2: Kirkpatrick’s Evaluation Model  

- **Level 1 - Reaction**: This level measures how participants react to the training. Participants may complete satisfaction surveys to determine their perceptions of the value of the program and the performance of the instructor.  

- **Level 2 - Learning**: This level evaluates what the participant learned, often by utilizing pre- and post-assessments to track changes in participant knowledge, skill development, and attitudes.  

- **Level 3 - Behavior**: At this level, the focus is on evaluating whether participants can put into action what they learned. Often supervisor and participant surveys can be used to track behavioral change.  

- **Level 4 - Results**: This level focuses on positive business outcomes for the organization and whether a return on  

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27 KIRKPATRICK, supra note 26, at 20.

28 *Id.* at 20–23.
investment exists (e.g., increased sales, productivity, or lower costs).\textsuperscript{29}

With this context, Leroy and his coauthors concluded that many programs in business schools fail to engage in high-quality program assessment. For example, they referenced studies that utilized student satisfaction (response) as the primary measure of assessment instead of behavioral change.\textsuperscript{30} The authors examined commonly used methods of evaluating the effectiveness of leadership development programs. The results, like other studies, showed a tendency to evaluate the first two phases (reaction and learning) and not the third and fourth levels (behavior and results).\textsuperscript{31} Studies call this a “transfer problem” and indicates that “educators may be paying too much attention to learning outcomes and neglecting to effectively teach students how to transfer their newfound skills.”\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{29}Id. at 23–24.

\textsuperscript{30}Leroy et al., supra note 10, at 6; Reyes et al., \textit{The State of Higher Education Leadership Development Program Evaluation: A Meta-Analysis, Critical Review, and Recommendations}, 30 LEADERSHIP Q. 1, 2 (2019) (where the majority of programs in the study used self-assessments that immediately followed training).

\textsuperscript{31}See Craig Russon & Claire Reinelt, \textit{The Results of an Evaluation Scan of 55 Leadership Development Programs}, 10 J. LEADERSHIP & ORG. STUD. 104, 105 (2004) (study showing most assessments do not move past the first two levels, reaction and learning, stopping at program satisfaction and knowledge gained).

\textsuperscript{32}Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 10.
Table 2. Evaluation Criteria Used in Assessing Leader Development Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>% Used</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Examples for available tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to the trainer (most commonly used, more so than content)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Smile sheets, focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about leadership theories and best practices on leadership</td>
<td>63.33%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Multiple choice, written exams, reflection assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral change in a way that is relevant to leadership (e.g., improved feedback giving)</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Pre-post 360 feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning objectives (whether the course objectives are met)</td>
<td>6.66%</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Smile sheets, focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability improvement in overall leadership skills</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Pre-post assessment center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower effectiveness (i.e., improved well-being and performance of followers of the leader being trained)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Multisource survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career success (e.g., being promoted to a position of leadership)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Longitudinal survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team outcomes</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Social network analysis, Q-sort methodology, appreciative inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational bottom line (impact/value)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Return on investment (ROI)/Return on development investment (RODI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The authors concluded by outlining a “stepwise process” to help educators develop research-based leadership development programs. The authors take educators through the following steps which would be an excellent framework for law schools to adopt in designing their leadership development programs:

- Step I. Define Leadership Development Broadly and What it Means for You Specifically.
- Step II. Search and Develop the Evidence to Support your View of Leadership.
- Step III. Embed your vision on Leadership Development in the School’s Climate.
- Step IV. Develop a System that Incorporates External Evaluation and Legitimacy.

33 Leroy et al., supra note 100, at 11.
34 Id. at 29.
35 Id. at 30–32.
II. SUGGESTIONS ON HOW LAW SCHOOLS CAN IMPROVE THEIR PROGRAMS

The valuable research Leroy and his colleagues conducted helps illuminate concrete ways law schools can improve existing programs or design new ones. The suggestions below speak to how law schools should think about the content, methods, assessment, and resource issues for their leadership development programs.

A. Fully Integrate the Leadership Program Into the Mission and the Curriculum

Educators define leadership and leadership education quite broadly making it imperative that law schools have clear goals and objectives when designing a leadership program. Schools differ on how to define leadership, what the various goals and objectives of leadership development education should be, and how they are aligned with other law school goals. Professors Fraley and Teague reviewed all ABA-accredited law schools in 2020 to ascertain how schools incorporated leadership into their mission statements and student learning outcomes. They concluded that “leadership has to be identified specifically to have much utility or meaning in a mission statement.”

Law schools should fully integrate leadership development into the core law school curriculum to prevent it as being labeled a pet project of the professors who teach in that area. Leadership concepts and competency development must be woven throughout the JD education by designing a program that spans the entire three years instead of just offering a single program.

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36 Elizabeth M. Fraley & Leah Witcher Jackson Teague, Where the Rubber Hits the Road: How Do Law Schools Demonstrate a Commitment to Training Leaders?, 14 TENN. J.L. & POL’Y 375, 380 (2020); Leroy et al., supra note 100. Dr. Leroy and his co-authors developed a step-by-step approach to embedding the leadership development program in the broader business school environment. Their article contains very helpful guiding questions and a schematic overview to help align the leadership development program with the school’s mission, policies, practices, and systems.

37 Fraley & Teague, supra note 36, at 402.

38 Id. at 409.

39 Hamilton, supra note 9, at 845 (“[T]he faculty and staff need to work together as co-educators in a ‘whole-building’ approach so that each student experiences a sequenced and coordinated progression of curriculum and assessment modules that foster the student’s growth to the next stage.”).
class. Doing this takes time and effort but natural links already exist between the leadership development program and broader law school learning outcomes related to professionalism, ethics, relationship-building, communication, and strategic thinking. These courses in combination with more leadership focused offerings fit together very well as professional identity and professional responsibility undergird leadership. Other courses may naturally fit because of their focus on many of the common mindsets, skills, and competencies of leadership education. For example, clinics and externships as well as courses focusing on conflict management, negotiation, and DEI naturally align with leadership development. Schools should intentionally review and map their curriculum, similar to writing across the curriculum projects, highlighting for the students the many ways leadership training infuses the curricular and extracurricular offerings.

B. Broaden the Curriculum to Include More Skills and Competencies That Go Beyond People Leadership

A common model for law school leadership programs involves a focus on developing traditional skills for personal growth. At Baylor Law School this first stage is identified as Leadership of Self. That stage introduces students to “character, grit, resilience, growth mindset, failing gracefully, seeking feedback, principled values, including honor and integrity.” More expansive programs incorporate a broader skillset including such topics as emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and ethics. At Baylor Law School this portion of the program focuses on Leadership of Others.

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40Kenneth Townsend, Preconditions of Leadership in Law, 56 WAKE FOREST L. REV. 859, 898 (2021); see Teague, Making Progress in Legal Education, supra note 4, at 40.
42Fraley & Teague, supra note 36, at 385.
43E-mail from Leah Teague, Professor of Law, Baylor University, to author (Sept. 16, 2023, 09:45 CST) (on file with author); Leah W. Teague et al., Creating a Culture of Professionalism: Equipping Students for the Practicalities and Paradoxes of the Legal Profession, ST. THOMAS L. REV. (forthcoming).
44Leah W. Teague et al., supra note 43; see also Deborah L. Rhode, Lawyers as Leaders, 2010 MICH. ST. L. REV. 413 (2010).
46Leah W. Teague et al., supra note 43.
program ends with a small portion of the curriculum devoted to Leadership with Community.\footnote{Id.}

Some leadership scholars urge law schools to do more to make sure graduates “have more business skills, project management skills, and ability to integrate the contributions of other professionals involved in clients’ matters.”\footnote{Westfahl & Wilkins, supra note 7, at 1697.} Aligning leadership competencies to law firm and other JD advantage job competency models through specific learning opportunities takes careful planning. Relatively few law school programs integrate more traditional business skills and competencies revolving around decision making, operational excellence, and strategic visioning into their curriculum.

To address this, a group of legal educators and students proposed the Delta Model, a framework for teaching a much broader range of competencies to law students.\footnote{Lee Fisher, \textit{Change at the Speed of Leadership}, 73 BAYLOR L. REV. 211, 216–17 (2021).} The model below reflects the belief that law graduates need training in the law, personal effectiveness, and business operations.\footnote{Alyson Carrel, \textit{The Delta Model: A Framework for Reimagining the Legal Profession Pipeline}, LAW INSIDER (July 24, 2020), https://www.lawinsider.com/resources/featured/the-delta-model-a-framework-for-reimagining-the-legal-profession-pipeline.} The architects of the model recently simplified it labeling the three sides: practice, people, and process.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{delta_model.png}
\caption{The Delta Model\footnote{Id. The graphic used is included by permission of Alyson Carrel.}}
\end{figure}
Teaching business and operations concepts in law school leadership development programs has support in the profession. At a leadership conference in 2020 Natalie Runyon, Director of Enterprise Content of Thomson Reuters, highlighted the importance of “teaching business fundamentals.” She shared that law firms now incorporate some of these business skills and competencies into their associate leadership training programs.

Likewise, Duc Vinh Trang, a Managing Director with Major, Linsey & Africa (a worldwide legal recruiting and advisory firm), after years in the field concludes that not including these competencies within leadership programs is a primary reason the programs fall short of their goals of producing better leaders. He observes law firms and other industries spending substantial sums of money and other resources on leadership development programs, but these same institutions reporting a shallow leadership bench. He hypothesizes that participants in these leadership development programs need training in a much broader set of skills and mindsets to prepare them to address the complex, often ambiguous, challenges they face. He argues that most of these professional programs, like the ones in law school, concentrate primarily on skills that solely focusing on people leadership. For example, they may highlight topics such as influence, engagement, delegation, conflict resolution and team building.

52 Baylor University, Leadership Development Learning Outcomes and How to Implement Them (Day One, Session Three), YOUTUBE, at 46:40 (Sept. 18, 2020), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyMN_z2RHq0&t=59s.
53 Id. at 46:26.
54 Interview with Duc Vinh Trang, Managing Dir., Major, Lindsey & Africa (Aug. 16, 2023) (notes on file with author).
56 Interview with Duc Vinh Trang, supra note 54; see also Mehdi Samimi et al., What is Strategic Leadership? Developing a Framework for Future Research, 33 LEADERSHIP Q., June 2022, at 2 (listing a broad range of CEO functions including managing information, overseeing operation and administration, and managing conflicting demands).
57 Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 10 (finding most programs focus on skill-based learning but not enough on cognitive and affective learning outcomes).
They help participants become better at active listening, developing a growth mindset, and coaching. He advocates for leadership development programs to include training in not only skills and competencies important to people leadership but also to develop those for the mindsets of decision-making leadership, operational leadership, and strategic leadership. Although all these categories have some potential overlap, the mindsets, skills, and competencies vary from the more traditional people leadership ones. They focus more on planning, resource allocation, problem solving, visioning, business acumen, and systems thinking. Specifically, he wants to educate participants about mental models and give them opportunities to practice them. Mental models are:

[R]epresentations in the human mind of various aspects of an individual’s lifetime experiences. Mental models are internal representations containing meaningful declarative and procedural knowledge that people use to understand specific phenomena. People can construct mental models in order to explain or to simulate problems, events, or future situations in mind, if no sufficient schema is available.

Participants lack the necessary tools to lead in a complex and ever-changing world when they receive no training on mental models. Many mental models exist, and more research needs to be conducted to see which are the most important to introduce to law students. Business schools may provide a helpful source for identifying these mental models. Some relevant models might include systems thinking (looking at context and how things fit together), first principle thinking (breaking down complex problems into

58Samimi et al., supra note 56 (explaining strategic leadership).
59Masa Magzan, Mental Models For Leadership Effectiveness: Building Future Different Than The Past, 2 J. ENGG MGMT. & COMPETITIVENESS 57, 58 (2012) (addressing the importance of mental models and suggesting that “mental models have much more influence over the organizational outcomes than the actions or decisions being made”); Gary L. Blasi, What Lawyers Know: Lawyering Expertise, Cognitive Science, And The Functions of Theory, 45 J. LEGAL EDUC. 313, 392 (1995) (“[O]nce we have a better sense of the varieties of mental models utilized by expert practitioners, we can explore ways to extend, generalize, and communicate those models to other lawyers and to students.”).
61Magzan, supra note 59, at 58.
62Tomar Pierson-Brown, (Systems) Thinking Like A Lawyer, 26 CLINICAL L. REV. 515 (2020); Mariel Rodak, Comment, It’s About Time: A Systems Thinking Analysis of the Litigation Finance
their fundamental truths or facts), game theory (models competition and strategy in various fields), cascading effects (understanding how initial events create secondary effects), and bias-impact correction model (identifying bias and trying to mitigate or eliminate it).

Although exposing students to the theoretical foundation in leadership models, behaviors, and techniques is important, this must be balanced with practice, feedback, and reflection. For example, after conceptualizing the mental models, students could engage with them by using case studies and real workplace scenarios to determine which model to use. Participants can journal, reflecting on how the use of mental models changed their perspective on actions. In addition, group discussions and peer coaching allow for feedback on the use of various mental models. Participants can also prospectively create action plans on ways they intend to apply mental models going forward.

Whether law schools adopt this broader curriculum for their leadership development programs presents a bit of a chicken-and-egg dilemma. As will be discussed later, assessment of these programs rarely involves longitudinal studies to ascertain which mindsets, skills, and competencies led participants to become effective leaders. Ideally, creators of the program would use evidence that these more business-type competencies did improve leadership training for lawyer leaders. Until these longitudinal assessments take hold, conducting targeted research with lawyer leaders about what mindsets, skills, and competencies they most attribute to their success might shed more light on the debate.

C. Create an Assessment Plan That Utilizes a Research-Based Framework

Leadership development programs should be assessed regularly using concrete metrics but often little evaluation or measurement of the

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64 Christopher J. Maurer, The Game’s Afoot: Game Theory Applied to Contested Divorce Actions, 34 DCBA BRIEF 10 (2021).
effectiveness of leadership programs occurs. The effectiveness of these programs may depend on various factors, such as the goals and objectives of the program, the curriculum and pedagogy, the faculty and facilitators, the participants and their needs, and the evaluation and feedback mechanisms. A leadership program should be continuously improved and evaluated based on the feedback and data collected from the participants, facilitators, stakeholders, and other sources. This can help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program and measure its impact and effectiveness.\textsuperscript{67}

Little empirical research exists on the effectiveness of law school leadership programs,\textsuperscript{68} but studies urging adopting a broader curriculum than just teaching the law promote their positive impacts on the participants’ leadership development, career satisfaction, and professional performance.\textsuperscript{69} Support exists for the premise that leadership education and other disciplines incorporated into the law school curriculum can enhance law students’ self-awareness, self-confidence, self-regulation, motivation, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, ethical judgment, and social responsibility.\textsuperscript{70} In addition, leadership programs arguably can help law students prepare for the changing demands and expectations of the legal profession, such as managing complexity, uncertainty, diversity, innovation, and globalization.\textsuperscript{71}

To test the validity of these claimed benefits we must assess the leadership development programs.

Research finds the most effective evaluations will tie development activities directly to strategic goals, using both quantitative and qualitative data, and focus on tangible behavior change.\textsuperscript{72} Assessing participation rates, completion rates, and program demand/enrollment over time may be interesting but not particularly valuable in assessing whether the program

\textsuperscript{67}Frye & Hemmer, supra note 23, at 289 (outlining some common evaluation models).

\textsuperscript{68}Rhode, supra note 3, at 1637, 1644 (noting little data on effectiveness of programs, many of which lack rigor); Westfahl & Wilkins, supra note 7, at 1697 (challenging law schools to measure impact of their programs).

\textsuperscript{69}Fraley & Teague, supra note 36, at 381–82 (discussing the MacCrate Report of the American Bar Association in 1992 and Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law (known as the “Carnegie Report”) in 2007 (which references the 2006 Best Practices for Legal Education)).

\textsuperscript{70}Susan Swaim Daicoff, Expanding the Lawyer’s Toolkit of Skills and Competencies: Synthesizing Leadership, Professionalism, Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution, and Comprehensive Law, 52 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 795, 803 (2012); Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 2 (“Previous research indicates that trainees generally have positive reactions following training.”).

\textsuperscript{71}Westfahl & Wilkins, supra note 7, at 1728.

\textsuperscript{72}Wallace et al., Just What Do We Think We are Doing? Learning Outcomes of Leader and Leadership Development, 32 THE LEADERSHIP Q., at 1, 10 (2021).
produces better leaders. As seen from the chart above, many business schools (and probably law schools) focus primarily on participant feedback. They may gather feedback from students on program content, instructor quality, applicability of skills and ability to apply them, and areas for improvement. Relying solely on participants’ self-assessment of their leadership skills without external validation, such as feedback from peers or supervisors, might not provide an accurate representation of growth.73

Conducting focus groups with students allows for a deeper dive into experiences, key learnings, and program value. Although these approaches are relatively simple and economical, they do not produce evidence of behavioral change.74 Relying solely on participant feedback without considering behavioral changes or performance improvements might not provide a comprehensive view of the program’s effectiveness.

Others may try to measure growth by surveying students before and after the program on leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities using a standardized competency model. Utilizing pre- and post-assessments to measure leadership competencies before and after the program through 360 assessments and skill tests provides valuable information to help see if the program is working. Wake Forest uses a “Character and Professional Identity” survey at the beginning and end of the semester.75 The surveys serve twin purposes of measuring growth of attitudes and values in individual students and serve as a baseline to compare future groups.76 Wake Forest also conducts a “Character and Values” survey to measure law school’s impact on professional identity to all 1Ls and repeats the process throughout the students’ law school career to measure change.77

To further check progress in a consistent and objective manner, faculty can conduct a systematic review with a structured assessment framework (rubrics) of student deliverables like capstone projects, reflection papers, and group presentations. One of the more interesting assessments a business school used was a pre- and post-assessment center, which assessed an individual’s leadership capabilities through a series of leadership challenges throughout the program.78

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73Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 12.
74Id. at 10.
75Townsend, supra note 40, at 901.
76Id.
77Id.
78Leroy et al., supra note 100, at 11.
To measure behavioral change, research supports students implementing new skills they learn with practical experiences because leadership is best learned through practice and experience.\textsuperscript{79} A challenge arises with law school leadership development programs because many students come to law school straight from college with very little, if any, work experience. This contrasts sharply with the business school cohorts made up of individuals with substantial work experience they can use to give context to the concepts covered in the program.\textsuperscript{80}

Since law students have limited real-world work experience to anchor leadership development the challenge is how to design a curriculum that embeds growth within authentic leadership contexts for sustainable change. Participants could apply their learning to real-world situations, such as leading teams, committees, or events, and then reflect on these experiences and the feedback they receive. This transferring of knowledge to concrete action can help deepen understanding by providing a real-world context, improve performance, and enhance self-awareness. Likewise, pairing the program with clinics, externships, and summer job placements, along with self-reflection and structured debriefing, can certainly help provide real-life encounters that will make the learning environment more like a laboratory environment found in business schools. Students could receive feedback and targeted coaching as part of these real-world opportunities to better solidify the information they learn in the classroom.\textsuperscript{81}

This also can be accomplished through capstones and intersession programs. For example, Elon designed a two-week community client experience that allows 2Ls to assist a nonprofit organization.\textsuperscript{82} In addition,
3Ls at Elon may elect to participate in a capstone project that allows them to engage in community problem solving.\(^{83}\)

At the University of Mississippi, I designed a hackathon to allow students to practice leadership and, specifically, design thinking. A hackathon is an event created by an organization that wants to get a high-quality solution through collaboration between participants.\(^{84}\) It is usually a competitive event between teams and originally started with people working in groups on software or hardware projects.\(^{85}\) Hackathons have now expanded to tackle many of society’s challenges.

The Leadership in Law 2024 Hackathon is based on similar events sponsored by Diversity Lab.\(^{86}\) This non-profit is an incubator for innovative ideas and solutions that boost diversity and inclusion in law. The organization engaged more than one-hundred top law firms and legal departments across the country with law students to develop ideas to move the needle forward.\(^{87}\) Many of these ideas are now being implemented in law offices and legal departments across the country.

The University of Mississippi leadership students divided into three groups to produce initiatives to make the law school more welcoming to first-generation students, students with disabilities, and underrepresented students. They utilized design thinking, including conducting empathy interviews, defining the problem, brainstorming ideas, developing a prototype, and testing the idea. Independent university staff will judge the pitches, and the law school committed to implementing the ideas from the winning team, if not all the ideas. The students receive the benefit of tackling a real-world problem while at the same time learning how to utilize a problem-solving method used to solve wicked issues.

The much more difficult and impactful evaluation of results involves collecting longitudinal data.\(^{88}\) Schools measuring graduates’ transfer (change

\(^{83}\) Id. at 422.


\(^{85}\) Id.


\(^{87}\) Id.

\(^{88}\) Westfahl & Wilkins, supra note 7, at 1697 (advocating for “law school leaders to measure the impact of their students on the world over an extended period after graduation and to celebrate the many paths students take to make a positive difference and analyzing which abilities and traits most highly correlate with graduates having significant influence on the world could lead to greater
in behavior) in addition to learning is much more difficult than measuring this change among employees. Schools should consider, however, tracking long-term impacts through follow-up surveys and metrics at various post-program intervals because assessing too soon might not capture the longer-term impact and changes that participants might exhibit over time. Using a control group in this data collection would make the data more valuable. For example, are the program graduates promoted at higher rates than non-participants? Without a control group, it may be difficult to attribute changes solely to the program, as external factors might influence participants’ development. Also following up with alumni to evaluate long-term impacts on law practice, community leadership, and career progression could yield more valuable information about the impact of the program than when they initially complete the program.

To develop an excellent assessment plan, faculty must invest in learning about research-based models for evaluating training programs to determine which framework will be best for their program. The business school study partially relied on Kirkpatrick’s model for evaluating training programs, but other models exist. Kraiger, Ford, and Salas offer a slightly different framework than Kirkpatrick’s model for evaluation focusing on the intended outcomes and whether they were achieved in the training. The researchers sought to address design flaws they and others identified in the Kirkpatrick model. They suggest that Kirkpatrick’s model, although intuitive and user-friendly, may be too simplistic as it claims to be sequential, however, reactions (level 1) do not automatically lead to learning (level 2). Changes in behavior (level 3) and results (level 4) are difficult to attribute to the training, possibly being affected by external factors, and his model lacked detailed guidance on measurement tools and techniques.

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energy around creating an environment more conducive to the development of those abilities and traits”).

89 Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 10 (“For example, gathering accurate transfer data after a class has ended and students are no longer in contact with the instructor may be more difficult compared to gathering transfer data from employees that continue to work with the organization that has provided training.”).

90 Id. at 11–12.

91 Kurt Kraiger et al., Application of Cognitive, Skill-Based, and Affective Theories of Learning Outcomes to New Methods of Training Evaluation, 78 J. OF APPLIED PSYCH. 311, 311 (1993).

92 Id. at 311–12.


94 Id.
Using a multidimensionality perspective utilizing Gagne and Bloom’s taxonomies, they proposed evaluating cognitive outcomes ("a developmental change in intellectual or mental-based skills"), skill-based outcomes ("acquisition of technical or motor-skills"), and affective outcomes learning ("acquisition or change in internally based states").

**Figure 4: The Kraiger et al. Framework**

Their initial framework also offered suggested methods for evaluation for each of the learning outcomes. These included:

**Cognitive Measures:**
- Written tests (recognition and recall)
- Power and speed tests
- Verbal knowledge tests

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96 Id.
97 Id.; see generally Kraiger et al., *supra* note 91, at 312.
98 Kraiger et al., *supra* note 91, at 312.
• Self-assessments

Skills-based measures:
• Supervisor/peer ratings
• Self-ratings
• Scenarios and work samples
• Objective performance data

Affective Measures:
• Self-reporting including: surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and personality and attitude assessments\(^9^9\)

Since Kraiger et al. introduced their classification scheme, scholars advanced the research on training effectiveness.\(^1^0^0\) For example, we now can evaluate in the cognitive knowledge category more than basic knowledge but also strategic knowledge.\(^1^0^1\) Evaluating changes in mental models “can help us to assess the degree to which advanced knowledge and problem-solving skills were acquired during training.”\(^1^0^2\) The authors share studies that measure change in mental models by using free sort pass activity (organizing items into groups based on perceived similarities and differences) and concept mapping (using tools to visualize connections between concepts).\(^1^0^3\) Law professors could benefit from delving into these studies that focus on evaluating mental models if they begin to incorporate mental models into the leadership development curriculum as suggested earlier in this article.

The struggle on how to best assess leadership development programs spans more disciplines than just law and business. Recently, scholars in pharmacy, medicine, and nursing published research exploring the gaps in the curriculum and assessment of their students.\(^1^0^4\) Similar to business, most

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\(^9^9\)Kraiger et al., supra note 91, at 323.

\(^1^0^0\)See J. Kevin Ford et al., An Updated Review of the Multidimensionality of Training Outcomes: New Directions for Training Evaluation Research, in LEARNING, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS 135, 135 (Steve W. J. Kozlowski & Eduardo Salas eds., 2010).

\(^1^0^1\)Id. at 139.

\(^1^0^2\)Id.

\(^1^0^3\)Id. at 140.

\(^1^0^4\)Jaason M. Geerts et al., Evidence-Based Leadership Development for Physicians: A Systematic Literature Review, 246 SOC. SCI. AND MED., Feb. 2020, at 1 (providing a step-by-step
assessments tended to be descriptive without much analysis on performance. Assessing leadership development programs using methods that are not research-based (e.g., anecdotal evidence, qualitative assessments alone, and lack of clear metrics) might lead to subjective and unreliable results. Reasons may exist for still using some of these methods of evaluation, but schools should bolster them with research-based assessments. Reyes et al. suggested utilizing a “mixed methods” approach including using high-quality instruments with psychological separation of content areas (survey items unrelated to the leadership program), utilizing composite ratings from self, peers, and supervisors of extracurricular activities, and incorporating declarative knowledge tests and carefully designed observation experiences (e.g., giving a speech before and six weeks after program).

D. Obtain Adequate Administrative Support to Engage a Robust Pool of Faculty and Students

Law school leadership development programs often have minimal staffing, resources, and administrative support compared to other curricular areas. These programs, if done correctly, will need adequate resources. Research finds that some leadership development programs utilize the most convenient and inexpensive approaches rather than those rooted in science. For example, leadership programs often use lecture and classroom activities. Many of the best practices to teach leadership (e.g., evidence-based assessments, coaching fees) and to evaluate its effectiveness (e.g., longitudinal studies) require significant funds.

Those expenses are in addition to any staffing and technology needs (e.g., simulations). For example, business schools often hire faculty with expertise in leadership. This does not usually occur with law school hiring. Law

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{105} Reed et al., supra note 104, at 1882.}\n\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{106} Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 12.}\n\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{107} Id. at 10.}\n\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{108} Leroy et al., supra note 100, at 6 (but see the following paragraph where authors acknowledge this is not always the case).}
faculty do not necessarily model strong leadership skills in their own teaching and administration roles due to a lack of training or interest. More faculty training and support around leadership may be needed to encourage and develop faculty expertise in the leadership development field. Faculty need the relevant knowledge, skills, and experience to teach and mentor the participants and have a depth of knowledge to know what approaches and activities prove to be effective and ineffective in developing leaders.

The robust engagement of students in leadership programs also must occur for these programs to be successful. Some students may fail to see the value of leadership development and view it as optional or extracurricular rather than an essential part of their legal education. Research finds that voluntary programs tend to be more successful because the participants are motivated. Yet, self-selective leadership programs often attract students who already see themselves as leaders rather than developing leadership capacity in all students. Short of making these programs mandatory, law schools should seek ways to recruit a broader base of students with diverse perspectives and working styles, creating more inclusive programs. Some suggestions for achieving this include making the program mandatory for all students, designing fellow programs or reconfiguring existing fellowships to include leadership development, or tying leadership development to clinic participation or certain extracurricular activities (e.g., presidents of all registered student organizations).

Better alumni engagement could also strengthen the programs. Law school alumni could supply additional resources by playing an important mentoring role in leadership development programs. Properly trained alumni could serve as coaches, mentors, and employers. Alumni may also

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109 James, supra note 82, at 435.
110 Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 10 (“Results suggest that voluntary programs are more effective than involuntary programs in fostering learning outcomes, thus supporting training theory which highlights the importance of trainee motivation in facilitating outcomes.”); but see Reyes et al., supra note 30, at 12 (warning self-selection could bias self-assessments); see also Lacerenza et al., supra note 95, at 1701 (discussing the pros and cons of voluntary versus involuntary programs).
111 Teague, supra note 4, at 31–32 (explaining how leadership programs can develop cultural competency in its participants).
112 Id. at 37.
113 Leadership Webinar, supra note 45, at 27:32–29:00 (Neil Hamilton speaking about training coaches in his professional responsibility class to help produce better guided reflections by the students).
financially support these initiatives as they may wish they would have had the opportunity when they were in school.\footnote{Teague, supra note 4, at 37–38.}

In sum, greater institutional support will allow for the wider and the preferred use of evidence-based content, methods, and evaluation. Resources will also help recruit students and faculty and provide them with the tools they need to be successful in these endeavors.

\section*{III. Opportunities for Research}

Law professors interested in this field need to engage in more research and discuss whether some consensus can be reached for how broad the coverage should be in the leadership development program curriculum. Of course, no “one size fits all” curriculum exists, but it does seem important for the leaders in this space to continue to think about the parameters of what does and does not fit in this field.\footnote{See Leroy et al., supra note 100, at 18 (“When there is a shared understanding amongst developers of what practices have more or less impact and, perhaps more importantly, a shared mindset of remaining critical of what does (not) work, humble and nuanced about one’s own efforts, and individual’s EBLD-identity likely further reduces discrepancies between espousal and enactment because it is collectively endorsed.”).} Are we trying to include too much under the guise of leadership development? For example, should wellness be a part of a leadership development program? Can leadership development programs satisfy the new amendments to the ABA standards or is that too much to pack into the curriculum? Law professors can look to other fields such as medicine, nursing, and engineering to learn how scholars in those fields established an integrated leadership development curriculum framework.\footnote{Dunne et al., supra note 104, at 475–81; see generally Leadership Issue, 11 J. STEM EDUC.: INNOVATIONS & RSCH. (2009) (multiple articles concerning design of leadership programs for engineering students).}

Another area ripe for research includes the methods we use for teaching leadership and whether these methods actually lead to developing better leaders. For example, commonly used practices in leadership development programs should be analyzed to ascertain evidence of effectiveness. These might include:

- Role playing unrealistic scenarios;
- Team building activities (e.g., Lego building; rope courses; outdoor wilderness challenges);
• Short inspirational speeches or talks;
• Purely conceptual classroom training without application;
• Large case competitions with little debrief; or
• Discussing great leaders without analysis.

Perhaps the greatest area ripe for research is how we assess these programs. Most programs assess reactions and learning but are not engaged in assessing behavioral changes and results. Law schools should adopt a combined approach between the various models of evaluation leveraging each of their strengths. Developing assessments that better ascertain the long-term impacts of these programs will help improve the programs and be evidence to the skeptics of the value of leadership education.

A component of assessing programs could include identifying or creating national or international accrediting standards and bodies specific to leadership programs.\(^\text{117}\) This would provide law school leadership programs with standards that they could meet or exceed, giving programs external credibility. The International Institute of Leadership currently offers this service.\(^\text{118}\) The Assessment Criteria and Guidelines this institution utilizes include:

• The purpose of the learning programme and its target audience are clearly stated
• The learning supports demonstrable improved leadership practice
• Consideration is given to learner inclusivity and accessibility to support the learning needs of diverse groups
• Reference to models, theories and explanations are current and relevant
• Collaborative learning is encouraged

\(^{117}\) Leroy et al., supra note 100, at 16.
• The level of facilitation provided and the extent to which the development is self-directed are both clearly stated.
• The learning includes an element of self-awareness and reflection.
• Learning activities are organised in multiple formats and different methods used to aid all types of learner;
• Learner feedback is gathered and evaluated and informs the design of future programmes;
• The programme reflects the values of The Institute of Leadership.\textsuperscript{119}

They list several universities and clients on their website.\textsuperscript{120} The Association of American Law Schools Section on Leadership could vet this organization and others, benefitting all law schools. The Section might even develop its own set of standards specific to law schools.

Before concluding, I offer one word of warning. A complicating factor with selecting leading practices for curriculum, methods, and assessment surrounds the distinction between the research and science of leadership versus the research and science behind leadership development.\textsuperscript{121} Creators of leadership development programs should not conflate the two when designing pedagogy and assessments. The latter is a newer field of discovery so identifying “evidence-based” or best practices in leadership development will continue to evolve as more research emerges requiring law professors to stay up to date.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{119} Id.
\textsuperscript{120} Id.
\textsuperscript{121} Leroy et al., \textit{supra} note 100, at 8; Bernd Vogel et al., \textit{A Bibliometric Review of the Leadership Development Field: How We Got Here, Where We Are, and Where We Are Headed}, 803 THE LEADERSHIP Q. 1, 1 (2021).
\textsuperscript{122} Leroy et al., \textit{supra} note 100, at 8; Vogel et al., \textit{supra} note 121, at 1.