



Presidio Institute Teaches Collaboration Across Broad Sectors

Presidio Institute
Best Advance in Creating
an Extended Enterprise Learning Program
December 2017



Company Background



Presidio Institute

Company At-a-Glance	
Headquarters	San Francisco, CA, USA
Year Founded	1997
Revenue	\$77 million
Employees	300+
Global Scale	Worldwide
Customers/Output, etc.	American Express, American Heart Association, United Way Worldwide, Stanford University, US Office of Personnel Management, Kresge Foundation, Points of Light, AmeriCorps Alums, Team Rubicon, The Corporation for National & Community Service, the White House Office of Management and Budget.
Industry	Government
Website	http://www.presidio.gov/institute

Budget and Timeframe

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Number of employees involved with the implementation?	6
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	12
Number of contractors involved with implementation	8
Timeframe to implement	1 year
Start date of the program	January 2016

Business Conditions and Business Needs

LEADEROSITY was born as a concept in 2012 at a White House Innovation Summit by representatives the Presidio Institute, American Express, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. They saw a need for leaders in the business, nonprofit, and governmental spheres to develop collaboration skills, because creative solutions to today's problems often require a combination of efforts.

In surveying the landscape, the Presidio Institute found some in-depth, person-to-person training with a very limited potential audience, some online webinars and resources with light content, and identified a gap – the need for deep training to teach cross-sector leadership with rich content and online scale.

LEADEROSITY was developed in 2015, utilizing the NovoEd learning management system to curate a number of courses and content to serve cross-sector leaders and their organizations in the three sectors.

Overview

A series of three courses for Cross Sector Leadership was made available to corporate, nonprofit, and governmental leaders.

The courses focused on the following topics:

- **Building Teams.** Teaching participants how to build teams effectively by building trust. Also covers power dynamics in a cross-sector, collaborative context.
- **Solving Problems.** Teaching participants how to increase their personal and organizational impact and taking the systems-thinking approach through the use of qualitative and quantitative data.
- **Achieving Impact.** Understanding the importance of sharing knowledge and how to align motivation and values across different organizations.

By the end of the three courses, participants understand how to collaborate outside of their silos, across sectors, and be more effective in driving change and making an impact.

A key way the courses help participants is by having them practice by learning together in cross-sectional cohorts. As they are learning, they also are practicing the collaboration skills that they are trying to develop.

The collaborative aspects of the course have an additional benefit. They help to develop a network of problem solvers who can form relationships outside of the course environment and rely on each other to help make changes in their organizational settings.

Design of the Program

The LEADEROSITY Cross Sector Leadership courses utilized several elements to meet the needs of its participants:

- Content was designed by leading experts in their fields.
- Instructors provided feedback and guidance to participants in discussions and on their project assignments.
- Participants are grouped into small teams to collaborate on assignments. In some cases, these teams are self-formed; in others, teams are pre-assigned based on mixing diverse sectors and organizations.
- The main project of each team is a concrete case study on cross-sector collaboration.
- There are self-assessments for participants to complete that help them recognize how they approach power dynamics and conflict resolution. This self-understanding is a key step to improving skills in these areas.

- There is a FailFest, where people share the failures they've experienced and acknowledge that such failures are important to encourage creative risk-taking.

Through the applied, project-based, collaborative-learning experiences, participants are able to develop their cross-sector leadership skills and develop a network with like-minded peers.

Delivery of the Program

The LEADEROSITY Cross Sector Leadership program was launched and available to the general public. In addition, recruitment webinars were tailored toward partner organizations with whom the Presidio Institute and its partners had relationships. The initial participants were solicited from places that were likely to be on the leading edge with respect to thinking strategically about a cross-sector focus.

Figure 1: Landing Page for the Building Teams Learning Program



 **Presidio Institute**

Introduction to Cross Sector Leadership: Building Teams

Instructor:
Alison Gold

June 1, 2015 - July 7, 2015 This is a private course. | [Sign up.](#)

The Course

A six-week course focused on the skills of **developing trust, managing power dynamics & conflict, and fostering an innovation culture in cross-sector collaborations.**

Participants will walk away from the course with...

- An increased awareness of the concept of cross-sector leadership so that they can identify when the practice should be applied.
- An overview of the Presidio Institute's 9 universal skills of cross-sector leadership
- A deeper understanding of the 3 skills focused on Building Teams so that they can begin to practice the skills and identify opportunities for further learning

The Instructor

 Alison Gold

Presidio Institute

Building on the Presidio's legacy of service and public-private partnerships, the Presidio Institute provides transformational experiences that inspire, encourage, and empower leaders to make measurable, positive impact in their communities.

Source: Presidio Institute 2017

A live webinar kicks off each learning program, allowing for some of the motivational and communicative benefits of a live event to be incorporated into the program and the flexibility for participants to choose when and where to engage.

Change Management Efforts

One of the questions involved formation of the working teams. Initially, teams were pre-assigned as there was concern that individuals from different sectors might not form naturally into teams to create the optimal level of team diversity. But, given the autonomy participants have over other aspects of the program, there was a question if that really was necessary.

Thus, an A/B test was chosen. In one scenario, teams were pre-assigned; in the other, teams were self-formed. Participants could create a team themselves or browse existing teams and request to join them.

The teams that were self-formed scored slightly higher in completion rate of the capstone assignment. It was determined that it is important to preserve learner agency, while still conveying the importance of forming diverse teams. This message permeated early communications in the learning program.

Measurable Benefits

The LEADEROSITY Cross Sector Leadership program has been a strong and growing success. More than 1,300 users from >200 distinct organizations have been through the program. Due to the diversity of individuals and organizations in the program, participants have a variety of goals.

Learners were asked whether they achieved their learning goals, and 74% of active participants indicated they did. About 35% of participants fulfilled the requirements to earn a Statement of Accomplishment, a formal acknowledgement of skill-building in this area.

Feedback

“I think the most powerful exercises were when we talked about failing (being vulnerable and reflecting on why it's important), and when we talked about the assumptions we make and why we make them.” – A.E.

“The group presentation was the most valuable to me because it helped pull everything together from the course and make it applicable in a real scenario. It was most beneficial to hear from our guest speakers.” – T.M.

“The personal failure assignment was pivotal for me in identifying a current work conflict that I am experiencing. It solidified in my mind the best strategy for addressing this conflict while maintaining the trust of my colleagues.” – M.G.

Overall

The development of the LEADEROSITY program was a product of collaboration across sectors, with the Presidio Institute, a government organization, and a corporate sponsor, American Express, along with numerous other nonprofit organizations contributing talented leaders to design and teach the program.

As the program was disseminated, very positive results were observed in meeting the core need that was originally envisioned: Building skills in working across the three sectors to drive significant change in society.

A great deal has been learned along the way: The target audience is eager to learn, they are willing to experiment with an online format because of its convenience, and they appreciate the live web-conferences.

Other Observations

- Participants can learn these topics online.
- Online collaboration can work with participants who did not know each other before entering the learning program.
- This model can reach its effectiveness goals, and the Presidio Institute continues to proliferate and scale it.

The Presidio Institute is now pursuing partnerships with other organizations to expand the repertoire of content and find larger channels to raise awareness of the new learning program.

The Presidio Institute’s leaders are proud to be innovating new forms of online learning as they strive to achieve maximum reach and impact. Their most important mission is to equip their partners in industry, government, and the nonprofit sector so they are able to work together.



About Brandon Hall Group

Brandon Hall Group is a HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management. With more than 10,000 clients globally and more than 20 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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