

Open for Business > The Leadership Development Group



PIONEER PRESS PHOTOS: BEN GARVIN

Dick Daniels of the Leadership Development Group, right, has a laugh with Mark Morse at the Bloomington office of Morsekode. Morse has done branding and website development for Daniels' company. Says Daniels: "We decided to narrow our focus ... to do what we can do best: develop leadership capacity."

Owner: Dick Daniels

Type of business: Business consulting and executive coaching

Number of employees: Six:

Diana Martenson, Brian Schubring, Nikki Daniels, Ron Hultgren, Jentine Arkema and Dick Daniels

Location: Shoreview-based, with national clients

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Tell us what your business does. The Leadership Development Group is a leadership systems advisory firm consulting with companies to establish or upgrade a leadership development process for emerging, mid-level and senior leaders.

Why are you launching it now? The corporate world recognizes the critical need for an internal leadership pipeline. Research documents that leaders often lack specific competencies related to strategic business outcomes. In addition, succession planning is needed for key roles with the potential to fill those roles internally. Our firm provides a comprehensive process for an internal leadership development initiative. The return on investment includes enhanced productivity, effective problem solving, team collaboration, employee engagement and retention, leadership bench strength, talent mobility and intentional succession planning.

Where did you get the idea for your business? Our group includes six senior leadership development consultants with decades of business consulting and executive coaching experience. We are

Dick Daniels



collaborating with the Center for Creative Leadership that brings 40 years of research-based assessments regarding the leadership development of high-potential employees. Their research and resources have reinforced our thinking regarding the

contribution we can make in the corporate workplace.

How did you develop your business plan? I have worked with three consultants. The branding and Web site development was created through with Mark Morse and his team at Morsekode in Bloomington. The marketing and sales strategy was developed with Chuck Swensson, president at Creatis Inc., Minneapolis. Chris Lower, president of Sterling Cross Group, Maple Grove, is advising us on the most effective uses of social media.

How are you financing your business? It is being launched with personal funding.

How do you see current economic conditions affecting your business? They are a factor in the corporate sector, but the latest research documents the financial value of companies establishing a leading culture. Leadership development that is embedded into a company's strategic business priorities will strengthen effectiveness and prepare it for new growth as the economy recovers. The return on investment makes leadership development non-negotiable in this economic season.

What makes your business unique? We work with clients in three phases: assess, learn and grow. These processes are applied first to a company in its comprehensive planning. We assess the leadership gap and identify competencies

that are most relevant to business performance. Then employees are assessed against that competency framework and a personal development plan is created by the employee and a leadership development coach. We use research-based assessments that lead to a plan incorporating adult learning styles. Finally, we offer personal coaching to facilitate the discussion, review and accountability for individual development plans. We work at each level of leadership development: those who manage themselves, those who manage others and those who manage managers. The client has three options: train — we equip a team to build a leadership development system; or consult — we collaborate alongside a team to supplement their efforts and expertise; or outsource — we do it all for a client.

What was the biggest obstacle you had to overcome? Wrestling with the strategy and planning process to clarify our target

and niche in the human resources/talent management arena. We decided to narrow our focus from the entire continuum of talent management to do what we can do best: develop leadership capacity. Then we had to select the best research-based assessment process to connect leadership development to strategic business outcomes and corporate culture.

What will tell you the business is successful? We look for these outcomes for each client, identified in the latest return-on-investment research for leadership development initiatives: 1) improve bottom-line financial performance, 2) attract and retain talent, 3) drive a performance culture and 4) increase organizational agility and talent mobility.

Interested in taking part in Open for Business? If your business is less than one year old, e-mail us at businessnews@pioneerpress.com.



Dick Daniels, right, greets Morsekode employee Brian Fisher at Morsekode offices. Daniels provided leadership consulting for Morsekode.

Researchers predict dire labor shortage within decade

By Al Lewis
Dow Jones Newswires

Imagine a not-too-distant future when millions of jobs go unfilled.

Instead of dozens of applicants for every job, there are dozens of jobs for every applicant. And one of the most frightening costs America faces is \$3 trillion in lost economic output because there just aren't enough workers to meet rising labor-market demands.

Welcome to the year 2018, as forecast by Barry Bluestone, dean of the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs at Northeastern University in Boston and Mark Melnik, Deputy Director for Research at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

Suddenly, the baby boomers are retiring en masse and there just aren't enough people to fill their desks. This cheery vision of roughly 5 million potential job vacancies is brought to you by the MetLife Foundation and Civic Ventures, a national think tank.

Bluestone and Melnik marshal plenty of demographic and economic data, as well as

compelling analysis, to support these predictions, but even they concede their findings are surprising.

"With nearly 10 percent of the American labor force unemployed and another 7 percent so discouraged by their job prospects ... it may come as something of a surprise that within less than a decade, the United States may face exactly the opposite problem," their study reads.

It's not the first time this sort of labor shortage has been predicted. In October 2003, the National Association of Manufacturers was touting research predicting a skilled worker gap that would grow to 5.3 million workers by 2010 and 14 million by 2020. The National Association of Software and Services Companies predicted a domestic labor shortfall in the U.S. of 5.6 million workers by 2010.

Despite all the jobs being shipped to India and China, the mighty influx of immigrant workers from all over the world and all the unprecedented productivity gains, the argument behind the Great Labor Shortage of 2010 was the same: The oldest boomers were 57 in 2003



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and would turn 64 in 2010.

Wharton business school professor Peter Cappelli swiftly debunked the 2010 labor shortage myth, noting that, "If productivity is growing at 4 percent a year, and the economy is growing at less than 4 percent a year, you actually need fewer workers each year."

But this time, it's different, Bluestone said in a phone interview.

"We're going to need millions of people working in the health care sector because this huge baby boom generation is entering the age when their health care expenditures are going to soar," he said. "They may not be buying as many cars and dishwashers and clothing or restaurant meals ... but the big difference is going to be the health care sector."

Aging baby boomers also will require more services from state and local governments, and their children and grandchildren will be flooding the schools, generating jobs in education.

History shows the recession won't last forever, Bluestone said, and when it ends, job growth inevitably will follow as it has followed past recessions.

Cappelli, however, said he stands by the analysis he offered me in 2003, and isn't surprised to see the labor shortage prediction resurface again: "People so want to believe this story that it just won't die."

Let's hope Capelli doesn't prove right once again.