

**An Action Research Study of the Relationship between
Leadership Development Programs and Financial
Performance of a Retail Business**

By

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We accept this thesis as conforming to the required Standard

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Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you did not do than by the ones you did. So cast off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbour, fill your sails with the wind. Explore, Dream, Discover. Mark Twain

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

1.1 Research Opportunity

Is there a relationship between leadership development and financial performance of a retail store?

Organisations today are recognising that in order to remain competitive in a rapidly changing environment, developing people as leaders is an essential strategy. Explicitly, it is understood at Shoppers Drug Mart that leadership is a dimension of store financial success. This is difficult to quantify however, as confounding variables such as location, and trademark complicate the relationship between leadership and profitability. In 1995, Shoppers Drug Mart determined that developing the leadership abilities of our Associates (pharmacist-owners) would result in increased profitability for our organisation. Beginning in 1997, Shoppers Drug Mart began investing in custom leadership programs to support this leadership development strategy. This study will examine the longer-term impact of these leadership programs on the participants. Were the anticipated consequences (increased profitability) accomplished? Were there other unanticipated consequences that we can learn from?

1.2 Scope of the Research Opportunity

1.2.1 ORGANISATION BACKGROUND

Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix is the largest drug retailer in Canada, operating 850 stores in Canada, generating system sales of over \$4 billion. Shoppers Drug Mart, Prairie Region consists of 120 stores located in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the North West Territories. In 1998, the Prairie Region contributed \$24 million in profitability to the Shoppers Drug Mart organisation.

Our corporation forecasts an aggressive expansion from 850 to 1000 stores over the next four years. In the Prairies, the growth plan is to expand from 120 to 200 locations in the next four years. The drug retail environment is a dynamic market, and our organisation must continue to change in order to hold our strong position within the industry. A corporate commitment to attracting, developing and retaining our storeowners (Associates) will be key to our success.

Although not a true franchise environment, each store is owned by an "Associate" pharmacist who operates his or her limited business under the Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix trademark. The Associate Concept has been maintained since the first Shoppers Drug Mart opened under the ownership of pharmacist, Murray Koffler. This unique arrangement provides pharmacists with the opportunity to own a business with no initial financial investment. In addition, Associate pharmacists receive a draw income regardless of whether the store is profitable, marginal, or in a loss position.

Shoppers Drug Mart's motto has been "Putting pharmacists into business for themselves, not by themselves" has been since Murray Koffler established the company 38 years ago.

Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix has transformed its operations in the last five years in order to maintain its competitive position within the drug retail industry. Project "Vision '97" changed the method in which the stores purchased, received, and maintained product inventory. Prior to "Vision '97", each store purchased inventory in exclusion, and maintained its inventory, and pricing systems manually. Due to this extensive transformation, all 850 stores now order product through three distribution centres located across Canada, maintain a perpetual inventory system, and utilise a centralised accounting system. The project "Vision '97" has lowered the costs of operations and improved productivity system wide, allowing the organisation to enjoy economies of scale previously unavailable to Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix.

Following the "Vision '97" restructuring, Shoppers Drug Mart embarked on another major change initiative called "Star Trek." Consulting firms were contracted to evaluate a number of areas of the business. Consumer segmentation and demographics, market share, recruitment and retention of pharmacists, refocus of our cosmetic business, and overall store experience for the consumer are all areas being considered within the Star Trek initiative. It is understood corporately that the Star Trek initiatives will radically alter our competitive position within the drug retail industry.

Our Associate's personal earnings are based on the financial return of their business to Shoppers Drug Mart. The return to the corporation, known as service fees, along with the Associate's income are determined at a meeting between office resources and Associate called the "projection process". Although human resources and operation issues are always discussed during this meeting, we are now spending more time discussing the Associate's leadership style in conjunction with the success of the business. Since the operational changes to our organisation in the early 1990s, we have turned our attention to the importance of leadership and culture within our retail establishments. A corporate commitment to leadership and culture development

is an essential contributor to what differentiates us from our competition. It also supports the heightened awareness and priority we place on people development as an organisation.

Prior to November 1999, Imasco Ltd. owned Shoppers Drug Mart. imasco Ltd. was also the owner of Imperial Tobacco, Canada Trust and Genstar Ltd. Since the writing of the original proposal for this project, British American Tobacco (BAT) purchased the remaining shares of Imasco Ltd. in order to secure its holdings of Imperial Tobacco. Interested in focusing on the tobacco industry, BAT divested of the Canada Trust arm, and placed Shoppers Drug Mart for sale in early July 1999. On November 23, 1999, BAT announced that Shoppers Drug Mart was purchased by an array of players, including Kohlberg Kravis Roberts (KKR), a leveraged buyout firm from New York. Other investors in the deal included the Ontario Teachers Association, and senior management from the Shoppers Drug Mart chain. The Shoppers Drug Mart chain was purchased for \$2.55 billion in cash. As part of this deal, the Shoppers Drug Mart Management Team and the Associates will be permitted to acquire between 10 and 15 percent of the equity in the organisation. Our Chief Executive Officer, David Bloom announced that this change would place the Shoppers Drug Mart chain in a position to make an initial public offering in 2 – 3 years. As Bloom states, “The prospect of having a high proportion of our employees motivated by a stake in ownership is very appealing.” (Shoppers Drug Mart Press Release: http://www.shoppersdrugmart.ca/eng/about_us/press_release76)

This strategy to take the organisation public in such a short period of time requires the commitment, dedication and leadership of the Associate body. The Shoppers Drug Mart deal closed in February 2000 with BAT acquiring the remaining 58 percent of stock it did not already own. As described in a press release at the at the time of the sale:

The characteristics of the SDM Management style – encouraging, entrepreneurship, eagerly accepting change and seeking new ways to revitalise the company – apparently struck a sympathetic chord with the prospective ownership group, particularly KKR, which has a reputation of inculcating those qualities in the companies it acquires.
(http://www.shoppersdrugmart.ca/eng/about_us/press_release76.html)

Under the new structure, Shoppers Drug Mart will be required to prove its viability as an independent national chain.

1.3 The Leadership Development Programs

In a business setting, ideas have little currency unless they can be meaningfully applied in a specific situation.
-Ulrich, D., 1999

1.3.1 GROWING PROFITABILITY THROUGH CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP (GPTCL) AND RETAIL POSITIONING THROUGH CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS (RPTCL)

In 1996, Shoppers Drug Mart contracted with Dr. Glenn Marshall, CLS (The Americas) Corp. to develop a number of programs to address culture and leadership issues at the store and corporate level. Dr. Marshall and his team designed a leadership and culture program reflective of the state of organisational change underway at Shoppers Drug Mart. The Prairie Region participated in “Growing Profitability through Culture and Leadership” (GPTCL) sessions in 1998.

The goal of the GPTCL program as outlined in the CLS (The Americas) Corp. proposal to Shoppers Drug Mart was to:

Generate an equivalent commitment to a culture of quality, service and responsiveness within each Associate's and Front Store Manager's area of responsibility, and an ability to deliver consistently high performance within the structure, procedures and processes for the heart of Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix successful model of retail management. (Marshall, 1997, Proposal, p.1)

Seven sessions (3 ½ days long) were held in the Prairies and participants included Office Management, Associates and Front Store Managers from the Prairie Region. A unique session was held for the office personnel although the District Co-ordinators attended with their region of stores.

Follow-up to this program occurred in 1999, with the "Retail Positioning through Culture and Leadership" (RPTCL). See Appendix A for a detailed breakdown of the main objectives of the RPTCL program. As Dr. Marshall (1998) identified in the proposal, the objectives of the RPTCL program were to:

Identify, assess, and maximise profit opportunity and develop the ability of Associates and Front Store Managers to maximise the benefits available from the effective use of the VISION and supporting culture to operationalize the Star Trek initiatives. (Marshall, 1998, Proposal, p.1)

Seven sessions (3 ½ days long) were held for all Associates, Front Store Managers and Office Management across the Prairie Region. The second program involved blended groups of office and store personnel. This provided a significant opportunity for cross-functional exposure to different facets of the business.

As Dr. Marshall's (1998) proposal explained, the program was intended to:

Focus on core competencies and self-development activities to meet both the common and unique needs of individuals working in this intrapreneurial, success-driven culture. (p.1)

See Appendix B for a breakdown of the structure of both the GPTCL and RPTCL programs.

Two significant tools were introduced in these sessions, the Life Styles Inventory Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and the Organisational Culture Inventory Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989). Both of these tools will be described in Section 2.2.1 Literature Review.

In the Prairies, 300 people attended each of the sessions bringing the combined participant attendance to 600 at the end of the RPTCL program.

1.4 Organisational Information Review

1.4.1 VALUES AND BELIEFS

In 1995, it was recognised that as an organisation we espouse certain values and beliefs that had not been articulated on paper. Our Chief Executive Officer, David Bloom created a team of Associates and Office Personnel to develop a set of values supported by the people of our organisation. As David Bloom (1998) stated in an internal document, "Vision RX into the Millennium", "Everything we do in pharmacy, as elsewhere in our organisation, must be guided by our values and beliefs." (p.1)

The Shoppers Drug Mart Values and Beliefs are:

- Associate Concept

The Associate Concept encourages entrepreneurship, a pride of ownership, a deep commitment to Pharmacy and a spirit of independence.

- People

People are our greatest resource and must be treated with equality, dignity and respect. We are committed to fostering growth and development.

- Teamwork

A Teamwork approach based on a participative style of management, trust and open communication. The success of our organisation is the responsibility of everyone.

- Integrity

Our operating principles must adhere to the highest code of integrity, must be ethically sound, understood and accepted by everyone.

- Embracing Change

We are willing to embrace change by remaining receptive to new ideas and approaches and by recognising the positive opportunities inherent in change. We will take full advantage of the opportunities change represents.

- Community

Shoppers Drug Mart must contribute to the betterment of society through leadership and health-related causes.

Our values and beliefs provide us with a framework for leadership in our company. The GPTCL and RPTCL programs emphasised the importance of values and beliefs as a foundation to the evolution of our organisation's culture

and financial sustainability. The values and beliefs also directly correlate to the norms and expectations of members of a constructive culture.

1.4.2 COMPOSITE STORE STATISTICS REPORTS

Composite Store Statistics reports are generated for each store in the company. These reports are compiled by period and include financial information for each department; pharmacy, cosmetics, and a breakdown by product category for front store. The reports indicate current sales, comparison to prior year and planned projection. Gross profit comparisons current and prior are also included.

The reports also include productivity measurements for each department tabulated by period. The hours used (current and prior) average wage rates, and sales per hour are included. This report is important, as productivity is one of the most significant performance measurements in our organisation.

Productivity is calculated for front store and cosmetics as total sales divided by total wage hours. Productivity is calculated differently for pharmacy due to the emphasis on patient-pharmacist relationships, and the high cost of some prescriptions. On average the stores achieve a 5.0 to 6.0 prescriptions per hour benchmark. Pharmacy productivity is also impacted by the Associate, who can displace up to 20 hours a week in the pharmacy.

The Composite Store Statistics report is one of many tools used by the Associates to analyse sales, margin and productivity trends in their stores. All of the individuals who participated in the one on one interviews were asked if they would consent to sharing their store information to support this project. The Composite Store Statistics report is also referenced by the focus group participants (Refer to Section 4.1 Study Findings).

1.5 Potential Impact of Opportunity

In order to sustain business growth, there is a great requirement for leadership at every level. Consequently, organisations are responding by creating custom leadership programs to meet their needs.

The Growing Profitability through Culture and Leadership (GPTCL) and Retail Positioning through Culture and Leadership (RPTCL) programs provided Shoppers Drug Mart with a forum to discuss and develop leadership. Only 40 participants attended each session to ensure maximum learning transfer. Evaluation of the programs was done through written feedback; a standard practice used to assess the degree to which participants are satisfied with a development program. Feedback from the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions indicated that the participants achieved a high degree of personal satisfaction with their learning from the programs. CLS (The Americas) Corp. was contracted to evaluate the programs at the closure of each session, however Shoppers Drug Mart has not evaluated the long-term impact of the programs six months and 1-½ years following the offering of the first sessions. As Kirkpatrick (1998) asked in his studies of evaluation of training, "What effect does the program have on measures that are important to the business?" (p.84) Few organisations undergo this type of evaluation because it is difficult to prove and hard to implement. However, most training and development people would agree that this type of evaluation ensures that there is a strong connection between the type of training delivered and its contribution to accomplishing organisational goals. This study will provide Shoppers Drug Mart, Prairie Region with the opportunity to reflect on the learning over the two years and substantiate both personal and organisational impact of the programs.

Organisations within the drug retail industry are increasingly challenged by a shortage of pharmacists. One of our essential human resource strategies is to

become the employer of choice offering opportunities that attract and retain pharmacists. Our company is challenged to recruit pharmacists interested in becoming Associates. This is a severe constraint as we struggle to reach our targeted expansion in both rural and urban centres. Continuing to build our existing leadership talent pool will assist us to minimise turnover of existing Associates. It will be an attractive incentive for pharmacists (internal and external) who are considering the role of Associate in their career paths.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Review of Organisation Documents

2.1.1 GROWING PROFITABILITY THROUGH CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP SUPPORTING LITERATURE

In August 1998, a follow-up summary of the GPTCL sessions (P. Mills, personal communication, August 20, 1998) was sent to the participants. This package included all group discussions from the seven sessions and clearly articulated the need for follow-up. The question of evaluation was posed during the sessions, "Do the short term and long term benefits of the program outweigh the costs to the stores?" Many of the performance indicators noted in the summary have been included in this project and will be measured during the study.

The summary indicated the need for management teams to "become more educated and trained (condensed program)" allowing for "broader infiltration of approach to every store level." Follow-up occurred with the creation of the "Leadership, Motivation and Change" (LMC) program. The objective of this program was to support the on-going evolution of leadership and culture within our organization. Unlike the GPTCL and RPTCL programs, internal training and development resources were certified to deliver this program. The two-day course was offered during 1999 to Cosmetic Managers and Management Teams across the Region. LMC will become a core program within the Management Development programs beginning in June 2000. The Associates and Front Store Managers also attended RPTCL as a follow-up to GPTCL in June 1999. The summary also indicated that the Associates were committed to assessing employee strengths and giving them more responsibilities to challenge them. Further, it emphasised the importance of decreasing staff turnover. Both of these

examples describe the link between leadership and profitability as described by the 300 participants. As the report describes:

Productivity as a people issue with the numbers as a guideline and not the only measure. This will lead to better customer service, better systems and procedures, and improved customer loyalty, increased sales and ultimately increased productivity.

The paper also detailed the need to “maintain momentum to improve the corporate culture.” The opportunity to evaluate change in culture occurred with a follow-up program in 1999. The participants indicated an interest in using the store OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) in combination with staff surveys to measure improvement in culture. In addition, the Associates indicated in their discussions that they would like to “review their hiring practices to ensure that prospective employees fit the OCI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) store profile.” This was further described by the Associate’s desire to “adopt OCI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) and profile to current and new staff (or potential staff)” as a means of matching people to the culture of the store. This integration to a group is widely discussed in the literature. Schein (1992) describes this as “creating a common language and conceptual categories.” (p. 70) He states that, “If members cannot communicate with and understand each other, a group is impossible by definition.” (p.70) In other words, the Associates planned to describe their store atmosphere by using the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989). Refer to Appendix D for a sample of the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989).

The need for a team approach to building the business was also discussed. Specifically, the Associates identified that they needed to “share store operational information with (the) entire store team and solicit their feedback in reaching store goals” as a leadership approach. In conjunction with teamwork, the Associates also indicated a need for increased coaching and mentoring within the stores, and from office personnel.

The summary also expressed frustration with role definition and expectations. At this point, Cosmetic Redirection had been introduced, however there was no substantive information on the strategy. As discussed in the following section, the second program, RPTCL focused on Cosmetic Redirection and assisted the Associates with planning to make the most of this strategy.

2.1.2 RETAIL POSITIONING THROUGH CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP SUPPORTING LITERATURE

The RPTCL session continued the learning from the previous year at the GPTCL session and provided the store and office personnel with an opportunity to discuss and plan the implementation of many of the Star Trek initiatives. Following RPTCL, each District Co-ordinator was responsible for summarising the meeting discussions and providing their region of stores with a specific report from a unique session. Seven reports were generated for the region. The reports documented tools, as well as discussion points that the Associates could use with their teams. This process differed from the GPTCL session summary which included all feedback from the 7 sessions. As indicated in Section 2.1.2, these performance indicators will also be measured within this study. Examples of these performance indicators were extracted from one District Coordinator's summary (M. Livojevic, District Coordinator, personal communication to Northern Alberta Associates, August 11, 1999).

Prior to attending the RPCL session, the Associates and Front Store Managers were asked to complete several questionnaires on program implementation. The data was tabulated according to a four-point scale and discussed at each session. The results from the cosmetic questionnaire indicated two areas of opportunity. For example, the question was asked, "Have cosmetic cycle counts been re-directed to front store responsibilities?" The average for this question was 2.4 indicating that the Associates and Front Store Managers felt this was

happening “to a minor extent.” The second question was, “Has cosmetic replenishment merchandising and labelling been redirected to front store responsibilities?” The response average for this question was 2.56 indicating that the Associates and Front Store Managers felt this was happening closer “to a moderate extent.” Consistently, all groups noted that it was important to “meet with all staff involved (merchandisers, cosmeticians) to discuss roadblocks, attitudes, comfort zones, etc. and also discuss the reasons and needs for task redirection and potential benefits”. The results of this project indicate improvement following the RPTCL sessions (Refer to Section 4.1 Study Findings).

2.2 Review of Supporting Literature

The five areas of research that supported this project are:

- Leadership - Life Styles Inventory
- Leadership Development
- Organisational Culture - Organisational Culture Inventory
- Organisational Performance
- Training Program Evaluation

These five domains were chosen to expand my knowledge of the fundamentals of this project, leadership, organisational culture and organisational performance. Within the leadership domain, I researched the Life Styles Inventory (LSI) developed by Lafferty and Cooke (1973) to gain a further understanding of the validity of the tool for measuring leadership thinking styles in relation to organisational culture. An understanding of the literature available on the issue of leadership development was also considered important. It confirmed my understanding that organisations in all industries are emphasising the importance of developing people’s leading skills as a strategy for reaching company objectives. Organisational culture, specifically the Organisational Culture

Inventory (OCI) referred to as the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) was explored to examine the validity of the tool for quantitatively measuring the culture of a company. Special attention was paid to the link between the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) and organisational performance. Organisational performance was researched to evaluate other writer's findings of the elusive relationship between financial profitability, leadership and culture. Finally, researching the literature on training program evaluation provided a framework for my project, and broadened my understanding of the challenges linking training to organisational performance. Each area will be explored to show its connection and impact to this project.

2.2.1 LEADERSHIP - LIFE STYLES INVENTORY

Leaders also regularly involve people in deciding how to achieve the organisation's vision (or the part most relevant to a particular individual).
-John Kotter, 1992

There have been many writers through history who have tried to define leadership, each offering a new technique or explanation for the real definition of leading. Quotes from some of the authors of the last fifteen years include:

- "Managerial Leadership is not learned; managerial leadership is learning" (Vaill, 1996)
- "Good leadership moves people in a direction that is genuinely in their real long-term best interests" (Kotter, 1988)
- "Leaders model the way through personal example and dedicated execution" (Kouzes and Posner, 1995)
- "Leadership – the creation and management of culture" (Schein, 1992)

- “Leadership is all about taking the risks necessary to positively affect the work lives of others and move the organisation forward” (Fairhurst and Sarr, 1996)
- “Leaders’ attention focused on both what to accomplish (results) and how to accomplish it (attributes).” (Ulrich, et al., 1999)

Each of these quotes attempts to articulate the language of leadership. Perhaps it is because of the elusive definition that organisations face the crisis of a leadership shortage today. Shoppers Drug Mart recognises that the development of all of our Associates is necessary to create a community of leaders who are committed to, and adept at leading change. The concept of leadership is essential to organisational growth. We know that leadership is an in-depth topic, those who study it critically analyse whether it can be defined. Despite this, businesses can present indicators of leadership that are supported organisationally. Employees can then use these indicators as benchmarks for developing their personal leadership style. The GPTCL and RPTCL sessions introduced our Associates to the Life Style Inventory (LSI) (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973), including self-analysis, referred to as the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and others referred to as the LSI 360 Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) perceptions of an individual’s leadership style. The LSI, developed by psychologist J. Clayton Lafferty and Robert A. Cooke (1973) is a statistically valid tool that identifies 12 interconnected thinking patterns that reflect 3 leadership styles. The LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) is graphed as a circumplex, with the twelve thinking styles incorporated into the circumplex in a clockwise fashion.

Further, the twelve thinking patterns are captured in three leadership styles known as:

- Constructive Style (11 o’clock to 2 o’clock position)
- Passive-Defensive Style (3 o’clock to 6 o’clock position)
- Aggressive-Defensive Style (7o’clock to 10 o’clock position)

Higher scores in constructive styles and lower scores in defensive style are generally considered more effective. People who possess this style are frequently more successful in relationships, managing conflict, and job performance. Refer to Appendix One for an example of a LSI and LSI 360 Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973). Constructive style then, could be described as a facilitative approach involving both people and goal-oriented behaviours in the achievement of organisational strategy. Bass (1990) described a comparative style as “transformational leadership” and suggested that:

Superior leadership performance – transformational leadership – occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their self-interest for the good of the group. (p.21)

The introduction to constructive indicators of leadership provided our Associates with meaningful feedback on the impact of their leadership style on store performance. As described by Marshall (1998), a primary goal of the RPTCL program was to:

Develop the ability of the Associates and Front Store Managers to maximise the benefits available from effective use of the VISION and supporting culture to operationalize the Star Trek initiatives. (1998, Proposal)

It is acknowledged by the Shoppers Drug Mart organisation that our success in major strategic initiatives comes from our Associate’s ability to lead change within the store. Kotter and Heskett (1992) found that “firms with consistently good economic performance over time tended to possess core values that emphasised the importance of an adaptive culture” (p.20). One of Shoppers Drug Mart’s core values and beliefs is “embracing change.” Change is considered an opportunity in our organisation, and our Associates play an essential role in modelling this leadership behaviour. The RPTCL program provided the opportunity for our Associates to explore the changes suggested by the Star Trek findings and make sense of the impact of these changes to their

businesses. The program also confirmed for the participants how important their leadership style was to their employee's ability to manage the change. As Schein (1992) reports, "The identity that the organisation has built up and that has been the source of its success must now be preserved, even if that means ultimate failure to adapt successfully to a changing environment" (p.300). This quote relates specifically to the change initiatives facing Shoppers Drug Mart today. Our Associates face a formidable task of understanding and articulating organisational change to their staff while dealing with long-standing cultural beliefs held by many employees. By discussing the Star Trek initiatives through the framework of values and beliefs the Associates reported more enthusiasm about the changes forecasted, and a greater understanding of the actions they could take to lead these changes.

The literature also describes the need for leaders to possess vision and to challenge strategies that no longer fit the needs of the organisation. During the Vision '97 process, we saw many Associates and Front Store Managers struggle with the challenges associated with role changes.

As Kotter (1999) describes leaders must be "broad based strategic thinkers who are willing to take risks." (p.55) This is also important to Shoppers Drug Mart because we have typically focused on operational planning instead of strategic thinking. Our one-year planning process does not provide the Associates with an opportunity to vision for their business. The GPTCL and RPTCL programs introduced our Associates to the concept of strategic thinking as a fundamental skill in leading change within their businesses. Porter (1996) describes the same complexity of strategic thinking in his article "What is Strategy?" He states that:

Managers at lower levels lack the perspective and the confidence to maintain a strategy. There will be constant pressures to compromise, relax trade-offs, and emulate rivals. One of the leader's jobs is to teach others in the organisation about strategy – and to say no. (p.77)

The Star Trek project identified our target consumers, and in doing so identified our legitimate competitors. There is little discussion within our strategies of “emulating rivals” as described by Porter (1996). Instead, we spend a great deal of time learning from competitors or comparative organisations to ensure we achieve high levels of success in the implementation of programs. In the last five years, there has been an increased focus on consistency in program implementation, and a heightened concern about dilution of corporate strategy at the regional and store level.

Schein (1992) confirms a leader’s role in creation, and implementation of new strategy through six critical steps:

1. To perceive accurately and in-depth what is happening in the environment.
2. To create enough disconfirming information to motivate the organisation to change without creating too much anxiety.
3. To provide psychological safety by either creating a process of vision of how to change and in what direction or by creating a process of visioning that allows the organisation itself to find a path.
4. To acknowledge uncertainty.
5. To embrace errors in the learning process as inevitable and desirable.
6. To manage all phases of the change process, including especially the management of anxiety as some cultural assumptions are given up and new learning begins. (p.383)

In my interpretation, corporate strategy within Shoppers Drug Mart is created through this process and constructive leadership plays a role in the success or failure of any change strategy. Leaders at all levels of our organisation are responsible for these steps, however our Associates’ leadership in change initiatives increases the probability of achieving and exceeding our store level goals.

It is also clear from the literature that a significant relationship exists between leadership style and corporate culture. The definition of constructive leadership is closely linked to this statement. Constructive leadership is a tangible approach

to leading people. It is a style that emphasises the importance of people and task in the achievement of organisational goals. As Juechter and Fisher (1998) state:

Leaders who are not afraid to confront the messy business of their human systems will engage people's issues, needs and concerns. Such leaders will be the architects of enduring organisational cultures characterised by resilience, responsiveness, and high performance. (p.71)

Shoppers Drug Mart has proven its success in the retail environment based on marketing programs and trade location. These two contributors, along with many other initiatives, are directly related to a certain level of profitability. However, it is our Associate's leadership style that helps us reach our full capability. As Kelly (1999) defines, capability is "future potential" (p.75). Future potential is created in our stores through the strength of the Associate's leadership style and the expectations he or she sets for the store staff. The studies reviewed for this research project indicated that companies that emphasise leadership and employee involvement also achieve greater organisational performance.

Although the definition of leadership is multi-faceted, the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) captures many of the definitions of leadership in the current literature today. I suggested in my project proposal that the language the Associates would use to describe leadership impact would be in LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) context, and this was prevalent in the research. As an organisation, we have established a clear framework of leadership indicators that people are utilising for their development. For a detailed description of the LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) styles, refer to Appendix C.

2.2.2 Leadership Development

*The toughest problem for learning leaders here is to come to terms with their own lack of expertise and wisdom.
- Edgar Schein (1992)*

Leadership development has evolved over the last twenty years. Today, there is greater corporate understanding of the necessity to differentiate between management and leadership development. Once used interchangeably in training and development departments, now there is a distinct understanding of the nuances of both. As McGill (1998) states:

Leaders who act as coaches, stewards, servants, or partners are seen as dramatically different from the leaders of old who used the power of their position and/or their persona to exert their influence. (p.3).

Organisations today must recognise leadership development as a competitive strategy. Not only does leadership development ensure that people are prepared to move into more senior roles as they come available, it also ensures the growth and revitalisation of both the individual and the organisation. At Shoppers Drug Mart, leadership development is an investment in the long-term success of our Associates and our business. Organisations that seriously consider the link between leadership and organisational performance are quick to recognise that leadership development does not include only a small group of leaders, but instead a network of leaders who will assist the organisation to grow. Stan Davis (1996) describes this corporate responsibility for learning in an interview with Educom Review called "Slicing the Learning Pie":

Business will emerge as the major educating institution because the overall educational pie is growing, employee learning is becoming very big and consumer learning will become very big later on. The student segment, instead of being 100 percent of the whole, will be a much smaller percentage of a much bigger whole as we shift to a lifetime learning model. (p.1)

We cannot rely entirely on the academic education system to sustain individuals development throughout their career. This is especially critical to the leadership shortage faced by organisations today. Shoppers Drug Mart has recognised that in order to recruit and retain Associates, we need to invest in their continued development. In order to become an Associate, individuals must be licensed pharmacists, and must complete the Associate Development Program (management training). The technical skills learned at a pharmacy school are useful for the role of pharmacist. However, little time is spent on developing management skills, and much less is spent in discussion of leadership. Our internal Associate development program focuses on basic management skills (behavioural based hiring, performance management, and interpersonal communication) however minimal time is spent on development of leadership ability once the pharmacist has become an Associate. As an employer dedicated to people development, Shoppers Drug Mart has recognised its responsibility in creating learning opportunities for people to further develop their leadership skills through forums like GPTCL and RPTCL.

Shoppers Drug Mart's commitment to developing leaders is essential. As described by Prem Benimadhu (Benimadhu, 1999, Conference Board of Canada Website) in a report for the Conference Board of Canada, "A recent Conference Board of Canada study indicates that only 5 percent of organisations consider their overall leadership capacity to be excellent." Further, Benimadhu (1999) goes on to state that "the success of Canadian organisations' growth strategy is contingent on their success in improving their leadership capacity. Thus, it is imperative to remove the barriers to leadership development." Our commitment to the GTCL and RPTCL programs shows our understanding of the importance of leadership development in the successful implementation of business strategy.

Adding to the Canadian statistics on the importance of leadership development, The National HRD 1997 Executive Survey on Leadership Development, completed by the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) on

2000 top executives around the world shows that leadership development has continued an upward trend. As detailed in the ASTD document, “Of the respondents to the survey, 84 percent said that their organisations offered formal leadership development opportunities in 1997, up from 80 percent in 1996.” Respondents to the survey stated that the most essential attributes that leaders should develop were “vision, integrity, competence, and trustworthiness.” (http://www.astd.org/virtual_community/research/nhrd_executive_survey_98ld) The survey also indicated that the most important skills leaders could develop were “communication skills, interpersonal skills, strategic planning skills and change management skills.” (http://www.astd.org/virtual_community/research/nhrd_executive_survey_98ld)

This data is supportive of Shoppers Drug Mart’s vision of constructive style leadership as indicated by the “Life Styles Inventory” (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973). Constructive leadership is descriptive of those who approach conflict directly, possess a strong goal orientation, and support coaching and development of others.

As described earlier, the GPTCL and RPTCL programs exposed the Associates to a 360-degree process defining their leadership style according to 12 thinking styles. This process was intended to increase our Associate’s awareness of how their style impacts others. As Argyris (1994) describes, often leaders struggle with “the blindness phenomena.” (p.273) According to Argyris (1994), a study of 28 executives indicated that “although they were clear about the mechanistic processes in their lives, they tended to be blind to their own impact on others and to other interpersonal processes.” (p.273) The 360-degree process introduced in the GPTCL and RPTCL programs exposed our Associates to the significance of comparing their perceptions of self to that of others as an essential component of leadership development. The importance of intent and perception comparisons has been discussed in the literature as early as the 1950s. The “Johari Window” (Ingham, Luft, 1955) validates the importance of increasing one’s “public arena”

(Ingham, Luft, 1955) through exposure and soliciting feedback from others. As Kouzes and Posner (1995) describe exemplary leadership is a result of “personal searching” (p.339). They go on to state that, “The believability and credibility so essential for leadership are earned when your behaviour is consistent with your beliefs.” (p.340) In other words, leadership development provides the individual with an opportunity to examine how their thoughts are translated into action, and determine how these actions impact on the environment around them.

The programs also provided the participants with an opportunity to work in a team atmosphere on Shoppers Drug Mart case studies. These case studies were comprised of decision sheets with points weighted from most desirable to least desirable answer. They were designed specifically around business initiatives currently underway at the organisation. Team performance was tabulated following the debrief of each decision sheet. The teams had an opportunity to compare their group scores to individual scores. As many teams discovered, they performed significantly better as a group when they used the skills and experience that each member contributed to the team.

As Kotter (1999) states “successful corporations don’t wait for leaders to come along. They actively seek out people with leadership potential and expose them to career experiences designed to develop their potential.” (p.51) This is important to Shoppers Drug Mart as we determine year to year whether to invest in continued professional development for our Associate community. By developing our Associate’s leadership potential, we are contributing to our envisioned corporate culture that is supportive of training, coaching and mentoring individuals. It also highlights the importance of follow-up to ensure that the development programs are utilised and become the norm for how Associates consider the issues and challenges facing their stores. As Kotter and Heskett (1992) describe, “The task of leadership is really to make the status quo more dangerous than launching into the unknown.” (p.116) This statement

becomes increasingly important as Shoppers Drug Mart faces change under new ownership. In the past, if the organisation failed to meet its profitability obligations to Imasco Ltd., the affiliated companies of Canada Trust and Imperial Tobacco could be relied upon to assist with obligations to the shareholders. The new business structure will require the organisation to insistently pursue its strategies to meet its performance obligations.

2.2.3 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE - ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE INVENTORY

Leaders, in contrast, create and modify cultures. Culture creation, culture evolution, and culture management are what ultimately define leadership.
-Edgar Schein (1992)

Culture emerges from the interaction of people, as individuals impact and influence the environment in which they work. What is expected and rewarded by the leader often defines culture. In our organisation, this definition is seen in the cultures and sub-cultures of our stores. Typically, there is a direct correlation between the style of the Associate and the culture of his or her store. Further, as Schein (1999) describes, "Organisational culture in particular matters because cultural elements determine strategy, goals and modes of operating." (p.14) This quote indicates the importance of culture to bottom-line profitability, discussed in detail under Section 2.2.4 "Organisational Performance."

The Organisational Culture Inventory (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) is comprised of the same terms detailed in Lafferty's (1973) Life Styles Inventory. Developed by Cooke and Lafferty (1989) this quantitative research method examines culture according to 12 sub-scales. There are 120 items in the questionnaire; each is rated on a 5-point likert scale. Different from the Life Styles Inventory (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973), the Organisational Culture Inventory (Lafferty and Cooke,

1989) describes behavioural norms or the way people should behave within an Organisation, as opposed to leadership thinking styles. The tool describes a task-people differentiation as well as three different environments. As Xenikou (1996) describes, the “OCI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) focus on behaviours that facilitate fitting in to the organisation and meeting expectations of co-workers.” (p.352) The OCI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) tool was used within the GPTCL and RPTCL on two levels. First, participants were asked to distribute the tool to their staff members to describe the environments in which they work. Some employees described the culture of the store, some described sub-cultures of the store (i.e. cosmetics, front store, and pharmacy). Second, the participants were asked to describe their vision of ideal culture. Over the last four years, over 400 teams participating in the leadership and culture exercises have described ideal culture. Each time, teams described the ideal environment at Shoppers Drug Mart as constructive culture. Through this exercise we were able to gather aggregate data regarding current and envisioned culture within our stores. This gap analysis provides meaningful data to support continued work on leadership development and culture evolution. Further, comparison of the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) from the GPTCL (1998) and RPTCL (1999) programs proved there had been a positive growth in the description of constructive culture in the Prairie Region. Refer to Appendix B for a copy of the aggregate 1998 OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) for retail stores in the Prairie Region.

Gibbons (1992) discusses the influence leadership has on culture in his paper, “Impacts of Organisational Evolution on Leadership Roles and Behaviours“. Gibbons quotes several behavioral scientists within his writing, including Griffin, an influential writer of the 1970s. Griffin comments are of particular value to this project:

Achievement-oriented leadership is required for success in the ongoing direction of the enterprise. The leader articulates challenging goals and continuously sees improvements in performance. (p.10)

This statement is important to Shoppers Drug Mart because it confirms the impact of a constructive leadership approach. The constructive leader is committed to linking organisational goals to the personal goals of the employees and understands that this connection confirms the employee's role in the success of the organisation. The leader then, is instrumental in the construct of a performance-oriented culture where people are involved in deciding how to meet the organisation's vision, and have a personal connection to the parts that are most relevant to them. People who work within a constructive culture recognise that they contribute to the success of the store. To further substantiate the value of a people-task approach to organisational performance, Schuster and Morden (1996) describes a 1988 study completed by Hansen and Wernerfelt that proved:

Two organisational factors: (a) emphasis on the management of human resources and (b) emphasis on goal accomplishment and determined that these organisational factors were significant determinants of firm performance. (p.210)

A performance culture is lead by individuals who understand that achievement stems from involving people in the goals and vision of the organisation. An alignment of personal and organisational objectives means that people have a personal stake in the success of the enterprise. The literature supports David Bloom's vision of the importance of associate and employee ownership in fulfilling the obligations of leading a public company.

2.2.4 ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Since culture is believed to improve performance and effectiveness, and effectiveness and performance are related to organisational development, it is therefore speculated that culture is also related to organisational lifecycle.

-Yash P. Gupta, David C.W. Chin (1994)

There is limited research to support the connection between organisational culture and financial performance of an organisation. However, Kotter and Heskett (1992) established in their study that organisational culture has a profound effect on a firm's long-term sustainability and economic performance.

They also make an important statement about the type of culture that will sustain continued growth:

In the firms with more adaptive cultures, the cultural ideal is that managers throughout the hierarchy should provide leadership to initiate change in strategies and tactics whenever necessary to satisfy the legitimate interests of not just stockholders, or customers, or employees, but all three. (p. 50)

Kotter and Heskett (1992) describe successful organisations as those that can adapt quickly to change because leaders at all levels understand that growth of the organisation is important to all stakeholders in the organisation. This ownership and responsibility is especially critical to our organisation as we continue to evolve within the drug retail marketplace.

Larry Griener (1998) speaks in his article, "Revolutions as Organisations Grow" on the impact of growth as a correlate to size and age of the organisation. Griener (1998) described crisis points at each stage within an organisation's growth. These crisis points are "periods of revolution because they typically exhibit a serious upheaval of management practices." (p.56) This is important for

Shoppers Drug Mart for two reasons. First, the organisation as a whole is evolving, but each of our stores is at a different point in the lifecycle. Second, our Associates have a responsibility to move their stores through the lifecycle, but may not have the skills required at each unique stage, or crisis point. Crisis points in Shoppers Drug Mart could include changes in community demographics and competitive market penetration. However, crises points could also arise from ineffective management of business strategy or employee relations. In other words, crisis points could be externally or internally driven. It is the Associate's focus on creating a dynamic atmosphere where employees can deal proactively with these crisis points that ensures the business is not impacted negatively by operational challenges. This supports the positive relationship between constructive culture and economic performance.

Interpretation of the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) indicates that certain thinking styles may be required at different points in the lifecycle of the organisation to deal with these crisis points effectively. The findings of this project will assist us to ensure that our Associates have the appropriate skills to manage crisis points in their businesses at the different stages of performance growth. I would suggest this equation describes financially successful organisations:

$$\text{Leadership} + \text{Culture} = \text{Organisational Performance}$$

If constructive leadership is absent, or negative sub-cultures exist within the store, organisational performance will be negatively impacted. If constructive leadership is in place it will strengthen the culture co-efficient positively impacting organisational performance. This equation will be discussed further in Section 4.2 Research Conclusions.

The literature on organisational performance provides a variety of definitions of bottom-line results. Descriptors like employee commitment, decreased turnover,

decreased absenteeism, and improved efficiency are often used. In other words, success and performance are defined as differently as leadership is in the literature. Kelly and Allison (1999) define performance as “the history of actual results achieved by an individual or group following a committed course of actions/interactions.” (p.75) For the purposes of this research project, organisational performance will be defined as any leadership contributions that influence current and future financial bottom-line.

In a study done between 1977 and 1988, Kotter and Heskett (1992) illustrate that companies who manage their culture effectively report substantial differences in their long-term results in comparison with that did not.

	Average for Twelve Firms with Performance-Enhancing Cultures (%)	Average for Twenty Firms without Performance – Enhancing Cultures (%)
Revenue Growth	682	166
Employment Growth	282	36
Stock Price Growth	901	74
Tax Base (Net Income) Growth	756	1

Exhibit 6.4, John P. Kotter & James L. Heskett (1992), *Corporate Culture and Performance*. p. 78.

Shoppers Drug Mart could potentially chart similar comparisons on stores within the organisation. Prior to the seminars, we had not discussed leadership and culture in the same context as financial performance. Participants in the programs quickly understood that the decisions they made as a team had a direct correlation to their performance. They also recognised the impact of team performance in comparison to individual performance within their businesses. In addition, the GPTCL and RPTCL programs provided a forum to analyse and compare changes in culture over a two-year period. As reported by Juechter and Fisher (1998):

All the change in the world won't provide sustainable performance unless an organisation's culture and people are fully prepared and aligned to support that change. Culture is what distinguishes truly high-performing organisations from the pack. (p.64)

This poses a great responsibility for our Associates. Do their stores support high-performance norms that will assist the people within them to deal with the on-going changes associated with Star-Trek, and now the change in ownership of the organisation? As defined by the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989), constructive culture is an environment where people's actions are collaborative and purposeful. Employees live by high standards that emphasise both people and task. Individuals who do not support the values and beliefs of the majority do not survive long in this environment. Kotter and Heskett's (1992) chart identifies the impact of culture on organisational growth. It identifies clearly what members of our organisation hypothesise today. In stores where leadership and culture are managed, the Associate reaches and exceeds his or her performance quotas. This is the leadership potential of the store, moving beyond the financial benefits such as prime trading location and marketing programs.

2.2.5 Training Program Evaluation

Learning: Changes a person makes in himself or herself that increase the know-why and/or the know-what and/or the know-how the person possesses with respect to a given subject.
- Peter Vaill, 1996

The purpose of evaluating training and development programs is to measure the impact of the training on participants and to ensure that the program met the needs of the participants and the organisation. Kirkpatrick (1998) referred to this through four levels of evaluation. These are:

- Level 1 – Reaction
- Level 2 – Learning
- Level 3 – Behaviour
- Level 4 – Results (p.19)

This study will focus primarily on level 3 and level 4 evaluation as a means of measuring behaviour change and performance. Level 1 and level 2 however, cannot be ignored. Level 1 was determined by feedback given immediately following the program. Level 2 is important to consider in this study because as states, “If we measure behaviour change (level 3) and not learning and if we found no change in behaviour, the likely conclusion is that no learning took place.” (p. 39) Further, if there is no change in behaviour, then results will not be impacted. It is important to evaluate at all levels to determine the true impact of the program. Kirkpatrick’s (1998) model was modified to meet the specific evaluative needs of this project (see Section 3.1.1 Data Gathering Tools).

Kirkpatrick (1998) described level 1 evaluation as “how those who participate in the program react to it.” (p.19) Following the GPTCL and RPTCL programs, CLS (The Americas) Corp. asked the participants to complete a written evaluation of their experiences. Participants rated these programs very favourably. As Kirkpatrick (1998) explained, it is not only important to get a reaction from participants leaving a program, it is also important to receive a favourable reaction. He stated that, “Positive reaction may not ensure learning, but negative reaction almost certainly reduces the possibility of its occurring.” (p.20) Level 2 evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 1998) examines learning. Learning takes place if “attitudes are changed. Knowledge is increased. Skill is improved.” (p.20) Evaluation of the GPTCL and RPTCL program included anecdotal comments such as “I have a greater understanding of how the Star Trek initiatives impact my business”, and “I understand now the actions I must take to make Star Trek a reality in my store based on what I learned.” These anecdotal comments were confirmed through the research methodology.

Discussions with the participants as indicated in the research methodology were used to measure the degree to which behaviours changed following the program (Kirkpatrick 1998), and the degree to which the program impacted the financial performance of the participant's stores (Kirkpatrick, 1998). Kirkpatrick (1998) described level 3 evaluation as "change in behaviour has occurred because the participants attended the training program." (p.20) The GPTCL and RPTCL program included the use of action plans and coaching sessions as a method to increase the probability that behaviour change would occur. Overall, the effectiveness of the coaching sessions as a means of encouraging behaviour change was discussed favourably by study participants.

The final level 4 focused on results. This study occurred approximately six months following the RPTCL program and 1-1/2 years following the GPTCL program. We did not plan for a specific increase in sales, or productivity because of the program. For that reason, level 4 results were measured by examining the participant's opinion of how they have used the program to influence the financial performance of their locations. Kirkpatrick (1998) describes a case study evaluating St. Luke's Hospital training program in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. One of the organisational outcomes they discovered linked level 3 and level 4 evaluation, "increased efficiency and teamwork improved employee satisfaction with their job, which consequently decreases turnover." (page 212) Determining the link between level 3 and level 4 will reveal the practical actions taken by our Associates to improve their businesses. Another example of training being linked to reduced turnover and ultimately to profitability was found in The Corporate Leadership Council (1996), "Companies Approaches to Training Evaluation" study (retrieved from <http://www.clc.executiveboard.com>, July 21, 1999). The Council interviewed training specialists at seven North American corporations. Findings included that a "cost benefit analysis presents training programs as preventative measures that contribute to long-term personnel cost reduction." (p.7) These types of organisational benefits are an important evaluative

measurement. This study examined what our Associates changed in their leadership style following the GPTCL and RPTCL programs that has impacted the financial outcomes of their businesses.

2.2.2 POTENTIAL OUTCOMES OF THE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

The results of this study will provide support for the continued evolution of constructive leadership and constructive culture within the Shoppers Drug Mart, Prairie Region. The data collected will also provide office personnel with general information that they can share with other stores on leadership actions taken by Associates to impact the financial performance of their stores. How can Associates use the skills learned from the GPTCL and RPTCL programs to effect change on their business? Finally, the results of the study will offer practical improvements to the training evaluative process to ensure a measurable return on the training investment.

CHAPTER 3 CONDUCT OF RESEARCH STUDY

Human capital investment will happen only when we offer management a realistic way to quantify how training contributes to the bottomline.
-Gordon (1999)

3.1 Research Design

This research project was conducted primarily using qualitative methodology. Palys (1997) describes this form of inquiry as “research methods characterised by an inductive perspective, a belief that theory should be grounded in the day-to-day realities of the people being studied.” (p.423) In order to gain a thorough understanding of the research participant’s experience, multiple sources for data collection and analysis were used including one-on-one interviews, a focus group, and a survey. Action research, a form of qualitative study, was the main format used to conduct this study. Action research is “an umbrella term for the deliberate use of any kind of a plan, act, review cycle for inquiry into action in a field of practice” (Tripp, 1996, http://www.parnet.org/PARchive/docs/tripp_96). Dickens and Watkins (1999) state that the two goals of action research are “to involve and to improve” and “foster learning about one’s self and one’s environment.” Action research differs from traditional research forms. As Stringer (1996) describes, action research is a “disciplined inquiry (research) which seeks focused efforts to improve the quality of people’s organisational, community and family lives.” (p.9) Further, the project was completed from an appreciative inquiry perspective. While traditional research is often problem based, or focused on proving a theory, appreciative inquiry offers a look at what works within an organisation. As Sue Annis Hammond (1998) describes, “The tangible result of the inquiry process is a series of statements that describe

where the organisation wants to be, based on high moments of where they have been.” (p.7) Hammond describe the four steps of appreciative inquiry as:

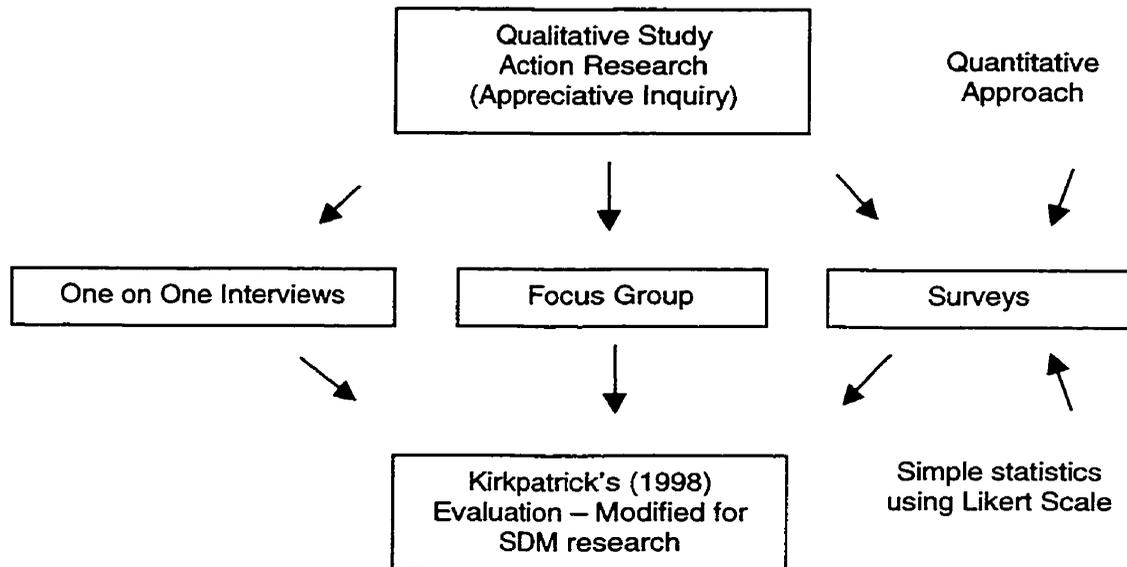
1. Appreciating and valuing the best of what is
2. Envisioning what might be
3. Dialoguing what should be
4. Innovating what will be (p.24)

The process of appreciative inquiry worked well because we knew anecdotally from the participants that the GPTCL and RPTCL programs were considered personally impactful. What we did not know is how the programs had impacted our Associate’s leadership behaviours, or their business results from a financial perspective.

Secondary to the qualitative approach, quantitative methods were used within the survey methodology to understand response trends. As described in Section 3.1.1 Data Tools, the 3-part survey included a section of questions that were analysed according to a 5-point likert scale. The data was tabulated using simple statistics; mean, median and standard deviation were calculated.

This chart summarises the numerous methodologies used to determine the relationship between leadership development and financial performance of a retail store.

Table 3.1



3.1.1 DATA GATHERING TOOLS

As mentioned above, there were three formats of data gathering within the study. One-on-one intensive interviews, a focus group, and a survey were used to ensure as complete a picture as possible. This provided a “life history approach” (Kirby and McKenna, 1989) to the study. As Kirby and McKenna (1989) describe, this form of qualitative research is useful for:

Drawing as complete a picture as possible using an individual’s own history. Then comments of others that have some perspective on the data are brought into account. (p.81)

A “life history approach” (Kirby and McKenna, 1989) was defined in the project proposal as how the Associates used their experience at the GPTCL and RPTCL programs to impact on their business.

Following the interviews, our District Co-ordinators were asked in a focus group about changes in Associate's behaviours they might have attributed to improved store results. A survey of the entire Associate population was the final step in the data collection process.

One-on-one interviews and focus group participants were informed that they were part of a research project designed to evaluate, from an appreciative perspective, the relationship between the GPTCL and RPTCL programs and financial performance of their store. Participation in the survey was used to indicate "informed consent." Participants in all three methodologies were also informed that a final report would be presented to the organisation sponsor, Cliff Proceviat. This report would detail general themes found through the research and recommendations for further leadership development interventions. All names and store specifics were removed from the data to ensure participant confidentiality. All participants were asked to sign a release form that acknowledged they were willing research participants and that they authorised the researcher to utilise the collected data in support of the research project. If requested by the sponsor, a presentation may be made to the Prairie Executive on the findings from the research. The confidentiality of the participants will be protected in the presentation. All interviews, focus group and survey data was coded according to Kirkpatrick's (1998) model of evaluation.

However, for purposes of the project, the model was modified as follows:

Table 3.2

Level	Kirkpatrick's (1998) definition	Kirkpatrick's (1998) model modified for SDM
One	Reaction	Satisfaction of participants following GPTCL/RPTCL session
Two	Learning	Skills Learned/Knowledge gained at GPTCL/RPTCL sessions
Three	Behaviour	Behaviour change as a result of the GPTCL/RPTCL sessions
Four	Results	Impact of programs on store profitability
Other		Leadership behaviours that cannot be attributed directly to GPTCL/RPTCL but have impacted the business

3.1.1.1 INTERVIEWS

The first step in the research process involved nine Associates in one on one discussions about their personal experiences at GPTCL/RPTCL and what they believed has been their most significant growing since completing the GPTCL and RPTCL programs. What worked within the programs? Did the programs alter the Associate's definition of leadership? Did the programs alter the Associate's measurement of success? An intensive interview process worked most effectively at this point. As described by Kirby and McKenna (1989):

The interviewer has a general understanding of the research topic and asks highly detailed, individualistic, exploratory questions that will vary somewhat with each research participant. (p.74)

Each Associate had a different perspective on the impact of the GPTCL and RPTCL programs. It was important to explore their personal experiences without

trying to fit their responses into a completely structured interview process. General questions were asked to create the forum for discussion, but the discussion was determined more by the intent of the participants. Each interview was different because like the definition of leadership, how our Associates define meaning from their experience, and how they have used their experiences to impact their business, was unique.

Participants were told to “ask back” (Kirby, McKenna, 1989, p.122) during the interview process. As Kirby and McKenna (1989) state, “Asking back is where participants have opportunities throughout the data gathering to make enquiries about the research and/or the researcher.” (p.122) The process of selecting Associates to contribute to the data was done by “purposeful sampling” (Crewel, 1989, p.64). Purposeful sampling is simply selecting participants who meet certain study criteria. The chosen Associates had unique styles, led different types of businesses, and had a wide range of experience and skill. All of them have expressed anecdotally their satisfaction with the GPTCL/RPTCL programs.

All of the one-on-one interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. The data was then coded according the modified version of Kirkpatrick’s (1998) evaluation model (See Section 3.1.1 Data Gathering Tools). A reflection journal was used to record my thoughts immediately following the interviews and the focus group. I was interested in reflecting upon questions that worked or should have be omitted, as well as other comments made informally following the data gathering exercise. The reflection journal was also used to capture new questions that came up and should be included in future interviews. Further, I utilised the journal to recall thoughts as I analysed the data. I also commented on what I had learned, and would do differently if I could do the project again.

3.1.1.2 FOCUS GROUPS

A 1-½ hour focus group was held with the District Co-ordinators from the Prairie Region to confirm and expand upon general themes found in the one-on-one interviews. Our District Co-ordinators represent each of the five markets in the Prairie Region. Each District Co-ordinator acts as an internal consultant to approximately 20 stores. This working relationship makes them excellent observers of both behaviour change and operational impact of the GPTCL and RPTCL programs. The focus group was teleconferenced, due to the geographic locations of our District Co-ordinators. Further, the conversation was audiotaped, transcribed and coded according to the modified version of Kirkpatrick's (1998) model (Refer to Section 3.1.1 Data Gathering Tools).

3.1.1.3 SURVEYS

Following the focus group, a survey was distributed to the Associate population (n=103) across the Prairie Region. The survey took into account general themes revealed in the one-on-one interviews and the focus group. As leadership development is a personal exercise, the survey was designed to gather responses to 18 specific questions utilising a likert scale for statistical evaluation, as well as 2 long-answer questions to allow the Associate to articulate his or her personal learning. Response to the surveys indicated informed consent. The surveys also included demographic information related to Associate tenure and store age to gain a better understanding of how Associates use leadership development at different points in their career, and at different points in the organisational lifecycle. The surveys were coded in sequential order as they were received. The long-answer data was coded according to the modified

version of Kirkpatrick's (1998) model (Refer to Section 3.1.1 Data Gathering Tools).

3.2 Study Conduct

3.2.1 INTERVIEWS

Nine Associates were selected from across the prairie region to participate in the one on one interviews. Each of the nine Associates had expressed interest in post-program activities to support their learning, including sharing their perspectives on the programs. The Associates represented different levels of tenure as well as store maturity (Refer to table 3.2). Each Associate signed an informed consent form, and understood that their information would be used in a general theme format only. The participants also submitted a copy of their LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) to support the interview transcript. All of the Associates participating were perceived to possess a constructive leadership style. The Associates permitted me to use any information in their store operations files as well as their comparative store statistics. Each interview was 1 ½ - 2 hours in length. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed.

Table 3.2

Tenure of Associate	Number of Associates who participated
0-3 years experience	3
3 – 7 years experience	3
7 – 10 years experience	2
10 years experience	1

Eight of the nine Associates who participated in the interview process had attended both the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions.

Table 3.3

Age of Store	Number of Stores participating in interviews
0-3 years open (infancy)	1
3 – 7 years open (growth)	2
7 + years open (maintenance)	6

These categories were selected for a few reasons. First, the Shoppers Drug Mart stores typically are not profitable in the first three years they are open. As indicated in Section 1.2.1 Organisation Background, the Prairie Region is forecasted to open 80 more locations in the next four years. Consequently, it was important to include participants who owned stores at this stage of the lifecycle. Second, stores are often renovated during the growth stage and maintenance stage creating change within the location. Finally, the Associates were asked if their store was an acquisition? and if so, when did the acquisition occur? Acquisitions pose unique culture challenges, as the leaders must diagnose the culture of the acquired company, and determine the assumptions held by the acquired group to manage sub-cultures that may emerge. An awareness of cultural differences is essential to ensure the growth of the new and existing businesses, the bottomline goal of any acquisition venture.

A set of seven questions were asked consistently during the interviews, however in accordance with “appreciative inquiry” (Hammond, 1998) each interview also included several other questions based on the history provided by the Associate. During the second interview I changed question three which read, “How have the GPTLC and RPTLC sessions changed your definition of success?” to “How have the GPTLC and RPTLC sessions changed or enhanced your definition of success?” This change acknowledged that many of the Associates participating in the study were successful as leaders previous to the programs. I also added an eighth question to the interview process, “What is your vision for your business?” to determine if the Associates had five and ten year strategic plans for their businesses. One Associate was uncomfortable with the tape-recording

process and preferred to answer the questions through email. Although this was a qualitative study, it was helpful to do a count of the number of times particular dimensions were mentioned to determine how representative the results were for the whole sample.

3.2.2 FOCUS GROUP

A focus group was held with the six District Co-ordinators representing the three Prairie Provinces. Unfortunately, while the project was underway, one of the District Co-ordinators representing Northern Saskatchewan left the company. The other six District Co-ordinators each took responsibility for two stores in the Northern Saskatchewan market, and attempted to add examples from this market to support our discussion. They retained responsibility for these stores until a new District Co-ordinator was hired in late January 2000. The focus group centred on four essential questions (Refer to Appendix F). From an appreciative standpoint, I asked more questions to clarify particular points brought forward by the participants. The focus group was audiotaped and transcribed. The data was coded according to the modified version of Kirkpatrick's (1998) model (see Section 3.1.1 Data Gathering Tools).

3.2.3 SURVEY

The survey consisted of three parts (Refer to Appendix G for a copy of the survey):

- Demographic Information
- Current Opinion
- Reflections on the GPTLC and RPTLC sessions

Part one, demographic information included:

- Tenure of the Associate
- Gender of the Associate
- Age of the store
- Was the store an acquisition?
- Program attendance
- Leadership style prior to training
- Opinion on current style

Part two of the survey consisted of eighteen questions regarding leadership, leadership development, culture and store performance. The questions were based on a five-point likert scale, and were written to represent behaviours or results articulated in the LSI constructive style (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973). The survey represented current opinion of the impact of training six months and 1-½ years following the GPTLC and RPTLC sessions. Although this was a qualitative study, the likert scale was helpful because it indicated the degree to which an Associate was utilising the skills and information presented at the conferences. The likert-scale was helpful for analysing trends across the entire sample.

Part three of the survey included two qualitative questions measuring the personal impact of the leadership development programs. To ensure consistency, the collected data was coded according to the modified Kirkpatrick (1998) model as described in Section 3.1.1 Data Gathering Tools. A count was done of the number of times the Associate group described different learning, behaviour changes, or impact on the business. Again, this was helpful in determining how representative the answers were for the entire participant sample.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH STUDY RESULTS

*Kirkpatrick's four levels represent a hierarchy of perceived difficulty; that is, the higher the level, the harder its supposed to be to measure success. But the four levels also represent increasingly direct relationships to bottom line – which, after all, is the point of training in a corporate setting.
- Malcom (1998)*

4.1 Study Findings

4.1.1 INTERVIEWS

4.1.1.1 Level Two Evaluation - Skills Learned/Knowledge Gained

The participants reacted positively to the program and felt that their personal learning was meaningful. In six of the nine interviews, the Associates commented that the one-on-one coaching sessions were significant in action planning for behaviour change. In four of nine interviews, the participants described suggestions provided by the CLS counsellor that were used back at the store for problem solving. Transfer of learning was evident in these interviews.

Three of nine Associates reported that the program confirmed their personal definition of leadership and provided a forum to evolve their skills. In another case, the Associate described a personal definition of leadership as “a result of those sessions.”

Eight of the nine Associates who participated in the interviews commented that the most significant learning came from comparing their LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) self profile to that of the LSI 360 (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) 360-degree

profile. As one participant described, “I think what I probably was most interested about was not so much how I saw myself, but how others saw me.” These comments confirm the importance of measuring intent and action in leadership attributes. In all of the interviews the Associates commented that the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) was a meaningful tool because it affirmed what they already thought they were achieving, and provided them with a measurement of the areas they could improve.

4.1.1.2 Level Three Evaluation – Behavioural Change

Coding the data revealed two different levels of behaviour change. During the conference, and post-program. As mentioned above, eight of the nine Associates felt that the one on one coaching meetings had assisted them with action planning for behaviour change, and all the Associates described behaviour change in terms of the LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) language using words such as “constructive”, “oppositional”, “approval seeking”, humanistic/encouraging”. As one Associate described:

GPTLC showed me the things I already had, and how to...well encouraged me to continue doing what I am doing and be less...it defined some of the things I do and gave me a map to change things.

Another Associate spoke of directly confronting team members during the RPTCL session about the team’s performance. The participant commented that this was a new approach to addressing issues with peers, and had felt good about doing so. Further, an Associate commented on a team-mate’s risk taking during the session. This individual had not been a confident public speaker, however made an effort to be involved in presentations back to the plenary group. In both cases, these behaviours confirmed the importance of security and inclusion in a constructive team. Though a temporary culture, these teams formed an atmosphere of trust where participants could develop their confidence and take risks assisting with behaviour change. As one participant said,

“That really showed me that if you believe in someone and encourage him or her along the way, what a difference that can make.”

Four participants commented that they had more confidence in their leadership abilities post-program. As one Associate described, “I was almost too democratic before. I would say I am going to do this, is it ok with you? Or take a vote on everything. I realized after the course that it is not the most productive style for me.” New Associates (of less than three years) also described increased confidence in their survey responses (Refer to Section 4.1.3.3.2).

Three Associates described specific changes in their LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) profiles from one year to the next. One Associate described action planning with a CLS coach in the first year to develop the “oppositional” piece within his profile. This individual focused on asking more questions to ensure understanding of the staff’s intent. The Associate stated that this effort had shown in the LSI 360 (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) profile during RPTCL. In other words, this person had changed some personal leadership behaviours, and the staff noticed. A second Associate described being less available to staff between year one and year two due to staffing shortages in the pharmacy. This subtle change in leadership style was confirmed in this person’s LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and the store OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989). As the participant said, “They weren’t feeling connected as the year before. I felt disconnected as well.” Both participants were not surprised with the results of their profile in year two, but commented on the accuracy of the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) tools. In addition, two of the ten Associates with less than three years tenure described style change from “mostly passive” to “constructive” or a “combination of constructive and passive” (Refer to Section 4.1.3.3.2).

Five of the Associates described challenges in relationships with others. All five participants found the programs helpful in developing new strategies to work with these individuals. Each of the participants also recognised that the challenges were a result of differences in style. As one Associate described:

Basically I took what I learned at the first session and said this employee has a lot of strengths, lets encourage those strengths and deal with any shortfalls differently. So what I did was, in any kind of performance review I let my employee do the talking. What are your weaknesses? What are your strengths? And we did a comparison. The employee pointed it out, recognized personal strengths and weaknesses. It became less confrontational and more constructive. Because this person was the one who did it.

Further, two of the five participants described using the LSI Influence cards (Pellow and Lafferty, 1988) as a means of doing quick assessments to determine the best approach with challenging individuals. This was also confirmed by focus group participants who said that the LSI Influence cards (Pellow and Lafferty, 1988) were used frequently in store to assist with performance improvement (Refer to Section 4.2.1.2). The LSI Influence cards (Pellow and Lafferty, 1988) are a tool that individuals can use to gain sensitivity to different leadership styles, and then use this information to improve relationships. The individual chooses cards to describe the person's behaviour style, types the person according to the three lifestyle descriptions or combinations, and then selects key actions he or she could take to improve the working relationship.

Consistently, the Associates revealed that the one-on-one coaching meetings held at both the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions had a profound effect on reinforcing, or assisting with employee behaviour change. Two of the five participants described changing their approach using the agreed action steps discussed in the one-on-one coaching meetings. As one participant reported, "I think learning the different styles demonstrated to me that you can, how critical it is, to recognize different behaviors and how important it is to be able to take proactive steps to correct a very destructive style."

Five of the participants commented on the notion of empowerment. As Helgesen (1995) describes, “Redefining the role of those on the front lines, transferring authority to the perimeter – this is the real meaning of that ubiquitous buzzword empowerment.” (p. 126). All of the Associates agreed that delegating decision making to their Management Team and Staff had assisted with creative approaches to business building. As one Associate reported,

Whereas before, I was thinking this is how we are going to do it. I changed my view to say, after the conference, to say you know what? Everyone had to take an active role.

Decision-making and empowerment were also significant themes in the survey data (Refer to Section 4.1.2.1 Level Three Evaluation – Behavior Change).

4.1.1.3 Level Four Evaluation – Impact on Store Profitability

Level four evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 1998) was the most difficult to assess from the interviews. The Associates described “getting more things done” however only two of the nine participants could describe specific measures they believed directly impacted the financial performance of their businesses. As Kirkpatrick (1998) describes, level four evaluation focuses on results “all the final results that occurred because of the training are measured at this level” (p.88). Only one of nine Associates could link change in behaviour to results. However, all nine could link change in behaviour to team performance and morale. All nine Associates expressed that concern for their employees was critical to the financial success of their businesses. Thus, in all cases, the Associates understood the impact of their leadership style on the culture of their store and they understood that the culture of their store was directly linked to store performance and customer satisfaction. The significant themes described in the interviews were:

- Improved communication between team members.
- Sharing information about store financials with members of Management and staff.
- Delegating responsibilities to build a team of leaders who feel a personal connection to store success.

As one Associate described,

It doesn't take a lot to improve the profit of your business if your staff are constantly thinking about ways to improve the business because they think that what they are doing means something.

This statement describes a general theme throughout the study; all of the Associates described their responsibility in creating an atmosphere where employee involvement was valued.

Shoppers Drug Mart has been in a constant state of change for the last several years. However, corporate change is accepted at variable levels throughout the organisation. Three of the 9 Associates described successfully implementing Cosmetic Redirection because of the discussions and action planning at the RPTCL session. This was confirmed in the survey data (Refer to Section 4.1.3.3.3) as well as the focus group (Refer to Section 4.1.2.3). Prior to RPTCL, Cosmetic Redirection had been implemented at varying degrees throughout the Prairie region. Change within an organisation is often complicated by past beliefs that provide a feeling of safety and security to its members. In order for strategic change to be successful, members must be able to substitute old values and expectations with new ones, a process that often takes time. As Schein (1992) describes, "One essential component of this feeling of safety is that we finally see a way to work on the problem or see a direction of learning that we had not seen before." (p.301) The RPTCL program assisted the Associates to understand the benefits of the new strategy. One participant described placing a greater emphasis on cosmetic sales following the RPTCL session. The store's

Comparative Store Statistics indicated that in the months immediately following the program, the store saw double digit increases in cosmetic sales over the prior year. Specifically, this location had a 15.5 percent change in cosmetic sales over prior statistics in the month of December. As the Associate described, "I think the staff would probably say to do with Cosmetic Redirection. They knew it was a priority when we came back." This Associate also described the Management Team and staff's commitment and understanding of the significance of this strategy:

It's a priority, if you can't get to the Distribution Center order because you have to receive a cosmetic order, so be it. The merchandisers at night can get to that tote. And the Front Store Manager is behind it too. 100 percent.

The interviews also confirmed that the Associates valued the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) as a means of measuring their store culture. As one survey respondent reported, "I was very excited about my store profile, because that gave me a good indication that how people viewed the store environment was really good." Another participant described sharing the store OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) with staff following the first GPTCL session, and then following the RPTLC session. This person reported, "I think they took some pride in the fact that we are more constructive, and we have seen some progress from one year to next." In this particular location, the Associate has taken a strong leadership position in influencing the assumptions of his team. Culture change has occurred as a result of the focus on leadership and team development. The staff is comfortable with the LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) language because of the emphasis this Associate has placed on developing constructive culture. This participant reported, "They are talking the lingo too, even some of the people who haven't been in the seminars and the sessions". This participant also noted a specific example that he believes to be the result of the focus on culture development:

We were responding to line-ups in the front. And what we ended up having was a group of people saying 'ok, lets hear some ideas on the best way we can come up to deal with those line-ups better.' And someone would stand up and say 'lets talk about the barriers, let's be honest with ourselves.' Talked about the barriers. And then someone else says 'you know what, to be honest with you, I am just freaked out about being on cash when there is a big line-up' and another staff member would get up and say, 'well you know what, that was a very brave thing you just said, cause you know what, I feel the same way. Let's talk about how we can get around these barriers and move forward.' That is a small example. But its part of the culture. There aren't any wows now. It's just how things happen.

This participant articulates Schein's (1992) description that, "to function as a group, the individuals who come together must establish a system of communication and a language that permits interpretation of what is going on." (p.71) Culture change can only occur when the leaders and followers within an organization use the same language in describing the organization.

4.1.2 FOCUS GROUP

The focus group included 6 District Co-ordinators representing 5 markets in the Prairie Region. The goal of the focus group was to confirm general themes from the one on one interviews, and to gain a consultant's perspective on the impact of the programs. The participants could clearly articulate how their Associates used their leadership style to impact their store teams through excellent communication, setting standards and follow through, and visible presence in the business. These key areas describe the constructive leadership style as depicted by the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973). These comments also confirmed the data collected from the one-on-one interviews. Level two evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 1998) was not done within this methodology. However, the focus group participants presented specific examples that attributed level three behaviour change (Kirkpatrick, 1998) to level two from the GPTCL and

RPTCL sessions. These examples will be discussed in Section 4.1.2.1 Level Three Evaluation – Behaviour Change.

4.1.2.1 Level Three Evaluation – Behaviour Change

The focus group participants described behaviour change they had noticed in their respective Associates post-program. However, as one participant commented:

Unless you are constantly focused on it. Not to say that they don't want to make the change. Just like in our case, there are things we want to change but when you get bogged down with something, your old habits, your old personality starts to come out.

Two of the participants also believed that behaviour change was a process that did not happen immediately. As one participant commented, "That's a process. It's not something that you do one day and boom you have the results. It takes some time."

Despite these comments, the participants were able to provide specific examples of behaviour change that they had seen with their groups. Three of the participants commented on changes they had seen in approaches to dealing with difficult people. As one participant described:

The Associate definitely learned how to look at a person, and say these are your strengths, these are your weaknesses, and this is why. And the Associate did specifically refer to the stuff, this person hauled out the case book and some of the performance standards did come from that.

The ability to dealing with conflict directly was also widely discussed throughout the interviews and survey data. The participants also agreed that the LSI Influence cards (Pellow and Lafferty, 1988) were used by the Associates to manage performance issues with staff.

The focus group participants also indicated that the Associate group had been impacted by the importance of employee focused leadership. Specifically, they described an increased focus on meetings as a means of improving communication as well as involving employees in decision making. As one participant noted:

The Associate has enjoyed doing the (staff) meetings more because there has been more feedback. Definitely (attribute to GPTLC and RPTLC) because this person wasn't even aware of that type of behaviour or way of talking before.

This further confirms the widely held value of teamwork. One participant described an Associate who had changed perspectives on business building, and was involving the store management team in more of the decisions that impacted the business. As this participant reported, "Better decisions are made by the team, versus alone." The participant confirmed that this Associate would attribute this behaviour change to the GPTCL session.

4.1.2.3 Level Four Evaluation – Impact on Store Profitability

The participants had more difficulty articulating the impact of leadership on their store profitability. As one participant described, "I would say there is a link to systems and morale. Sales is a difficult one." Impact was often described through comparison of "good leadership" and "poor leadership." All District Co-ordinators recognised that leases and marketing programs had a significant impact on profitability, but believed that leadership was essential for the stores to reach their financial potential. One store was described as having the "ideal" culture, refer to Appendix D for a copy of the Prairies ideal OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989). The District Co-ordinator made a direct link between ideal culture and the Associates leadership style. The District Co-ordinators believed that this store was a good example of a location reaching its profit potential through leadership. They also described this store as meeting its

productivity goals, and managing low turnover, both essential variables in bottom-line results.

The focus group also revealed the importance of leadership during crisis points in the store. Participants described crisis points as dealing with difficult personalities, store renovations, and competition moving into the trading area. They confirmed that constructive style leadership was essential for managing these points in the store's life cycle. As one participant described, "One of few stores I have ever seen go through a major renovation and basically not lose any sales." This participant attributed the management of this change to leadership, "The Associate was very proactive and I think that type of leadership with a team and getting everybody involved works wonders morale wise."

The participants also confirmed that there was a greater focus on Cosmetic Redirection following the RPTCL session. As one participant described, "People just really took hold of replenishment ordering or finally doing cycle counts in cosmetics...I saw a lot more focus on it as a result of that." As described in the survey results, the program contributed to a greater emphasis on incorporating this strategy in store. One participant reported, "The good communicators put the plan in place and then it was easy for them to go to their Cosmetic Managers and FSMs and say well, what is our plan now?"

The participants described strategic risk taking as an important leadership attribute. The group could not confirm that this was a direct result of the GPTLC and RPTLC sessions, however felt that the program helped the Associates build their confidence in taking calculated risk within their business. They also believed that the Associates would consult with them more not to ask for permission, but to work collaboratively on such strategy. For example, in the Autumn of 1999, Eaton's closed many of its locations. Some of the Associates acted upon these closures by hiring cosmetic staff from these locations despite the fact that their wage budgets would not accommodate additional full time

hires. They believed that the addition of these people would positively impact their cosmetic sales. As described above, Cosmetic Redirection and an emphasis on relationship selling was discussed at RPTCL. The stores that hired Eaton's staff saw double digit increases in their sales over last year. Composite store statistics indicate that one such store reported a 36.4 percent increase from prior December sales. This indicates the increased focus on selling within the cosmetic departments during a month that is historically strong in cosmetic sales.

4.1.3 SURVEY

The study survey was sent to all Associates in the Prairie Region. The goal of the survey was to confirm general themes found in the one-on-one interviews and focus group, and determine trends in responses. The data from the survey was analysed two ways. First, the demographics and likert-scale was used to analyse widely held opinion through the sample population. Second, this information was analysed according to the modified version of Kirkpatrick's (1998) evaluation model (Refer to Appendix G for a copy of the survey).

4.1.3.1 Survey Part One - Demographic analysis

Part one of the survey consisted of demographic questions. The data was aggregated and analysed to determine if there was a correlation between demographic trends and survey responses.

1. The survey methodology yielded a 44 percent participation rate. Forty of the participants had attended both the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions. Three had attended the RPTCL session only. One had attended GPTCL only. One Associate did not disclose. Of the 45 participants, 49 percent reported their dominant leadership styles as "mostly constructive" identified before the program.

The survey results also indicate that 52 percent of Associates described their current style as “mostly constructive” indicating behaviour change.

Table 4.1

Participant tenure	Number of Participants in Survey
Less than three years	10
Three to Seven years	14
Seven to Ten years	4
More than ten years	17

1. Of the ten respondents with less than three years tenure, 60 percent described themselves as “mostly constructive” before and after training. A change in style was indicated by 30 percent of the respondents.
2. Of the 14 respondents with three to seven years experience, 50 percent described themselves as “mostly constructive” before and after training. Twenty percent of the Associates reported style change from assertive and passive to a combination of Constructive/Passive and Constructive/Aggressive.
3. Four participants were Associates for seven to ten years. One reported a constructive style prior to program and current. One reported a Constructive/Aggressive style prior and current. Two reported change in their style.
4. Of the 17 participants who reported tenure of more than ten years, 42 percent described their dominant leadership style as “mostly constructive” prior to the program. Within this group, 47 percent described their dominant style post program to be “mostly constructive.” Six described a combination of Constructive/Passive prior to the program. One reported Constructive

Aggressive prior to and current style. Style change was reported by 18 percent of the respondents.

5. The data sample included 11 female Associates and 34 male Associates. Within the female population, 6 participants reported constructive styles before the training, and current style. Three (27 percent) reported style changes from pre-training to current state. Within the male population, 15 indicated constructive styles before and current style. Eight (24 percent) reported style changes.

4.1.3.2 Survey Part Two - Current Opinion

Part two of the survey consisted of 18 questions that were answered according to a 5-point likert scale. Each question was analysed to determine the most common recurring response and the range of agreement within the sample on a particular answer.

Table 4.2

Question	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
1	4.2	4	0.68
2	4.2	4	0.60
3	4.2	4	0.77
4	4.6	5	0.59
5	4.6	5	0.49
6	4.6	5	0.49
7	4.5	5	0.59
8	3.8	4	0.90
9	4.0	4	0.78
10	3.6	4	0.81
11	4.2	4	0.49
12	4.4	4	0.71
13	4.1	4	0.69
14	4.3	4	1.08
15	3.1	3	1.24
16	4.5	5	0.63
17	4.6	5	0.54
18	4.1	4	0.87

1. The data for Question 15 “I refer to our store Organisational Culture Inventory when describing the atmosphere of our store to new employees indicates a variation in the way the Associates used the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) to describe expectations and cultural norms to new staff. As described under Section 2.1.1 GPTCL Supporting Documents, the Associates had discussed a plan to “Adopt OCI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) and profile to current and new staff (or potential staff)” (p.25) as a means of matching people to the culture of the store. However only 43 percent of the respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they were doing this in their stores currently.

2. Question 8 “I ensure that all of my employees are aware of the financial performance of their department and the overall store.” Results indicate a variation in information sharing from store to store, with 60 percent of respondents indicating that they “agree” or “strongly agreed” with this question. Results also indicate that 36 percent of respondents “neither agreed or disagreed” with this question. This is further supported by question 10, “I ensure that employees set personal goals linked to department and store objectives on a yearly basis”, 51 percent of respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with this statement. Both of these questions are directly linked to expectations set within the store. Both questions evaluated the performance indicators outlined in Section 2.1 Supporting Documents following the GPTCL session.

3. Question 4 “I view my Management Team as mentors and coaches for our part-time and full-time staff” and question 5 “I consider people development to be a key responsibility of my Management Team” focus on the humanistic/encouraging component of the constructive profile. These statements depict the expectations and norms described in a constructive culture that values people development. These questions also support one of our Values and Beliefs “People Development.” The results indicate that 96 percent of respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with this statement. The high response rate on these questions validates the high number of “constructive”

Associates who participated in the study. Further, as described in the next section, many of the Associates described a change in focus within the culture of Shoppers Drug Mart, moving from a task focus to a people focus, understanding that our human resources were essential to our success.

4. Question 14 “I understand the impact of my leadership style on employee turnover in our store.” Results indicate that there is reasonable agreement and understanding that leadership has a direct relationship to store turnover. However, there was no data in the long answer portion of the survey to indicate that turnover had been reduced as a result of this program.

5. Question 16 a mean score of 4.5 and a median score of 5 described “I recognise that my leadership style directly impacts the financial performance of my store.” Standard deviation was .63 indicating some variation in agreement. However, question 17 was rated slightly higher “I recognise that the culture of my store directly impacts the financial performance of my store” with a mean score of 4.6 and a median score of 5, standard deviation of .55. This indicates a slightly higher agreement amongst the participant sample. It is also supportive of the interviews and focus group information that indicated the Associates have an understanding of the impact of their style on the atmosphere of the store, but have slightly more difficulty attributing their leadership style to profitability.

4.1.3.3 Part Three - Reflections on GPTCL and RPTCL sessions

The Associates applied their learning in a variety of personal and business ways, and all recognised the importance of leadership as a means to build their businesses. Of the 45 surveys returned, 5 Associates did not comment on question two supporting the difficulty participants have in articulating the value of the program to the financial success of their businesses.

4.1.3.3.1 Level Two Evaluation – Skills learned/Knowledge gained from Programs

The survey respondents confirmed that the most impactful learning was how they viewed themselves as compared to how others viewed them. The survey revealed that 35 percent of the respondents believed this feedback was meaningful and important for behaviour change. This data confirmed the interview results (Refer to Section 4.1.1.2. Interviews). It also confirmed the widely held understanding that leadership intent is not necessarily always conveyed in action, and that there may be a gap between leadership intentions and employee perception. As one participant indicated:

To realize that the way others perceive you is not necessarily the same as how you feel you are projecting yourself. Then to figure out why there is a difference and work on narrowing the gap. It helps you to be the person you want to be or to better project the real you that is not coming across.

The data also indicated that 25 percent of the Associates understood the impact of teamwork better as a result of the program. This data is further supported with specific examples of employee involvement in Section 4.1.3.3.2 - Behaviour Change and Section 4.1.3.3.3 – Impact on Store Profitability. One respondent commented on greater understanding of “Vision/Mission Statements/Values & Beliefs how important these are to setting the stage for profitability” as a result of the program. Another commented that the most significant learning was “How my attitude and leadership style can affect positively/negatively store culture thus the financial aspect of the store.” Both of these comments indicate a heightened awareness of the impact of leadership on the business.

4.1.3.3.2 Level Three Evaluation – Behaviour Change

The participants discussed their learning in terms of changes they made in their style frequently in the survey data. Many of the respondents indicated that they had gained more confidence in their style because of the program. As a result,

they were dealing with communication issues and conflict situations more effectively. One respondent reported, "I have become more confident in constructive criticism. As a result my team works together much better than we used to." This information confirms the comments made by interview and focus group participants. The survey results indicated that 50 percent of the participants recognised how changing their style had impacted their teams. Another Associate reported that the programs:

Gave me more confidence in taking a more aggressive approach with all my staff in giving staff more information and responsibility, to encourage staff to reach their full potential as a team with a common goal.

The notion of teamwork is also discussed in Section 4.1.3.3.3 Level Four Evaluation – Impact on Store Profitability. However, this is a good example of the type of behaviour change described and supported by other studies on leadership behaviours and culture:

It is not the defining of a personality or culture that will benefit my store but the progressive growth areas that the Associate and FSM can identify from themselves and the store that will enhance profitability as well as a better feeling within the store itself.

Kotter and Heskett's (1992) studies of performance culture indicated that:

In almost all cases, the leaders became living embodiments of the cultures they desired. The values and practices they wanted infused in their firms were usually on display in their daily behaviour: in the questions they asked at meetings, in how they spent their time, in the decisions they made. (p.96)

Kotter and Heskett describe what our Associates have come to recognise; their words and goals are only credible if their actions are observable. One respondent commented that morale had improved by, "using my personal style (changing it) to optimize the group outcome." Another participant noted that:

Personally, my growth came through identifying areas of my leadership qualities and acting upon these areas. Learning from mistakes and taking them as growing steps (i.e. Better planning, follow-up schedules, etc.)

The surveys indicated that the program succeeded in influencing behavior change for many Associates, and this behavior change has translated into substantial gains for their businesses.

4.1.3.3.3 Level Four Evaluation – Impact on Store Profitability

As described above, the most widely held belief in the survey results was the value the participants placed on teamwork. As one participant described:

Since my experience at GPTLC and RPTLC I have been working on improving our team attitude. Having more Management Team meetings to share info and ideas and really working on helping merchandising, Rx, P.O. work as teams to accomplish their tasks. It is not always easy but it is a challenge I think is worth working on.

Ten participants indicated that they were involving staff in more decisions because of the program. The Associates did not indicate the direct financial impact of changing their leadership approach, however, they did describe improved systems and procedures as a direct result. As one Associate noted:

We try to involve the members of the team responsible for a particular problem or area that needs improvement, to come up with solutions or ideas. It works much better when the staff has come up with the ideas & solutions are they are motivated to carry them out.

The literature on organizational performance supports the link between teamwork and organizational performance. One such statement that validates the participant's learning is Schuster et al. (1997):

For some organisations, significantly improved organisation performance can be achieved through the participation and contribution of employees in problem-solving and decision-making processes. (p.227)

As one participant reported:

I changed the format of staff meetings. Allows for more communications from employees. Facilitator of meeting rather than the leader of meeting. Many issues have been resolved at this time rather than being escalated to crisis situations.

The emphasis on improving communication was a major goal following the GPTCL sessions (Refer to Section 2.1.1 Growing Profitability through Culture and Leadership, Supporting Literature) and confirms the focus group and interview data. Another respondent reported the importance of a culture that will:

Allow freedom for employees to learn by their mistakes, set some of their own goals. This has resulted in many committed loyal employees which translates to good customer service, and return shopping visits. Although the respondent did not directly attribute this to the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions, this belief was widely held through out the sample population as supported by this quote:

Our financial results continue to show good strides in profitability over the past 3 years and I think that a lot of that success is attributable to the environment we try to create in our store.

As Ulrich et al. (1999) articulates:

Leaders interested in investing, leveraging, and expanding their human capital should spend time raising standards, setting high expectations and demanding more from their employees. (p80)

This statement supports both the interview research findings and the “ideal” culture as described by the SDM teams in 1998 (see Appendix C for ideal SDM culture). It is further supported by the focus group results where the participants described constructive leaders as those who communicate frequently with staff, hold high expectations and follow up on results. High expectations and support from the Associates contributes to a high performance culture that supports profit potential. This is meaningful from a staff perspective, as employees have a clear understanding of their role within the store. It also provides for feedback and

follow-up on decisions, and responsibilities as Schuster et. all (1997) confirm in their study:

Organizational performance can be significantly enhanced through the participation and contribution of employees in problem-solving and decision-making processes. (p. 1)

As one participant explained:

The single biggest thing I learned was the value of allowing employees to self-actualize their own goals, and allow them to work towards those goals with support and encouragement. This is the biggest motivator of people, and is the greatest asset to the business. This has certainly helped me to improve my staff productivity, and the impact on my business has been positive.

This Associate made the connection between constructive leadership and performance. Another Associate described the most impactful learning as “the difference between constructive and passive when backing off aggressiveness.” One respondent noted that, “Since acquiring this store, which previously was managed in a completely aggressive manner, profitability has increased by 60 percent in one year.” Although these participants did not state that the increase was a direct result of the program, these findings are significant because these participants have identified the link between leadership style and profitability. As one respondent reported, “Leadership styles really do affect outcome.”

4.2 Study Conclusions

The research suggests that there is a relationship between the leadership development programs and financial profitability of the retail stores. However, it indicates a more definitive relationship between the impact of constructive leadership on culture and consequently, financial performance. The data also indicates that the leadership programs had a significant impact on stores where the Associates shared their learning with their staff. According to Kirkpatrick’s

(1998) model, level two learning was validated in the data as participants reacted positively to the program and felt that their personal learning was significant. As suggested previously, all participants described leadership and the leadership programs using the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) vocabulary.

Level three evaluation was also confirmed through the Associates' description of better communication, improved store morale, and greater attention to systems and procedures as a result of the programs. In particular, the Associates described genuine attention to employees as a method of impacting the business positively. Ulrich, Zenger and Smallwood (1999) state that "culture provides a key link between a company and an employee's motivation to do their best work." (p.72) Consistently, the interviews, surveys and focus groups proved that the Associates linked staff morale to store profitability. This directly related to improved customer service, and more attention to expense control and inventory control as described by the Associates, indicating level four (Kirkpatrick, 1998) impact.

Participants found the program exercises practical and applicable to store life. The impact of leadership and teamwork are hard to measure, and these topics are not often taken into account when discussing financial performance. The study results indicate that the more an Associate had done following the programs in developing his/her team, the greater their comfort in describing specific initiatives they had undertaken in their stores that they believed positively influenced their sales and bottomline.

Tenure had an impact on the responses I received in the one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and survey results. Overall, new Associates viewed the program as affirming their style, and useful for confidence building. They were the least able of all groups to articulate the impact of their style on the financial profitability of their locations. New Associates play a critical role in establishing the norms

and expectations (culture creation) which will impact the store's performance in the long term. Due to the wide expansion in the Prairie Region, we often place new Associates in new locations. The data indicates the importance of leadership and teamwork in establishing the culture in new locations. Schein (1992) describes this process as "cultural-embedding mechanisms." (p.231) He goes on to describe that "What leaders pay attention to, measure and control on a regular basis" (p.231) becomes the cultural standards for the organisation. The new Associates who participated in the program were less comfortable with their leadership style however understood conceptually the impact their style had on their team.

Associates with greater than 3-years experience viewed the program as helpful in confirmation and improvement of their leadership style. The more tenured Associates were more able to link their style to culture and ultimately store performance through specific examples. Only 4 Associates responded in the seven to ten year tenure, indicating an opportunity to revisit the program information with this particular group. Consistently, all participants agreed that they have a significant role to play in influencing the culture of their locations. As Schein (1992) describes:

It is much more difficult to embed new assumptions in a mature organisation than in a young and growing one because all of the organisation structures and processes have to be rethought, and perhaps, rebuilt. (p.331)

Associates who had moved recently felt they had a positive impact on culture change but recognised those norms and expectations established by earlier Associates were difficult to alter. However, comments from Associates indicate that they were able to influence the profitability of their business significantly in their short time of leadership.

Appendix H captures the components of leadership necessary to impact performance. I created this diagram in 1998 as a means of articulating visually

the key leadership and culture components I believed to be necessary to impact performance. Leadership is depicted as the core foundation with all necessary cultural components surrounding it. The diagram depicts dynamic flow of information, making change the responsibility of all within the organisation. It also indicates the expectations held within a constructive culture. As seen in the diagram, action thinking is necessary to organisational performance. The diagram depicts all aspects of constructive leadership, and constructive culture as described by the Associate group.

4.3 Study Recommendations

The survey and interviews results indicated that Associates would like to see leadership development continue within our organisation. It is important for us to recognise that leadership development is an evolutionary process. Each year builds upon the learning from the previous session. The two-year program was important because the Associates reported changes in their personal LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and store OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) over the course of two years. Ulrich states that “selecting measurable activities allow that allow participants to see how well they are learning and applying the lessons received.” (p.181) However, if programs such as GPTCL and RPTCL continue, all programs in the future should have a behaviour and results based objective that is clearly understood by participants. I would recommend that level 4 evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 1998) is included to clearly depict the benefit of this program to organisational performance. Also, it is important that the Training & Development Group has a role in evaluating level 3 and level 4 change 6 months - 1 year as “post program implementation.” Further, I would recommend that discussions on culture become a part of the District Co-ordinator’s operational visits in the future.

Ulrich (1999) describes leadership development activities impactful when leaders choose “personalised, tailored development activities. This includes soliciting feedback from peers and colleagues, and personalised coaching. Leaders should make a clear eyed assessment of their flat sides and select development activities that will round them out.” (p. 180) Continued focus on development is important for measurement so the Associates can analyse their specific action plans according to results. Behaviour change becomes standard practice when people notice.

The focus group data indicated the programs that can be implemented quickly and have an immediate impact that can be measured are generally more effective than those that require time and process. Could this be an indication that Associates are more comfortable with task-oriented activities than people-oriented activities because of current forms of performance measurement? Kaplan and Norton’s (1996) “Balanced Score Card” will be used in the future to allow for measurement of strategy. I would recommend that this tool be used in combination with leadership development. Introducing the “Balanced Score Card”(Kaplan and Norton, 1996) within the leadership development programming would encourage implementation of this useful performance tool. Further, we talk about teamwork but we do not bonus based on team achievement of goals. The balanced score card may present an opportunity to offer incentives based on team accomplishments. As Kaplan and Norton (1996) describe:

Align employee’s individual performance with the overall strategy, scorecard users generally engage in three activities: communicating and educating, setting goals, and linking rewards to performance measures. (p.80)

I would also recommend a formalised mentoring program to assist new Associates and those Associates struggling with issues of leadership. This would support the work started at the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions through one-on-one coaching.

Competency models for all Management Team roles would assist in the recruitment and development of leaders in the organisation. A 360-feedback process is an essential part of the performance management process for all Management Team members and aspiring leaders. Currently, Shoppers Drug Mart Role Development Co-ordinators focus on the development of new Managers, a necessary task for the growth of the organisation. However, programs like GPTCL, RPTCL and continued focus by internal personnel will ensure the continued development of leaders and ultimately the potential of a performance culture.

Further, culture evaluations completed once a year would assist Associates to measure if their efforts are making a difference. The standards of a “constructive” culture are defined by the OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989). We use the values and beliefs statements in our decision making, why couldn't we use an OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989)? We have the data from the GPTCL, RPTCL and LMC programs identifying ideal culture. I believe this is especially important for new Associates opening new stores. Focus on culture at the early stages of start-up will assist the store to be profitable sooner, and will assist with crisis management as the store matures.

CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The research indicated that there was a great deal of personal change inspired through the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions. It also indicated the need to ensure that concise business objectives are established prior to the program so that evaluation is easier and more effective post-program. As described in the survey results, level one, level two and level three evaluation were achieved successfully. Level four was harder to evaluate. Although the correlation is hard to prove with absolute certainty, the data does indicate that the Associates understand the impact of their leadership style on the culture of their store. Although this is subjective evidence, it was clear through the interviews, focus groups and surveys that the Associates also recognised the relationship between their style and financial profitability of their location. Environmental conditions such as location, trademark, and new revitalisation strategies complicate this relationship as confirmed by the research participants. The data suggests that these variables assist a store to reach a reasonable level of profit, however, the leadership of the Associate, and the strength of the management team contribute significantly to performance potential.

This project confirms the difficulty in establishing the link between leadership and profitability. However, it does prove that leadership development has a significant impact on the behaviours of people and consequently the growth of their businesses. The implications of this study are most important because of the aggressive growth plans for the Prairies and the entire organisation.

Beyond this study, an interesting proposition would be to follow several new stores through the lifecycle to determine the impact of leadership on business growth. The study could be established using a control group, and leaders who represent constructive, passive and aggressive styles with stores of similar sales volume, and trade location. Three key indicators require further research:

- The Prairie Region is building new stores. Many of which will be operated by new Associates. These individuals will create the culture and will influence cultural artifacts within the store even after they leave the location. Within the first three years of infancy, what leadership style is required to ensure that the organisation moves from birth to infancy seamlessly?
- It is recognised that any change made to a store in relation to leadership impacts profitability in a positive fashion. Should we be capitalising on Associate strengths at different points in the lifecycle by moving Associates to different stores?
- There are indicators that some Associates reach the 7-10 year mark and experience leadership and team challenges. What is significantly different in leadership style between Associates that determines success or failure through these crisis periods?

CHAPTER 6 LESSONS LEARNED

6.1 Research Project Lessons Learned

There were many lessons learned that would have impacted the calibre of data that I collected. First, if I could repeat the project, I would do all interviews and focus group in person if possible. This would have provided me with the opportunity to observe body language and prompt for further detail. The in-person interviews were very helpful because I had the chance to observe the Associates interacting with their staff. Second, although I asked unique questions based on the interviews, it would have been helpful to write questions specific to the tenure of the Associate to determine how representative the answers were for a specific Associate sample.

Reflecting on the focus group process, I could have asked the District Coordinators to bring their Composite Store Statistics reports to the focus group discussion. That would have helped when some of them attempted to articulate sales growth, and employee turnover for their locations. In addition, I could have been clearer on separating “leadership practices” from “changes made to the business because of leadership development.”

I should have added a third qualitative question to the survey. The first question focused specifically on level two evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 1998), skills learned/knowledge gained from the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions. The second question focused on level four evaluation, impact of the program on store profitability. I did not have a question that addressed level three, behaviour change. Although some respondents indicated the changes they had made in their leadership styles, the data would have been richer if I had added, “Describe changes you have made in your leadership style as a result of the GPTCL and

RPTCL sessions. How have these changes impacted the profitability of your business?"

Sending out an introduction of the project to all Prairie Associates in early September would have been helpful. This might have increased the return rate of the surveys. Also, I decided not to code the surveys to maintain ethical research conduct. However, coding the surveys would have made it easier to determine which geographic regions were responding. This would have made follow-up simpler, and might have impacted the number of surveys actually completed.

The project was conducted from an appreciative standpoint, however an interesting question that might have assisted with future programs would have been, "What are some of the barriers to using the LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) materials in your daily business practices?"

Finally if I could do it again I would talk to staff! The employee's perspective on their Associate's leadership style would have supported the information provided through the interviews and survey process.

As my Academic Advisor Dr. Glenn Marshall stated early in this project, "you won't get the information if you don't ask."

6.2 Program Lessons Learned

MALT COMPETENCY EVALUATION

COMPETENCIES/ Work Project/Major Project?	DESCRIPTION	RESULTS
1e. Recognise ethical considerations Work Project	Researcher will utilise an informed consent process to ensure confidentiality of participants. Researcher recognises and respects the relationship between CLS (The Americas) Corp. and Shoppers Drug Mart.	Informed consent forms on file for all one on one interviews. Survey letter assured confidentiality of response. Response to surveys indicated informed consent. E-mail reminders sent to entire Associate population not individuals respecting their right to decline participation. Researcher was aware of her bias towards the leadership development program and did not include personal opinion within the research methodology
1c. Provide leadership Major Project	Employ different leadership styles and display associated behaviours that are appropriate to the situation in a variety of contexts. Exhibit leadership.	I adapted my style with each of the interviews. Some of the interviews required more prompting, others required a more assertive stand to control the interview. I maintained contact with my Academic Committee throughout the study informing them of the stage I was working on. I respected the confidentiality of the Associates who participated in the study. I believe that the Associates participated willingly based on a level of trust and integrity that I have established through my working relationships with them.

COMPETENCIES/ Work Project/Major Project?	DESCRIPTION	RESULTS
<p>2b. Apply systems theories to the solution of leadership and learning problems.</p> <p>Major Project</p>	<p>Researcher recognises the relationship between Associates, Employees and Office personnel in compiling an accurate picture of the project opportunity.</p> <p>Researcher identifies the link between leadership, culture, and performance in the completion of the major project.</p>	<p>I developed my research methodology to include not only the Associate's perspective on the program, but also the District Co-ordinators who are responsible for the profitability of their region. These people work in a consultative role with our stores. The project identified a relationship between leadership development and financial performance by employee involvement, improved systems and procedures.</p>
<p>3b. Provide consulting services to help Organisations succeed</p> <p>Work Project</p>	<p>Researcher will provide Shoppers Drug Mart with a full proposal of the project, and a final report indicating the themes found in the research and recommendations for follow-up.</p> <p>A presentation will be provided if desired by the sponsor.</p>	<p>Proposal completed and submitted to Cliff Proceviat and Mike Hoenmans for approval. Approval granted on the project.</p> <p>An offer has been made to present the findings to the organisation if requested.</p>
<p>4f. Manage own learning to achieve maximum added value</p> <p>Work Project</p>	<p>Enhances the learning culture of the organisation. Develops and implements learning activities and programs in the context of the MA program and the workplace</p>	<p>By involving the Associates and District Co-ordinators in this process, I have reminded them of the important learning from each of the leadership development programs.</p> <p>I have received calls from Associates who wanted to discuss my project, and provide their feedback. This indicates to me that the survey and interview process has made them rethink the entire experience.</p>

COMPETENCIES/ Work Project/Major Project?	DESCRIPTION	RESULTS
<p>5a. Identify, locate and evaluate research findings.</p> <p>Major Project</p>	<p>Access research in fields of leadership, systems, organisations and learning.</p> <p>Critically evaluate the credibility of that research for its applicability in the resolution of leadership problems using ethical standards.</p>	<p>My research on leadership, organisational culture, and organisational performance started during my first residency. I continue to read and formulate my own theories on each of these areas. I realise the more I read, the less I know! This project is the beginning of continued research in this area.</p> <p>The data collected in this project indicates that the leadership development programs were very impactful. My recommendations for continued programming are based on the findings of the study.</p>
<p>5b. Research methods to solve problems</p> <p>Major Project</p>	<p>Plan research and evaluation activities</p> <p>Demonstrate a spirit of inquiry and reflection in preparation for the design and conduct of research and evaluation activities.</p>	<p>Research methodology was solid. I reflected on each interview to ensure that I was asking the right questions. I recognise from reading my transcripts that there was opportunity for further prompting in the process.</p> <p>My focus group questions were helpful, however I should have focused more on change as a result of the programs rather than demonstrated leadership as my data supporting level three behavior change and level four impact might have been easier to articulate.</p>
<p>7a. Interpret oral communication</p> <p>Work Project</p>	<p>Listens attentively and the skills of listening and understanding are demonstrated through clear and coherent responses</p> <p>The method of oral communication and conciseness suits the purpose and context; discussions are contributed to in a way that is valued and ensures others have space and opportunity to contribute fully; listeners understanding is checked regularly.</p>	<p>Demonstrated active listening skills in all discussions related to this project.</p> <p>Planned my questions carefully to ensure conciseness. I recognise that this is an area that I can still improve upon.</p> <p>I have developed the habit of asking more questions to ensure I understand. Rather than elaborating, I often simply ask "why:"?</p> <p>Following the focus group, one of the District Co-ordinators commented that I am much more direct in my questioning than previously.</p>

COMPETENCIES/ Work Project/Major Project?	DESCRIPTION	RESULTS
	The skills of listening and understanding are demonstrated through clear and coherent responses.	I use open body language as a means of demonstrating sincerity, and interest.
7b. Communicate with others through writing Major Project	Proposal and final report will be concise, clear and applied. Final report will be written according to RRU Major Project standards.	My final report demonstrates my ability to apply theory to practical applications. I paid close attention to my audience. That is, I attempted to articulate theoretic concepts in a way that captures the attention of my readers.
7c. Communicate orally Major Project	Verbal presentations are poised and engage the listener; contributions in a small group session are articulate, concise and engaging.	Focus group and interviews were successful because of my communication skills. I introduced the topic, and guided the discussions. Assertiveness was required in some cases to maintain control of the conversations I recognise that more clarification may have assisted in better data!

APPENDIX A

Goals for Retail Positioning through Culture and Leadership Program (Marshall, 1998, Proposal)

- Changes in operating practices
- Retail Repositioning Planning, progressing and delivering exceptional individual and team performance.
- Identify, assess and maximise profit opportunity.
- Coaching and training for improvement in staff performance.
- Molding, focusing, developing leadership roles within the retail store environment consistent with retail repositioning.
- Sustain an exciting, positive and realistic working environment at Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix.
- Develop the ability of Associates and Front Store managers (sic) to maximise the benefits available from the effective use of the VISION and supporting culture to operationalize the Star Trek initiatives.
- To complement the continued development of the District Co-ordinator Role, the pharmacist Associate and that of Regional/Corporate Executives by providing opportunity for continuous application and improvement of leadership skills while at the same time utilising a skills approach to develop and support Star Trek approaches.
- Continue reinforcement of fostering corporate culture and constructive leadership developed in the Visions and Values initiative.
- Supports and operationalize the findings of Star Trek
- Roles and responsibilities, location and market forces
- Display and merchandise presentation
- Customer service issues (internal and external)

APPENDIX B

Structure of Programs - Growing Profitability through Culture and Leadership

Retail Positioning through Culture and Leadership (Marshall, 1999, Proposal)

Individual Case Study

Participants were required to read a practical case study and complete a series of “decision sheets” prior to attending the workshop.

Team based learning

Participants worked as teams completing the “decision sheets” through consensus (and sometimes not consensus) decision-making. Teams were established by CLS (The Americas) Corp. utilising the Life Styles Inventory to ensure that there was a compliment of diverse thinking styles within each team.

360 degree assessment (Life Styles Inventory)

Self and Others circumplexes were provided for each Associate, Front Store Manager and Office Personnel. Each individual completed a self-profile and self-selected people to complete the Life Styles Inventory others profile prior to attending the program. This data was collected by computer disk and sent confidentially to Human Synergistics for correlation. All data collected from the sessions across Canada is housed by contract with CLS (The Americas) Corp.

Organisational Culture Inventory

Associates, Front Store Managers and Office Personnel were provided with an OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) depicting the culture of their workplace as described by themselves and other staff selected.

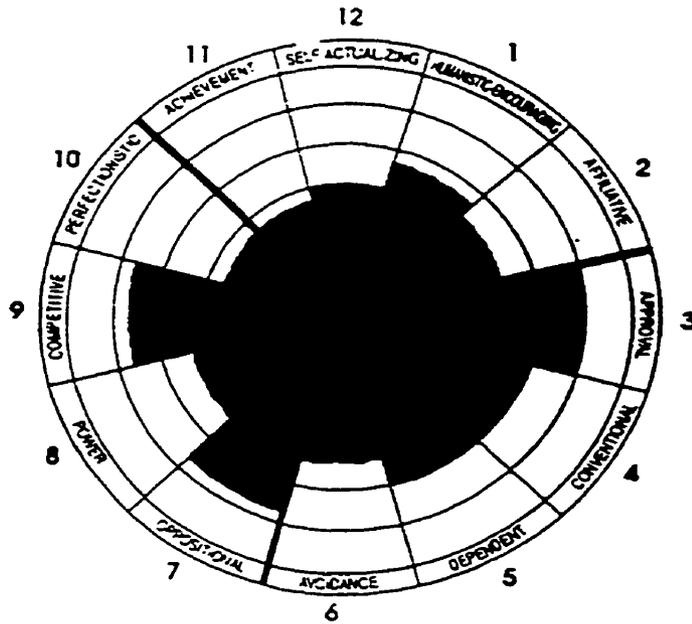
Individual Leadership Coaching

Each participant attended a leadership coaching session to discuss the results of their LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) and OCI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989) profiles. Action plans were created to assist participants with behaviour changes. For those who had previously attended GPTLC, these coaching sessions included a follow-up report on the previous individual LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973).

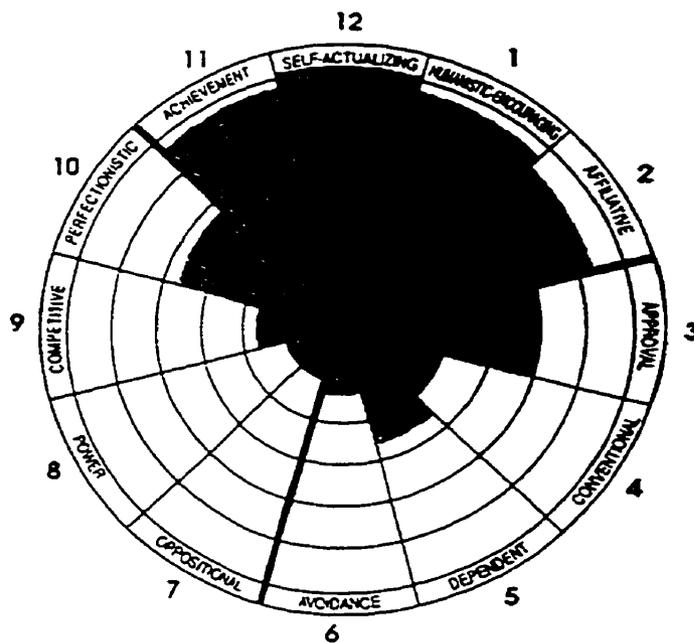
APPENDIX C

LSI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973)

Self Description
LSI 1



Others Description
LSI 2



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Description of LSI Instrument (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973)

The LSI (Lafferty and Cooke, 1973) is comprised of 12 different thinking approaches categorised by 3 major styles. These styles are passive defensive, aggressive defensive and constructive. Refer to the previous page for a visual of the following descriptions. The following descriptions are adapted from a case study workbook created by CLS (The Americas) and used at the Shoppers Drug Mart Executive Program in 1998.

Passive Style

The passive style rests between the 3:00 and the 6:00 position on the circumplex. The four thinking patterns associated with the passive style are:

- 3:00 Approval
- 4:00 Conventional
- 5:00 Dependent
- 6:00 Avoidance

Individuals who show passive style tend to be concerned with other's approval. As a result of their need for approval, these people will sacrifice their own personal needs in order to maintain relationships with others. Individuals may avoid, or smooth over conflicts, and seldom assert themselves. In addition, those with a passive style are conventionally oriented, and have a tendency to follow policies and procedures.

Aggressive Style

The aggressive style rests between the 7:00 and the 10:00 position on the circumplex. The four thinking patterns associated with an aggressive style are:

- 7:00 Oppositional
- 8:00 Power

9:00 Competitive

10:00 Perfectionistic

Individuals with aggressive thinking styles tend to emphasise a factual viewpoint often disregarding the feelings of others. They show aggressive tendencies and have a strong desire to control relationships often creating compliance.

Individuals with aggressive tendencies are often impatient with errors, and tend to be competitively driven.

Constructive Style

The constructive style falls between the 11:00 and the 2:00 position. The four thinking styles are:

11:00 Achievement

12:00 Self-Actualising

1:00 Humanistic-Encouraging

2:00 Affiliative

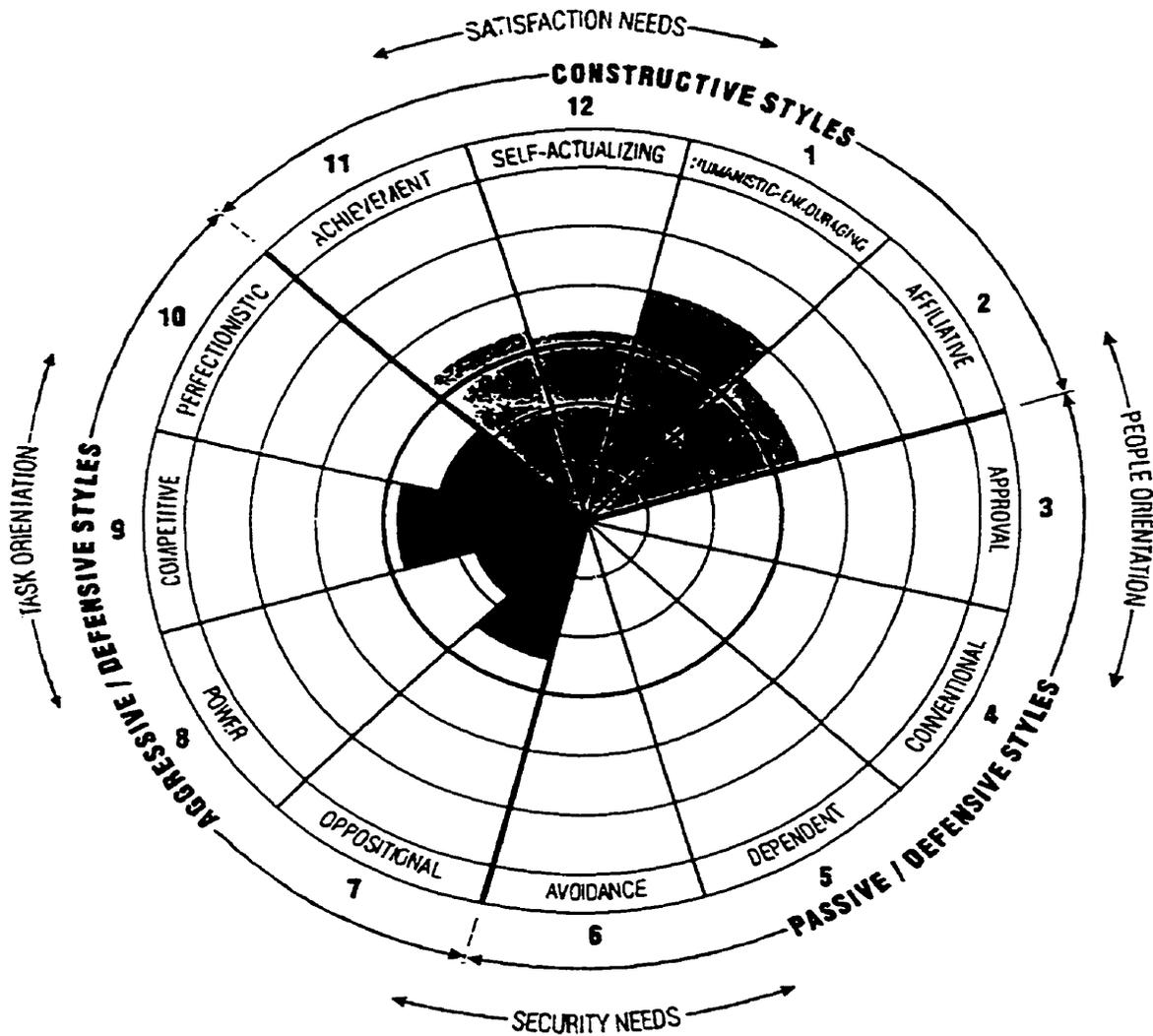
Individuals with constructive thinking styles tend to emphasise a healthy combination of task and relationship - oriented behaviour. Those possessing this style tend to be motivated by goal accomplishment, and a sense of what is possible. Individuals possessing a constructive style demonstrate an authentic concern for relationships, and are considered motivational by others.

These three styles are not mutually exclusive. In fact it is important to look for the combinations between styles or "bowties" in thinking patterns. For example, an individual possessing a strong constructive style may also show a degree of oppositional (8:00) in their profile. Due to the strong commitment to valuing others, this "oppositional" style could be demonstrated through questions dedicated to improving a situation, not criticising the others involved. As a result

of the combinations within the circumplex, this tool provides a brilliant visual forum for coaching and assisting others to improve their leadership style.

APPENDIX D

OCI Circumplex (Lafferty and Cooke, 1989)



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APPENDIX E

One on One Interviews

An Action Research Study of the Relationship between Leadership Development Programs and the Financial Performance of a Retail Store

Royal Roads University/Shoppers Drug Mart

Interview #

Associate Name

Store #

Date

Years as an Associate

Age of Store

Permission to include Composite Store Stats?

Permission to include Operations File?

Permission to include Turnover statistics?

Permission to use personal Life Styles Inventory?

Permission to use store Organisational Culture Inventory?

Questions

What did you value most from your experience at GPTLC and/or RPTLC? Why?

What does leadership mean to you? Can you give some specific examples to support your definition?

How has your definition of leadership changed since your experience at GPTLC and/or RPTLC?

How have the GPTLC and RPTLC sessions changed or enhanced your definition of success?

What were some of the most impactful learnings you took from the GPTLC and/or RPTLC sessions?

What changes have you initiated in your business that are a result of your changing view of leadership?

Has your staff commented or noticed any changes in your store since you returned from the GPTLC and RPTLC programs?

Please share with me some examples that would demonstrate the impact your leadership style has on the profitability of your business? Has this changed since the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions? If so, how?

APPENDIX F

Focus Group Questions

How do your Associates demonstrate leadership in their stores?

Has this changed since the GPTLC/RPTLC sessions?

What are some changes your Associates have initiated in their business as a result of GPTLC/RPTLC?

Can you share with me some examples of how your Associate's leadership style has impacted the financial profitability of their stores? Has this changed since GPTLC/RPTLC? If so, how?

If none, are there any extenuating circumstances that may have hindered efforts to improve?

APPENDIX G

December 31, 1999

To All Associates, Prairie Region

Thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

You had the opportunity to attend the Growing Profitability through Leadership and Culture and/or the Retail Positioning through Leadership and Culture programs offered last June 1998, and more recently in June 1999. This survey is part of my research study evaluating the relationship between these leadership development programs and financial performance of your store. A final report of the research will be completed by May 01, 2000 in support of my Masters of Arts degree from Royal Roads University. The report will also become the property of Cliff Proceviat, Shoppers Drug Mart Prairie Region.

Your input is important if I am to have an accurate picture of how the programs positively impacted both your leadership style and ultimately the financial performance of your store. Please review each survey question and provide the response that most accurately describes your belief at the present time. As with all surveys of opinion, there are no right or wrong answers. It is more important that you answer each question as accurately as you can to portray your current opinions.

I am interested in getting a picture of the overall Associate group as a whole so you are not required to identify yourself. I have asked demographic questions that will permit me to look for any significant trends in responses. All responses will be both anonymous and strictly confidential and only I will have access to the individual responses in order to analyse the data and prepare the report of the group's results. These results will be shared with you in June 2000.

Please complete the survey and return it in the enclosed envelope through the store mail by January 14, 2000 to my attention, care of the Calgary Office.

I appreciate your participation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (403) 259-1748.

Sincerely,
Penny S. Mills, CHRP
Training & Development Co-ordinator

c. Proceviat, M. Hoenmans

An Action Research Study of the Relationship between Leadership Development Programs and Financial Performance of a Retail Store

Part One: Demographic Information

Please mark an X beside your answer

Number of years as an Associate:

- Less than three years
 3 – 7 years
 7 – 10 years
 More than 10 years

Gender:

- Female
 Male

Store Age:

My store(s) is/are _____ years old

My store(s) was/were an acquisition in 19 _____

Program Participation:

- I attended Growing Profitability through Culture and Leadership (GPTCL) in 1998
 I attended Retail Positioning through Culture and Leadership (RPTCL) in 1999
 I attended both programs
 I did not attend but will attempt to answer

Prior to Training:

What was your dominant leadership style identified before the program?

- Mostly Constructive
 Mostly Passive
 Mostly Aggressive
 A combination of Constructive with
 - a. Passive
 - b. Aggressive

After Training:

How would you rate your current style? You may ask a trusted colleague for a second opinion.

- Mostly Constructive
 Mostly Passive
 Mostly Aggressive
 A combination of Constructive with
 - a. Passive
 - b. Aggressive

18. I believe that our store would benefit from other members of my Management Team attending a program like the GPTCL and RPTCL sessions.

1 2 3 4 5 NA

Part Three: Reflections on The Growing Profitability through Leadership and Culture (GPTLC) and Retail Positioning through Leadership and Culture (RPTLC) programs

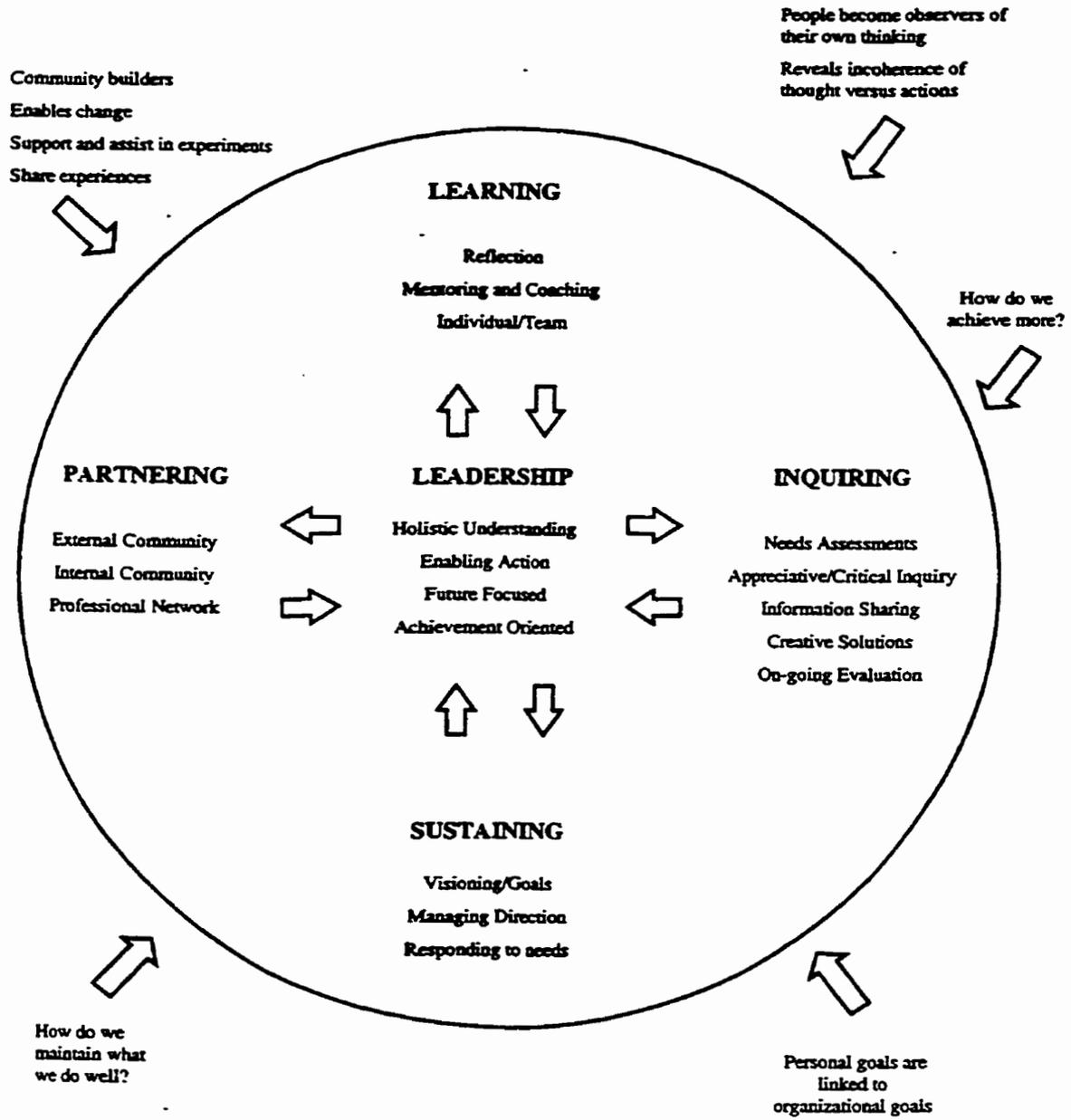
Please take a minute to think about your experiences at GPTLC and/or RPTLC.

1. What were the most impactful learnings that you took from the GPTLC and/or RPTLC sessions? Describe your experience in as much detail as you are comfortable sharing. If you run out of space, please continue on the back of the page. Please answer in point form if possible.

2. Please share some examples of the impact of your leadership style on the profitability of your business. Has this changed since the GPTLC and/or RPTLC sessions, and if so, how? Please answer in point form if possible.

Thank you for your participation! Please return your survey in the attached envelope to Penny Mills, Calgary Office.

APPENDIX H



Leadership + Culture = Performance

APPENDIX I

Glossary of Terms

360-Degree Feedback

The performance assessment by which an individual receives feedback on his/her skills, knowledge and behaviour within the workplace. The 360 degree process involves self and others evaluation and allows for measurement of intended leadership practices and actions as perceived by others.

Growing Profitability through Culture and Leadership (GPTCL)

Three-day retreat held for Associates, Front Store Managers and Office personnel in June 1998. The workshop provided the Shoppers Drug Mart personnel with an opportunity to examine their leadership style and their impact on others.

Life Styles Inventory (LSI)

Inventory developed by J. Clayton Lafferty and Robert Cooke in 1973 depicting three leadership styles through the use of self and others feedback. The inventory is based upon 240 questions and data is displayed through as a "circumplex."

Organisational Culture

The practices that organisations develop around their handling of people or to refer to the espoused values and credo of an organisation. (Schein, 1992)

Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI)

Inventory developed by J. Clayton Lafferty, PhD. and Robert A. Cooke, PhD. in 1989 depicting the norms and expectations held by a group of individuals. The inventory is based upon 120 questions utilising a 5-point likert scale and is displayed as a "circumplex."

Retail Positioning through Culture and Leadership (RPTCL)

Three-day retreat held for Associates, Front Store Managers and Office personnel in June 1999. RPTCL further evolved the participants leadership skills, and provided them with an update of their LSI and OCI profiles from 1998. The workshop focused on business challenges and strategies from Star Trek research.

Sub-Culture

Different expectations and norms that exist within an organisation that may be contrary to the overall company's values and beliefs. Sometimes referred to as counter-culture.

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