

Center for Intelligent Ventures

A proposal to train leaders to be
Organization Development (OD) capable.

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BACKGROUND

Executives with a combination of skill depth in both business (e.g., an MBA) and in organization development (e.g., an MS in Organization Development or MSOD) have a higher success rate as leaders of people, teams, and organizations. Too many initiatives fail to achieve their full potential to improve organization performance and growth because there are so few leaders who are both Business *and* OD competent. It does not have to be this way.

Master's degree programs in OD recruit and train students to use OD tools, methods and principles in order to increase the effectiveness of the executives and organizations they work with principally while serving in the role of internal or external OD consultant. A relatively small percentage of MSOD students see themselves as line-executives who seek to increase their own effectiveness by becoming OD-Capable.

Virtually every line-executive stands to improve her/his effectiveness by becoming OD-Capable. However, MBA programs generally offer only a few elective OD courses that rarely attract the top of the class despite that other business skills are of little value if those with them are not adept at working with people, teams, and organizations to put what has been learned to full use.

Large, growing, well-run organizations crave content with which to develop the skills and effectiveness of their highest potential up-and-coming leaders but few are inclined to send executives for OD training because:

- OD program messaging emphasizes the potential for personal professional development and not the value and positive impact of individual training and development on an organization and its performance and effectiveness. The decision to pursue OD training is almost always made by an individual interested in advancing their own professional development in order to get in position to do something new as opposed to by organization leaders seeking to improve the odds that key staff grow to satisfy future leadership needs.
- Line-executives who attend OD programs are often “lost to OD” in the sense that when they come back to the line organization, they return to work for, and with, unenlightened bosses and peers. The lack of receptivity to what has been learned leaves them frustrated. An attractive option is to escape into roles as an internal or external, individual or group, OD consultant. The result being that the opportunity to enrich line managers directly is lost or at best delayed.



- The time, expense, and effort to take a full OD program are so large that it is impractical for most line-executives and their authorizing environments to pursue.
- OD programs are rightfully rich in theory but at the expense of making it difficult for even high-potential and high-performing line-executives to figure out for themselves how to put theory into practice in their day-to-day roles.

OPPORTUNITY

There is potentially a large and lucrative market in need of a subset of the MSOD curriculum honed for consumption and application targeting high-performing and high-potential line-executives and MBAs. Program participants complete a course of study using their own business circumstances to complete fieldwork and on which to demonstrate knowledge gained and that they have mastered the effective application of Organization Development tools, methods, and principals to leading change.

Those who successfully complete the course of study and demonstrate they are able to apply what has been learned receive a certificate of completion along the lines shown in Exhibit 1.

A top business school will want to cultivate and serve this market via an executive certificate program in order to:

- Derive further value from existing curriculum in return for fees commensurate with the value delivered and in a timely, efficient, and profitable manner, contributing as much as several hundreds of thousands of additional dollars per year in incremental funds once the program is in full operation.
- Extend the reach and range of the school's impact and leadership.
- Demonstrate leadership in an agenda of national importance by significantly advancing the ability of leaders to work with individuals, teams, and organization to achieve their potential, thereby contributing to the national goal to create and grow organizations and jobs that cannot be exported and that can never be automated.



APPROACH

After achieving much success applying OD tools, methods, and principles over the past 35+ years [IntelliVen](#) seeks to cultivate and serve a market of future and current line-executives in order to:

- Consolidate, advance, and disseminate lessons-learned to perpetuate their utility to leaders around the world through the intelligent use of OD tools, methods, and principles.
- Affiliate with a world-class platform led and staffed by individuals who are like-minded in their pursuit of personal and organization excellence, impact, growth, and performance.

Towards this end, IntelliVen seeks an academic or corporate platform with which to partner in order to conceive and launch a new degree or certificate program featuring a core set of OD courses as adjunct to core business curricula. Exhibit 2 presents an example of a set of OD courses which individually and collectively help future and current line-executives improve their effectiveness by training them to be OD-Capable.

NEXT STEPS

While the merits of this program may be obvious to some, its market acceptance is uncertain and so must be carefully developed and tested before investing in, and launching, a full-blown program. It will take significant and careful work to construct a curriculum and to describe it, and its value proposition, in a way that compels instructors, students, current leaders, and future leaders to engage.

A three-Phased approach is planned:

- **Set-Up Phase (~3 months):**
 - Define the offering:
 - Prepare materials to describe the offering and its value proposition in a compelling manner.
 - Run the value proposition by leaders in organizations that should be receptive based on past experience, circumstances, and goals.
 - Convene a forum for stakeholders to review the offering and its justification and prospects.



- Market the program:
 - Work out pricing, schedule, and mechanics.
 - Enroll 12 - 18 qualified participants in the first cohort.
 - Assess whether market reaction, demand, and interest are high enough to warrant further efforts to develop the program.
 - Develop 3-year business and financial plan.
- Set up to deliver the program
 - Develop the curriculum.
 - Recruit, appoint, and prepare faculty to teach the courses.
 - Prepare to administer the program, monitor results, collect feedback, and assess progress.
- **Pilot Phase (~4 months):**
 - Conduct the first set of five classes with the first cohort.
 - Assess reaction and results to determine if results and demand are such that it makes sense to continue.
 - Recruit cohorts two and three to enroll at least 24 qualified participants in the second and third cohorts.
 - Provide feedback, guidance, and development to faculty.
 - Hone curriculum.
 - Review and revise plans and performance targets based on results.
 - Target, approach, and cultivate corporate and foundation sponsors, funders, and grants.
- **Operate Phase (years):**
 - Rollout full-scale operations with as many cohorts in parallel as market demand and capacity permit.
 - Provide custom training and related consulting services.
 - Consider the adding research and publications dimensions as scholars, topics, and funders emerge.

The following needs to be done by the academic or corporate host to accomplish the above:

- Retain the services of an executive to lead and guide a program of efforts to set-up, pilot, and operate the program; meet with monthly to review progress and provide guidance, direction as appropriate, and feedback on performance; and



help to learn and grow to work effectively in the hosting environment and culture.

- Facilitate introducing the certificate program to the current school dean (or corporate equivalent) and sort out their role, level of involvement, and financial arrangements.
- Provide appropriate program support services (e.g., administrative, financial, marketing), facilities (i.e., a place to work, administrative support, etc.).
- Host an initial breakfast forum to cultivate key program stakeholders.

The following needs to be done by the executive program leader:

- Identify, recruit, enlist, and work with instructors and staff to develop and launch a new degree or certificate program based on the existing OD curricula. Bring to life the vision to help line-executives improve their effectiveness by training them to be OD-Capable.
- Define target qualifications of program participants and list organizations in which to find them. Recruit two to four students from each of three to six organizations to build the first cohort.
- Explore and develop possibilities for corporate sponsorship and foundation grants.
- Work with academic leaders to support and participate in the program as a member of its Advisory Council, instructors, and as an active supporter of the program
- Report monthly on progress relative to plans.
- Work with in-place academicians and administration to sort out the details in terms of:
 - The courses with what modifications will form the core of the program.
 - Program and course descriptions that articulate their value proposition in a way that is compelling to business leaders.



- Identifying, recruiting, and training instructors who know the material and who will be comfortable and effective with executives.
- Mechanics (e.g., location; timing, format).
- Admissions/registration materials, both paper and web-based, and a procedure and staffing for enrolling participants into the program.
- Program pricing, revenue, and cost.
- Timeline of activities and target results.
- In coordination with the office of Marketing, Admissions and Outreach, develop a press release and one-page summary of the OD-capable executives program and a management presentation to present the program to business leaders.
- Identify organizations likely to benefit from and be receptive to such a program.
- Identify key people in those organizations to approach about their support, involvement and being a source of students.
- Define the purpose, roles, and responsibilities of a Program Advisory Council that meets semi-annually to provide guidance and access to resources including recruiting students and fundraising for grants and sponsorships.
- Host a breakfast for a group of high-potential prospects to inform, educate, and test their interest that would:
 - Be hosted by a pre-eminent figure (CEO, Chancellor, President, or Dean).
 - Offer thought-provoking material on the practical application of OD tools, techniques, and principles to business presented by some combination of prominent and successful academics and practitioners.
 - Present the program, why it makes sense to launch it now, how it would work, and next steps.
 - Include a facilitated group discussion/workshop to stimulate thinking and generate input and feedback from attendees.



- For attendees that show the most potential to sponsor and/or source students:
 - Cultivate them towards becoming members of the Program's Advisory Council.
 - Develop a call-plan to cultivate the opportunity to pitch the program to executive beneficiaries with authority and responsibility to make the decision to send students with the longer term objective being to get them on track to sending many more over the coming years if things go well.
- Build a strong foundation that could lead to an ongoing stream of students from key organizations with an appetite for what is offered.
- Prepare the program to operate successfully and at a high rate of performance indefinitely without being overly dependent on any one leader.

SUMMARY

This effort is to launch degree or certificate program and associated custom training and consulting services. Research and publication elements will be added once scholars, funders, and research topics of interest emerge such that it may be possible to extend and expand the program into a Center.

Adjustments will be made as the initiative progresses to help increase the odds of better results sooner.

CALL TO ACTION

If you and/or your organization are interested in learning more about the Center for Intelligent Ventures and the OD-Competent Executive Program contact intelliven@intelliven.com or reach out directly to peterd@intelliven.com.



Exhibit 1**Center for Intelligent Ventures
Certificate of
OD-Competence**

The recipient leader has completed the Center for Intelligent Ventures program of study and fieldwork demonstrating significant knowledge and effective application of Organization Development tools, methods, and principals to leading change.



Exhibit 2

Course descriptions

Sample Set of OD Courses to serve as a foundation for Degree or Certificate Program to Develop Current or Future OD-Capable Executives

- **Leadership and Use of Self:** This course will help students understand the theories and concepts which are relevant to building, maintaining, and enriching effective interpersonal relationships and the use of themselves as practitioners in consultative and change processes. Included will be the skills relevant to working in one-on-one relationships, small groups, and large organization settings.
- **Interventions:** This course provides students with the opportunity to engage in the creation of a learning community that focuses on the examination of team development. By moving from a focus on the individual to a focus on the small group and progressing to the larger group, the team building process is examined from the perspective of its component parts. Strategies and techniques from the behavioral sciences are utilized to help participants improve their effectiveness as facilitators/leaders and members of work teams
- **Applied Research Methods:** This course is designed to develop an understanding of the use of quantitative and qualitative problem solving methodology for use in organization and individual assessment.
- **Organization Dynamics:** This is a course in organization theory intended to lay a foundation for other courses by covering the history, range, and contemporary developments in the theoretical literature about organizations. It is also intended to stimulate and support the conceptual skills required to think about and manage change at the organizational level of behavior
- **Organization Analysis and Strategy:** This course expands knowledge of organization operations, executive roles, and the centrality of strategy in organization operations, development, and change. Using readings, class exercises, fieldwork, guest speakers, analysis, work problems, and cases the course helps students learn, and to use, tools, principles, and methods in strategy development and implementation to move a system toward its desired future

