

HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

THE CLIENT

A healthcare membership organization in a major U.S. city with responsibility for improving the quality, accessibility and delivery of services for more than 150 hospitals.

THE SITUATION

The American Hospital Association's Commission on Workforce released national recommendations designed to help hospitals improve effective leadership abilities and knowledge among supervisors and managers. The AHA group offered specific recommendations, including the enhancement of communication skills, fostering meaningful work and strengthening management-employee relations. The healthcare membership organization partnered with IRI Consultants to create a comprehensive education program focused on workforce leadership development.

THE CHALLENGE

Surveys conducted by IRI Consultants before the Academy revealed self-identified weaknesses among supervisors and managers when asked about their leadership skills. Problem areas included communications, employee coaching, evaluating performance and managing change.

MANAGEMENT SURVEY

The graph of survey responses on the next page illustrates that a majority of participants felt they needed help, or felt there was room for improvement in each of the seven skill areas examined. Thorough self-assessment showed a deep need and desire for leadership development among these managers and supervisors.

Further research and interviews discovered:

- 31% of supervisors and managers received no formal management training prior to assuming a leadership position
- 46% of those who had received training had attended only a seminar
- Just 11% had received a formal certification or degree as their leadership preparation
- 54% had been serving in a leadership role for less than three years
- More than one-third of supervisors and managers were spending five or more hours each week on administrative duties. None spent less than one hour

LEADERSHIP AUDIT

As a clinical manager/supervisor, rate yourself in the following skills needed to be an effective leader.

- **Weaknesses:** "I need help in this area."
- **Opportunities:** "I get by, but there is some room for improvement."
- **Strengths:** "I could teach a class in this skill."

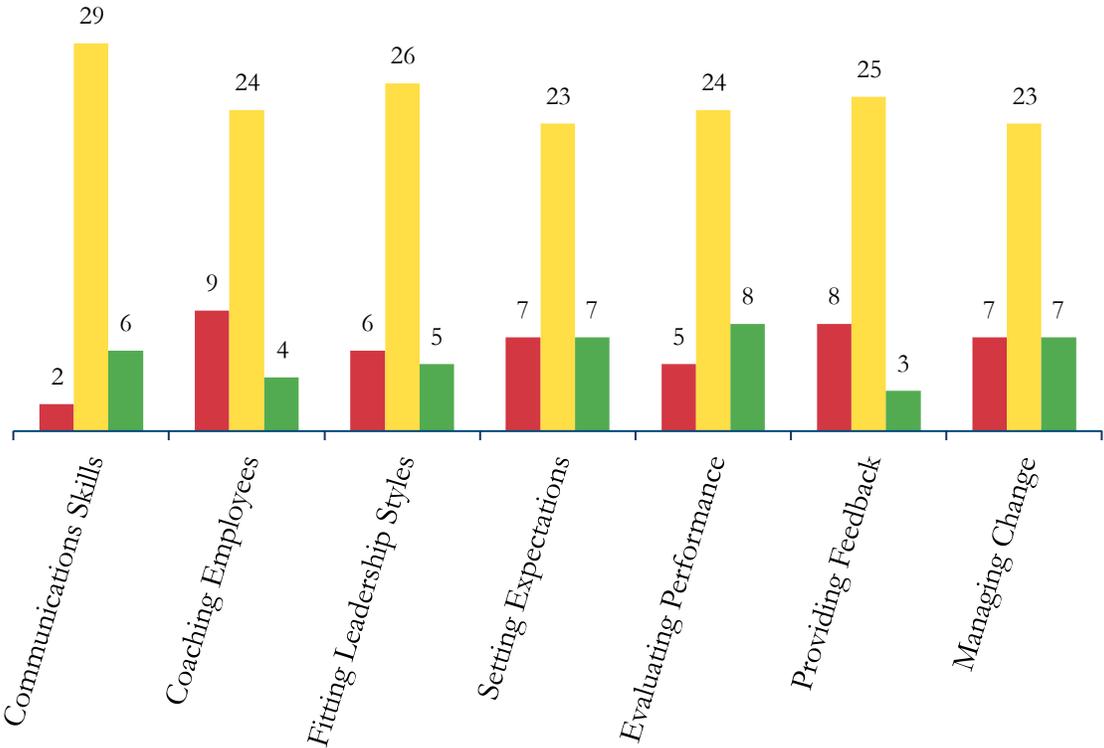


Figure 1

THE SOLUTION

IRI Consultants partnered with the healthcare membership organization to create a comprehensive training program designed to help supervisors and managers with their managerial skills. The 10-module Healthcare Leadership Academy was presented in five days, over a three-month period, to healthcare leaders from the membership organization.

Using comprehensive training modules, a behavioral assessment and communication tools, IRI's Organization Effectiveness team empowered participants to improve their skills in 10 essential areas:

- Principles of Leadership
- Understanding Individual Differences
- Principles of Leadership Communication
- Coaching Employees to Higher Performance
- Leading Others through Change
- Managing Performance
- Building and Leading Effective Teams
- Planning and Running Effective Team Meetings
- Making Conflict Productive
- Organizing Your Time, Work and Priorities

THE RESULTS

Following the Academy IRI asked participants to evaluate training on three criteria:

1. Meeting the stated objectives
2. Usefulness of the information presented
3. The value of the training materials as useful reference material

In each of these categories, the training modules earned positive marks of 91 percent or higher. Four of the ten modules scored 100 percent on two of three evaluation questions.

Beyond the individual training modules, IRI assessed how Academy graduates perceived their own learning and self-improvement in previously identified areas of concern.

SOMEWHAT OR STRONGLY AGREE

Rate how much you agree that the Healthcare Leadership Academy improved your knowledge in the following areas:



Figure 2

IRI also asked graduates to assess the improvement in their management abilities relative to their performance before the Academy. Respondents reported back the following (time measured in hours per week):

TIME SPENT DEALING WITH CONFLICT

The time spent dealing with conflict declined slightly. Academy alumni stated that while time spent dealing with conflict remained almost unchanged, time spent on this post- Academy was used more constructively in that they acquired the skills to deal with conflict positively instead of avoiding it altogether.

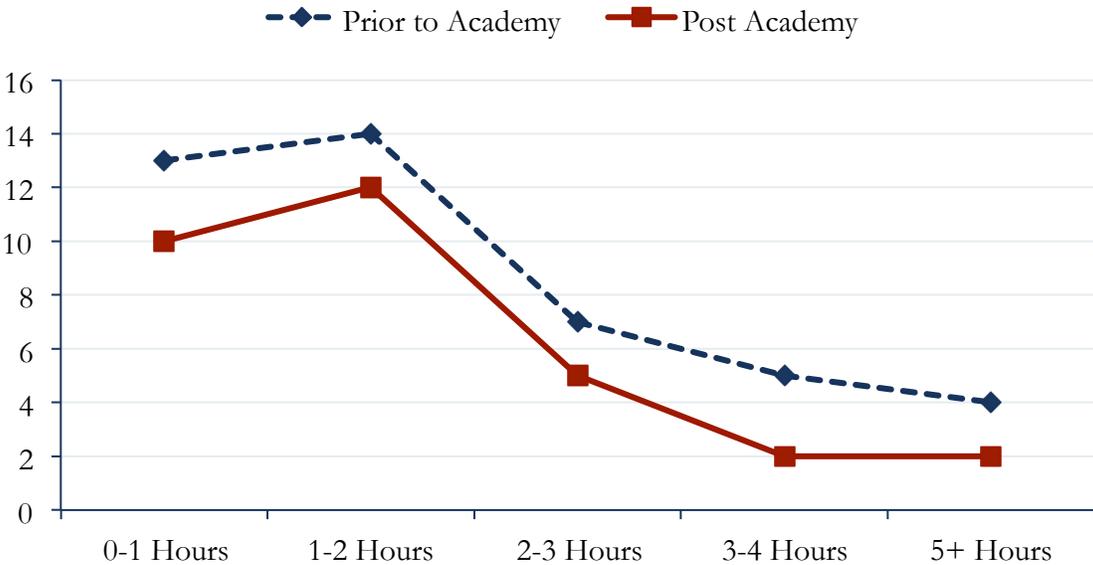


Figure 3

TIME SPENT MONITORING DIRECT REPORTS

Mentoring direct reports became a higher priority, especially among those who were doing little mentoring prior to the Academy.

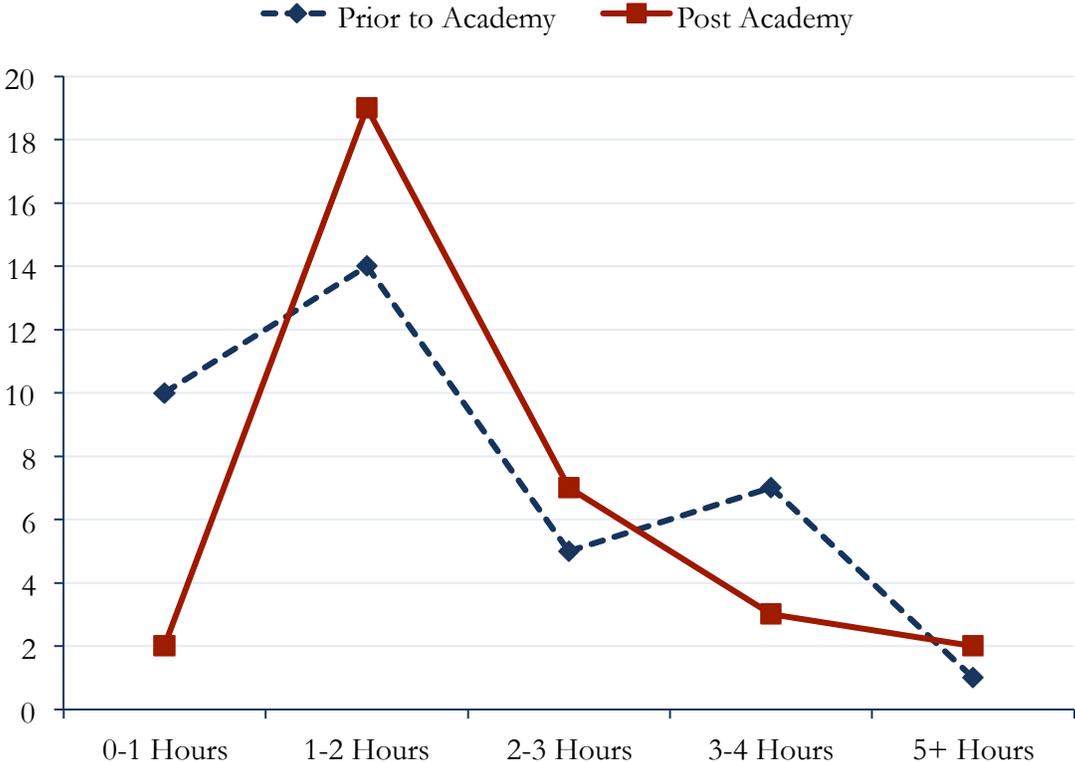


Figure 4

TIME SAVED ON ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

There were measurable gains in time saved on administrative duties. The pre-Academy survey showed 35% spending five or more hours per week handling administration. This dropped to 21% after the training, allowing more time for mentoring.

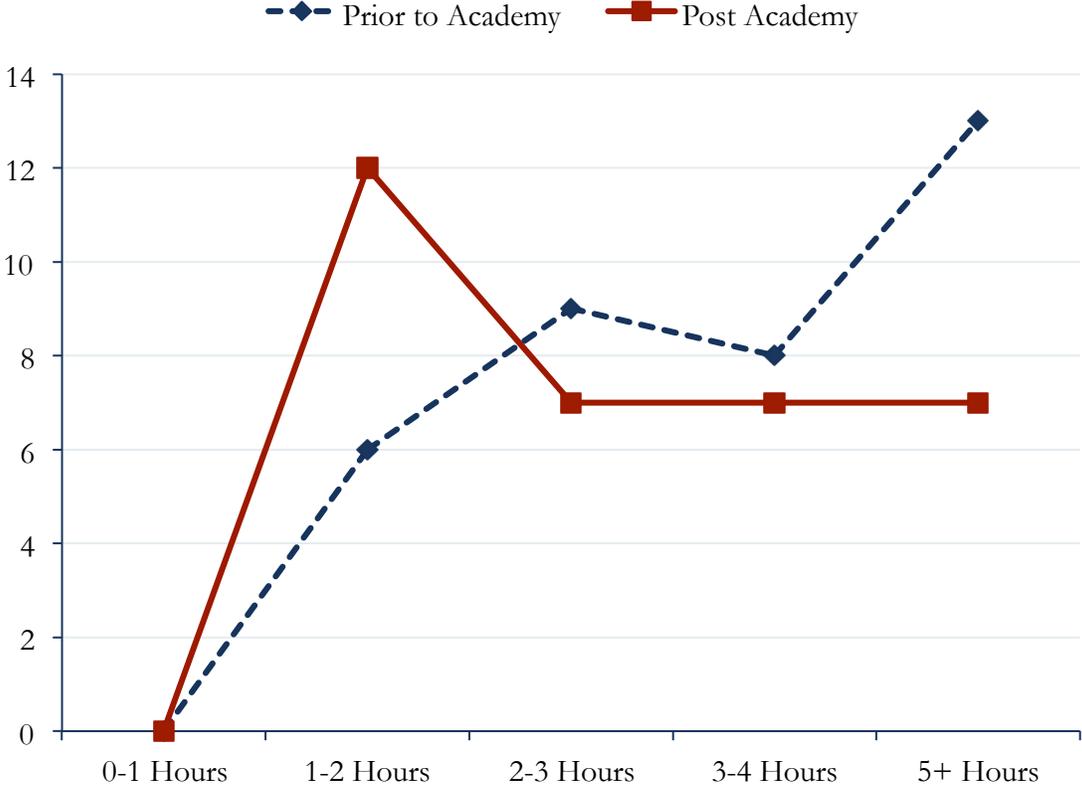


Figure 5

LESSONS LEARNED

Academy participants felt empowered to make changes in their work habits, allowing them to save time, prioritize tasks and lead effectively:

“I set up a weekly meeting with a low-performing staff member, which has helped me build my relationship with her and improve her performance on the team.”

“I used the new techniques I learned at the Leadership Academy to have two staff people solve a problem themselves without me interfering in the solution.”

“Since the Academy, I am...trying to communicate with everyone in their best method of understanding. I have a staff member with a dominant personality; a physician complained she was disrespectful and unprofessional. I used the tools I learned to inform her of this incident. She apologized and stated she would mind how she communicates with others from now on.”

According to their feedback, Academy graduates are spending more time on the critical aspects of their work and less time on administrative issues. They also have become far more effective communicators and leaders in their organizations. The Academy’s training modules equipped participants to manage conflict, increase productivity by building relationships with low-performing staff, and achieve better outcomes when delegating tasks. The time saved has been reinvested into mentoring employees, thereby building productive teams that are focused on delivering quality healthcare services to patients.