After reflecting on the philosophy classes that we took in college, and comparing notes, we realized our experiences were strikingly similar. When it came time for the final exam, our professors dramatically turned to a chalkboard and wrote out a version of the question: “Why live?”

And, tempted though we were to respond by writing down something like “Why not?” and head for the door, we succumbed to traditional expectations and filled blue book after blue book recounting what we had learned from reading the work of one philosopher after another throughout the semester.

WHEN YOU BEGIN WITH THE BUSINESS RESULTS, THERE IS AN ELEMENT OF CONSISTENCY THAT SURPRISES NO ONE.

Now, fast forward to this very moment and let’s consider the question: “Why do leadership training?” We’ll come back to what we think is a viable answer shortly, but, first, a little side story. In large part because of the model that has been ascribed to him since the 1960s, there is a natural inclination to attribute measurement strategy for leadership training to Donald Kirkpatrick. He was the first person to publicly suggest the following parameters of impact analysis for a training intervention:

- **Reaction:** Did learners like the learning experience?
- **Learning:** Did the learners learn anything?
- **Behavior:** Did the learners change behavior because of what they learned?
- **Results:** Are there any results we can tie to the behavior change?

Donald Kirkpatrick was initially resistant to the suggestion, but later came around to the idea. Donald’s successors, Jim and Wendy Kirkpatrick of Kirkpatrick Partners, analyzed the model and inverted the starting point for effective measurement strategy.

In the mid-1980s, there was a highly disruptive article published by training guru Bob Pike that essentially posed the question: “What if we turned the Four Levels Model upside down?”

So, why do leadership training? You do leadership training to enable your organization to achieve its strategic objectives. We are well past the point in life where regurgitating what we know in a blue book or two matters to anyone.

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