THE CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP STUDIES

THE GLOBAL HOME OF SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP®

University expands reach of leadership training programs through custom accessibility solution

Compliance is key

A nonprofit private college dedicated to inclusive and affordable education adopted The Center for Leadership Studies' courses *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders Online* and *Situational Leadership®: Taking Charge Online* to elevate individual performance and empower their coaching culture. The programs easily integrate with the university's 27 organizational competencies and serve as their primary leadership development track.

Designed for managers and supervisors to develop leadership expertise, the *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders Online* suite features four, self-paced modules that introduce the Situational Leadership® Model and its bedrock concepts. The program prepares the university's leaders to accurately assess employee Performance Readiness® and facilitate development toward or divert regression back to task attainment through dynamic practice scenarios. Dovetailing this foundational piece, *Situational Leadership®: Taking Charge Online* reframes the content to the individual contributor's perspective, teaching direct reports to pursue a mutual agreement of expected performance outcomes with their leaders.

After successful deployment of the courses to their LMS and proven impact on learners, the university recognized the potential to increase the reach and benefit of Situational Leadership® training to learners with disabilities through Section 508 accessibility standards. With 508 compliance being key to sharing the transformative Situational Leadership® process with as many learners as possible, they partnered with The Center for Leadership Studies to provide custom versions of the programs to meet the 508 requirements.

Industry: **Education**

Number of Employees: **10,400**

Challenge
Adapt existing leadership development programs to create accessible versions for learners with disabilities

Solution
Partner with The Center for Leadership Studies' custom development team to align current leadership programs to 508 compliance requirements

"Accessibility is our standard. Our university is extremely grateful for the support on this project to meet our needs."

Senior Director of Talent Development

Research and refine

The university requested a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for each program to assess its accessibility and uncover conformance opportunities. Following the university's review and approval, the final VPAT criteria informed the component modifications The Center for Leadership Studies implemented in the programs and their accompanying materials.

Discussions with the university identified their desire to address accessibility while maintaining the quality of experience for learners who didn't need those adjustments; depict conceptual material, like the Situational Leadership® framework, in an easy-to-understand manner; and promote better understanding and flow for all learners. Frequent touchpoints with them allowed The Center for Leadership Studies to continually refine and adapt the approach to best meet the needs of the university's user population.

Broad access, focused approach

Specific design features focused on the university's objective to enable those with physical or cognitive impairments to consume and benefit from an equal learning experience.

This effort included updates to the online modules and supporting components, such as content-specific handouts, Participant Workbook, Study Guides and participant certificate generators, which were optimized and evaluated for screen reader integration and 508 alignment. Extensive functional and usability testing was conducted prior to client delivery to satisfy internal standards of excellence and gauge the university users' seamless experience. The collaborative preplanning and communication with the university yielded successful, on-time delivery of both 508-compliant programs and their supplemental materials, expanding their leadership development catalog with on-tap, accessible programs.

The Center for Leadership Studies strives to match the best solution to a client's needs, whether it is a custom endeavor or ready-made package. By continuously adapting course offerings, The Center for Leadership Studies helps visionary clients like this university reach broader audiences through unencumbered access to leadership development training.

SOLUTIONS EMPLOYED

- *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders Online* teaches the Situational Leadership® Model and four-step process for influencing performance in four, accessible modules

- *Situational Leadership®: Taking Charge Online* engages front-line employees and individual contributors in their own performance development journeys

DESIGN FEATURES

- Elective closed captions for all narration and video slides enhance the experience for the hearing impaired

- A logical tab order of screen elements allows easier comprehension

- Alternative text allows screen readers to vocalize image depictions and button text

- Keyboard-accessible options replace drag-and-drop activities for streamlined usabiity

- Heightened color contrast optimizes fonts and backgrounds for low-vision users

- Content-heavy and decision-tree slides divided into two or more for clarity

"We're extremely appreciative of the support we received across the online modules and VPAT deliverables."

Learning Support Specialist