

LMI Journal

Provided by Leadership Management Institute™

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A Case Study Featuring Luker Framing, Inc.

The Company...

Construction and rough framing has been the back bone of the Luker family business for three generations. Brothers Scott and Jon Luker have worked construction sites since an early age. Scott eventually started his own company, Luker Construction, in Santa Maria, CA. Jon was also developing his own place in the building industry in Santa Maria. He began providing assistance to framing contractors on large, residential projects. After a while he began to notice the contractors he worked for were lacking in organizational and people development skills. And it was evident that companies were not investing properly in training people to obtain skills in the building trade. In July 1999, Jon founded Luker Framing, Inc. and later called upon his brother, Scott, to merge their companies and ideas. Together again, they began discussing ways to simplify the framing process to train lesser-skilled employees. They set a goal to complete a project of framing seventy-seven houses. In a short time, they had recruited thirty-five new employees, and they soon started their second and third projects simultaneously. Now the company had grown to approximately eighty employees. Fueled with determination and the motivation to succeed, Scott and Jon realized they were still in desperate need of something. They were confident in their

skills, they knew the business well, and they were somewhat certain they had the 'right stuff.' After analyzing the circumstances, they realized a potentially overwhelming problem... they were not prepared to manage all of these people!

The Challenge...

Luker Framing wanted to continue to grow their business. However, the difficulties they faced in managing eighty employees was something that had to be addressed. They recognized communication as the most urgent challenge with which they were dealing. There was a lack of knowing who was doing what, when, and where. They decided the solution to improving productivity could be as simple as enhancing their communication skills. Personal development and growth were important, too. Scott and Jon believed that their biggest payoff could



(Back row) Howie Jenkins, Estimator; Jon Luker, CEO; Scott Luker, V.P.; David Kell, Jr., Forklift Supervisor (Front row) Mike Davis, Foreman; Chuck Woods, Foreman; Bonnie Colvard, Office Manager; Antonio Vilchis, Foreman; Mark Cabatuan, Purchasing

come from investing in leadership development. Foremen were in need of leadership training, and all managers needed to know how they were affecting their teams. The organization was also lacking in daily planning, and they were spending too much time outside of their high pay off

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activities. Meanwhile, Scott had been observing a positive change in Luker's material supplier. He asked the manager what they were doing that was causing things to be so noticeably different. The manager briefly told him about a 'process' he was involved in. He then introduced Scott to Alan Hutsinpiller, an LMI Franchise Partner, and Alan introduced Luker Framing, Inc. to the LMI Process™.

The LMI Process™...

Two weeks after meeting Alan Hutsinpiller, Jon and Scott enrolled in Effective Personal Productivity®. The decision was made that the entire executive team would participate. Jon admits that everyone was not entirely sold on the idea. He personally was skeptical of the plan, but that opinion soon changed. Jon said by lesson two of the EPP he was already focusing on the process. To Jon's surprise, Luker Framing saw a return on investment before they even reached the last lesson in the program. The revenue they were saving as a result of improving their productivity through effective communication completely paid for the initial investment. This was just the beginning. They began planning and prioritizing daily activities and their work loads became more manageable. With the success and accomplishments they achieved in the EPP, Scott and Jon were ready to enter a different phase of development in the LMI Process. Alan next introduced them to strategic planning, and they began to develop the company's vision, mission, and purpose statements using LMI's Organizational Strategic Analysis™ workbook. They wrote an executive summary of where they wanted the company to be in one year and set actions steps towards achieving that goal. The plan would soon change Luker Framing, Inc. for the better.



The Difference...

Jon says it has been a privilege watching his team accomplish personal and business goals they set in Effective Personal Productivity. Witnessing them purchasing their

“Help had arrived, but not without a cost. I knew the change was going to be hard. But we made the personal commitment to make the change. We soon realized our investment was going to pay off.”

– Jon Luker, CEO & President,
Luker Framing, Inc.

first home, making large contributions to the organization, and making positive changes in their behavior has been the most

“There is always a mystical magic when leaders become ‘achieving managers’ and embrace the LMI Process in continual improvement.”

– Alan Hutsinpiller, President,
LMI Rogue Valley



satisfying reward of all. The organization has also achieved new success as a result of the LMI Process. When they began the process in 2002, Luker Framing had two million dollars in gross sales receipts. Today they are on pace to target thirty-four million dollars in 2006. Because of their newly improved professional disposition, national builders have contracted Luker Framing. Recently, they landed their largest contract to date estimated at seventy-five million dollars. Jon believes the results they have achieved, and continue to achieve, are a direct result of the lessons learned



Jon Luker facilitates his executive team through the LMI Process.

“We have defined the scope, goals, and objectives for developing our most valuable asset... our people.”

– Jon Luker, CEO & President,
Luker Framing, Inc.

from the LMI Process. The managers at Luker stay organized by planning daily in the My-Tyme Success Planner®. The executive team has a well-written strategic plan and executive summary. They stay focused on the critical success factors, high payoff activities, and clearly defined long-term goals. In the last three years, Luker has reduced claims, increased revenue and profitability, been commended by Cal-OSHA, and expanded their employment base to over two hundred. The investments made in the employees have increased Luker's competitive posture in their market, and they are focused and committed to building the organization's future to even greater heights of success.

Living an Abundant Life

We live in a world of abundance – a world that was created for us and filled with a wealth of resources that we may use to fulfill our needs and satisfy our desires. The abundance in the physical world is mirrored in the abundance of human potential within each individual. Much attention is given to the tragedy of wasted natural resources, and rightfully so. Even more tragic, however, is the waste that occurs when people fail to use their full potential. Recognize the wealth of untapped potential that lies within you and you will begin to marvel at its abundance.

The new-found confidence that is yours from the exercise of personal leadership attracts other people. Understanding and empathy are tools that enable you to motivate others to search for their own potential and to achieve success for themselves. Just as you have learned, those whose lives you touch will also learn that the only genuine understanding is self-understanding; the only true peace is internal peace; the only meaningful motivation is self-motivation based on an attitude of positive expectancy and the conviction that we all possess limitless potential.

When you are successful, you draw vitality and strength from the abundance of opportunity that surrounds you. By setting progressively higher goals, you maintain the necessary momentum to keep yourself on a constant course of personal leadership. The practice of goal setting is intended to be a lifelong pattern. The goal setter, like all winners, is marked by the determination. A winner never quits.

Clear Vision: Key to Your Future



David Byrd
President, LMI

Today I want to talk with you about the key to your future. One of the most distinguishing characteristics of humankind is the creative power of our imagination. There is significant power in our ability to imagine our ideal future. The LMI Process refers to this power as “vision.”

There were some studies conducted back in the 60s that scientifically substantiate the power of vision. A group of behavioral scientist randomly selected a group of junior high boys and girls and divided them into two groups. The test was to shoot a basketball through the hoop for a set number of free throws from the free throw line on a basketball court. The two groups were given an initial test without any practice to establish a base line. Then each group was given one week to practice.

For a set time period each day the two groups practiced shooting free throws; however, one group physically practiced with the ball and actually shooting it, while the second group practiced mentally by imagining standing at the foul line and shooting the ball successfully through the hoop.

After the one week of physical vs. mental practice, the two groups were pitted against each other in a final test. The purpose was to measure and compare the improvement from the first test. The result of the test showed that not only did the group who mentally practiced show the highest percentage of improvement but actually beat the group that had practiced

with the ball.

From this classic research grew the trend for professional athletes to spend specific practice time on positive vision of a successful performance.

Clear vision is the key to your future. Clear vision is the key to the future of your organization.

Ask yourself these questions. What vision do I hold for my future? How much time do I spend weekly imagining my success? How clearly and vividly do I see my future? How do

I feel when I vision my success? If you can answer these questions with clarity, you are well on your way to your desired future vision. If, however, you have difficulty with these questions, you would benefit from learning how to build a clear vision for your future and the future of your organization.

I think the founder of our organization, Paul J. Meyer, penned the most descriptive statement of vision years ago, and it goes like this:

“What ever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe, and enthusiastically act upon must inevitably come to pass.”

Until next time...

With Positive Expectancy,

David Byrd

President, Leadership Management Institute™

Committing to Organizational Goals

Goal setting is the most powerful tool at your disposal in the development of your organization. Used effectively, goal setting principles can greatly enhance your skill as an effective motivational leader. Throughout history strong leaders and organizations, armed with specific goals and the force of commitment, have shaped the destinies of millions. You and your organization can leave an imprint on the lives of others by setting worthwhile goals and committing to their achievement.

Effective leaders dare to make their own decisions and to direct their organization toward success. Goals create the confidence that comes from knowing where you and your team are going and how you intend to get there. Goals serve as a filter to eliminate extraneous demands. Goals bring to life a sense of order and purpose that sustains desire and motivation over a long period of time.

Designing Your Destiny

Your organization is a unique entity. No one outside your organization can choose the direction in which you will grow. You and your team members must dream your own dreams, identify your own goals, and design your own destiny. Define a logical starting place and an ultimate destination where your goals program will lead you. With these two points clearly stated, planning how to move from where you are now to your destination is relatively simple.

1. **Where your organization stands now.** Spend some time in honest assessment and evaluation of your present level of growth in the various aspects of your organization. Organizational evaluation helps you gain insight into your present situation. You will discover some outstanding strengths and some areas of needed growth. Use this information to build on your strengths and to select challenging goals for growth.

2. **Where you want to go.** Once you have defined your present status, next decide where you want the organization to go. Identify ultimate goals for you and your team – goals that define your leadership style and the results you wish to achieve from your effort. Next, identify a number of intermediate milestones along the way to those ultimate goals.

Those short- and intermediate-range goals involve all aspects of your organization – from people and productivity to maintenance and inventory. Carefully coordinate them so they are mutually supportive and so each one builds organizational growth and progress.

Where you want the organization to go may also include the long-range career plan you choose to pursue. Perhaps your career goal is to hold one of the top leadership positions in your company for a specific number of years before retirement. To support achievement of that career goal, set specific department or team goals for this year – goals that represent your appropriate contribution to the overall goals of the organization. Success in your present job brings you closer to success in your long-range career plan.

Defining where you and your organization want to go is a continuing process. Looking far into the future toward ultimate goals includes carefully choosing where you and your team want to be next year, next month, or by the end of this week or even day.

3. **How you will reach your destination.** When the first two steps have been completed, begin to develop workable plans for reaching your destination. Just as a travel agent must know when and where you want to begin and where you want to go before arranging reservations, you need to know where to be-

gin and where you want to go.

As you develop plans for achievement, include both short-range and long-range goals. Short-range goals are those that can be achieved in a

relatively brief time frame. Begin by setting goals you and your team can achieve within the next two weeks. Each short-range goal you achieve generates a feeling of accomplishment, energizes your motivation, and increases your team's belief in your leadership ability.

Also establish long-range goals that provide overall direction for the organization. Long-range goals may take six months, a year, or several years to achieve. Plan to reach them by setting short-range goals that move you closer to their ultimate attainment.

It is valuable to sit down and think about what you and your team have achieved so far, to consider where you want to go in the future, and to dream of the strategies you will follow in pursuit of those ideals. And remember, goal setting works best through a written plan.



“You and your team members must dream your own dreams, identify your own goals, and design your own destiny.”

Boost Your Problem Solving Skills

Problem solving is closely related to decision making. The processes are much the same. The first step in problem solving is to define the problem by evaluating the difference between the current situation and the desired goal. In other words, a problem is the difference between the goal and the result. The sooner you observe and correct any deviation between the goal and result, the smaller the problem will be.

Part of defining the problem is also identifying the causes. At times, the apparent problem is not the real one; it is merely a symptom. The real problem may be hidden beneath defensive accusations, confusing data, complex processes and procedures, or poorly constructed reports. Be sure you address the causes rather than the symptoms.

For example, one individual on your team may continually bombard you with questions. You need to ask yourself: *Is that really the problem? Or is it a symptom of a lack of training? Or is the real problem that this person once received a harsh reprimand for a decision and is now hesitant to proceed without prior approval?* You can usually narrow down inadequate performance to one of these three root problems: training, environment, or motivation.

After you define the problem, you need to decide whether it is even a problem that must be solved. Some problems resolve themselves in a short time without any action. Other problems are not worth your time to take action to solve. Spend a hundred dollars' worth of your time on hundred dollar problems, not twenty dollar problems. If a problem is not worth your time, assign the solving of it to someone else who is paid less than you are. Of course, you need to make sure that it will be solved before it becomes a more costly problem.

When the problem does require your attention to be solved, use this time proven formula for approaching the problem:

1. *Define the problem.* Make sure the real problem is defined clearly and relates to an important organizational or personal goal. Address *causes*, not effects or symptoms. You may find that a number of negative symptoms may all have the same root cause. By dealing with the root cause, you may solve more than one problem at a time.
2. *Set a deadline.* Set a deadline for making the final decision about a solution to be chosen. Allow adequate time to gather information, suggestions, and opinions from others.
3. *Identify the purpose to be met by the solution.* Refer to specific organizational and personal goals as guidelines for deciding exactly what the solution must accomplish.



- This prevents investing too much time and material in solving a relatively minor problem. Specifically state any criteria that must be met, including budget, time frame, quality requirements, efficiency, and simplicity.
4. *Compile and study information.* Collect and assemble information in a logical and useful form, and study the facts to be sure that you understand everything involved.
 5. *List possible solutions.* List all of the possible solutions. Make no attempt to rule out alternatives; use free association, visualization, and creativity to generate as many solutions as possible. Consider the possibility that a given solution could cause other problems. Decide if other actions will need to be taken to ensure a net positive effect, or if another solution altogether needs to be considered.
 6. *Make a choice.* Look over the list of possible solutions that you have made. Cross out any items that you know immediately you do not want to use. For each possible solution left on your list, answer the question, "What would happen if I chose this solution?" Then choose the one that appears to have the best possible chance of success.
 7. *Take action.* Decide what action must be taken to implement the solution. The action may be simple and require the attention of only one or two people, or it may have several steps and involve the whole department. Make sure that every person understands what to do, how, and why. Then make sure the predetermined steps are followed.
 8. *Request feedback.* Keep open the lines of communication between yourself and those who must carry out your decision. Be open to their ideas, and do not judge feedback based on your preconceived ideas about the person giving it. Let your team members know you are interested in their problems but that your instructions will be carried out. When necessary and practical, be willing to modify the plan when the feedback you receive indicates a need for adjustment.

Altering Your Attitudes and Habits

Since the moment of birth, you have been engaged in a constant process of forming habits, breaking them and forming new ones. As much as 95 percent of what you do each day is done from habit. Habits include attitudes and dominant patterns of thought as well as actions. Habit formation is a constructive way to meet life's challenges. Every day you encounter situations and experiences that require a conscious choice or a decision. But once a satisfactory decision has been made in a common set of circumstances, it is a waste of time and mental effort to make the conscious decision again and again. Instead, your brain "stores" for future use all the data from that first satisfactory decision. That, in simple terms, is the process of habit formation, a constructive and mentally economical way of dealing with routine activities.

If, in meeting a new situation, you make a bad choice or a poor decision – one that produces an unsatisfactory result – you mentally reject that choice and make a different one each time that situation recurs until you find an acceptable choice. Once you have found a satisfactory response, you adopt it as a standard for the future – a new habit. Bad habits creep in only when they are not recognized as bad. For example, someone who talks too much and listens too little may have formed that habit to gain stature and prestige by always having something "interesting" to say. The habit seems good because it gives one kind of satisfaction.

Remember that habits include both attitudes and actions. An attitude is a habit of reacting in a certain way each time you encounter the same situation. It is especially important to personal leadership to form success attitudes. Such attitudes of self-confidence, self-respect, enthusiasm and determination are merely special kinds of habits. They are mental and emotional habits as distinguished from action habits. And such internal habits control your behavior.

Attitudes, since they are habits of thought, are formed in the same way as habits of action. You find a thought pattern that gives you pleasure or satisfaction. You repeat it, and it

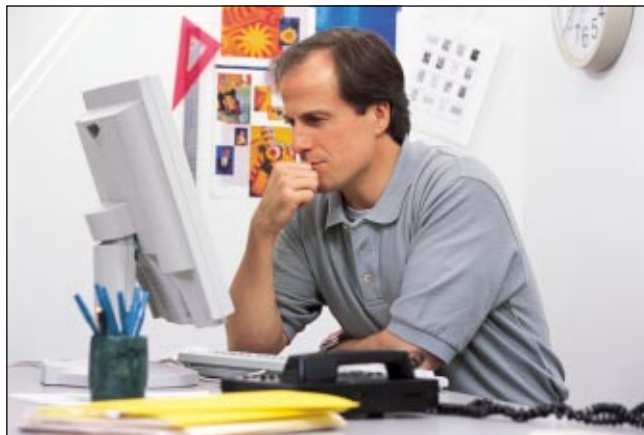
becomes habitual. Negative attitudes begin when people try to protect themselves from failure or from the fear of failure by saying to themselves, "I can't." The tragedy is that the satisfaction gained in this manner is insignificant compared to the exhilaration of achievement that could have been experienced by believing "I can."

Any change in attitude must come from internal understanding and acceptance. Insight always precedes change. Changes in attitudes that follow insight into yourself become permanent changes; any others are usually temporary. An attitude formed by blind acceptance of another's influence is subject to rapid change; but attitudes based on insight, commitment and belief and supported by a carefully planned course of action gain permanence. It follows naturally that your effectiveness in making attitude changes depends primarily on the extent of your insight into the reasons such changes are desirable. As you gain insight, you develop personal leadership. Your program of personal goals is the best possible tool for gaining that insight.

Another factor in the willingness to change is your attitude toward change itself. If you consistently resist change, you live in a dull, drab life. But when you accept change, you find joy in living and the excitement of new experiences, new challenges, and new dimensions. Capture the spirit of enthusiasm, and recognize the "thrill of the chase" as a reward of goal seeking.

Dealing with Demotivators

You were born to lead, but in the process of adjusting to the complexities of the world, you are sometimes so occupied with satisfying basic needs that you can give little thought, time, or attention to self-fulfillment and development of personal leadership. Habits developed in this context become demotivators. Most demotivators can be lumped together as fears, worries and doubts. These demotivators can control only those who lack self-confidence. Build your self-confidence, and the demotivators disappear. Build a consistent *attitude* of self-confidence, substitute it for fear, and fear is dissolved. Then you live a rewarding life full of self-realization, achievement and success. A personal goals program is the most positive approach you can make to breaking through demotivators and building a strong sense of personal leadership.



“Remember that habits include both attitudes and actions.”

Improving Your Ability to Communicate

One of the quickest and most powerful ways to grow personally and professionally is to improve your ability to communicate. Effective communication involves two methods of transmitting information: • writing, which includes handwritten notes, typed memos, letters, and E-mail • verbal communication, which utilizes the power of the “spoken word,” including sending the message (speaking the words) and receiving the message.

Improving your skills in both methods of transmitting information – writing and speaking – will enable you to use more of your potential, to develop skills and abilities that may have lain dormant, and to interface with people more effectively. Without good communication, you accomplish only what you can do alone, which inevitably is only a fraction of what you can do in joint effort with others. Improving your communication skills will enable you as a team member to contribute even more to your work group, and ultimately to your organization’s success.

Essentials to Effective Communication

Communication is the process of developing shared understanding. If only one side understands the message, communication has not taken place. Only when verbal, written, or physical messages are understood by both sender and receiver does communication actually occur.

What is required for communication to happen? *First*, someone must send the message. *Second*, someone must receive the message. *Third*, the best words must be chosen for relaying the message, and the best method for delivering those words must be selected. If one of these three elements is missing, communication cannot take place.

Good communication assigns each element a unique role or responsibility. Good communication is defined as developing appropriate, shared understanding through verbal, written, or physical messages. The role of all three must be clearly defined:

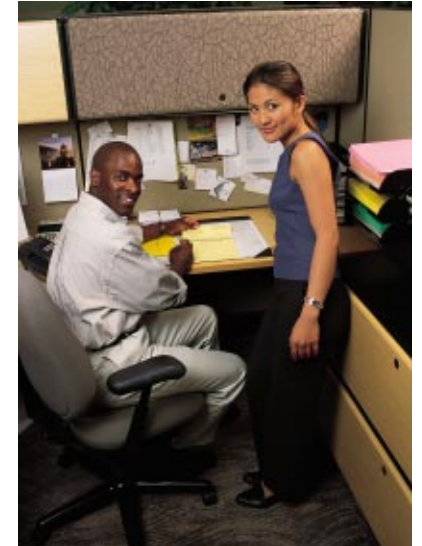
- ◆ **Sender** – The role of the sender is clarity. The responsibility of the sender is to identify the goal of their message and to formulate it with words that best accomplish that goals.
- ◆ **Receiver** – The receiver’s role is to understand the message through careful listening, asking probing questions, or seeking detailed explanations. Unfortunately,

the role of the receiver is often overlooked or minimized, but understanding the message is essential for effective communication.

- ◆ **Delivery method and choice of words** – An appropriate, successful message embodies the right words and appropriate delivery. Often, the choice of words depends upon how the message is to be delivered. Give close attention to the best words to use and the most satisfying delivery method for sending them.

Each of these three elements has a responsibility; when one of the elements gives up or fails that responsibility, communication breaks down. To be successful or to get the desired results, the message must be put together with thought and skill. In addition, the most appropriate delivery method for the particular message must be selected.

When you learn to use these three elements skillfully, you will earn untold benefits, including increased respect and understanding from others, improved relationships with family, friends, and



coworkers, the satisfaction of doing your job better, and so on. Improved communication and success, of course, never come look for you. You must work at becoming a better communicator.

Taking Responsibility for Improvement

Studies show that the majority of people feel that they are taking the proper steps to communicate effectively. The problem, some individuals maintain, is with “those other people.” If blame is always shifted to others, no improvement in communication can be made. If communication is ineffective, both sides have failed and must take responsibility for improvement.

When people are able to communicate with each other effectively, productivity is enhanced and everyone involved feels happy, satisfied, and mutually rewarded. Orders are filled correctly, and on time. Workers have a clear mental picture of the contribution they make to the “big picture.” Leaders get good information from their support team. Feelings, instructions, desires, and requirements are all communicated effectively.

Bridging the Gap Between Potential and Performance

Since 1966, Leadership Management Institute™ has been bridging the gap between potential and performance by helping organizations and individuals evaluate their strengths and opportunities through implementation of the unique and proven LMI Process™.

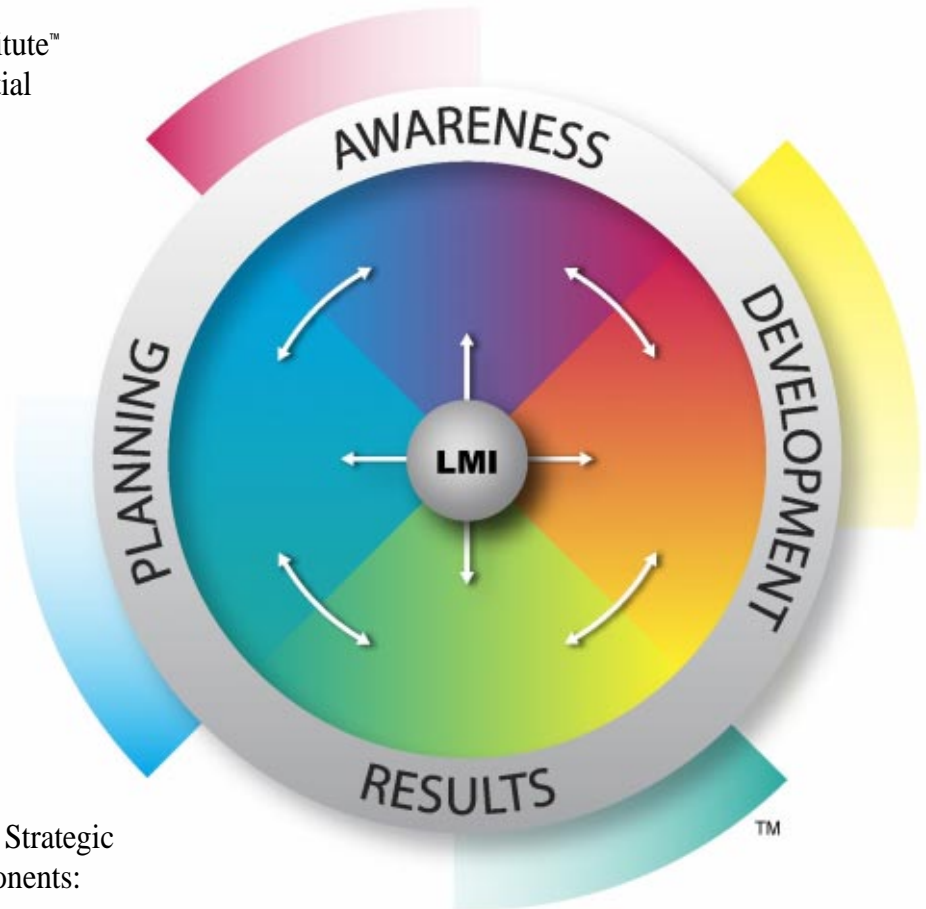
The LMI Process™ ...

- Develops leaders who, in turn, empower their people to use their untapped talents and abilities.
- Identifies key areas the organization should focus on in order to reach the next level of success.
- Gives direction to an effective solution and delivers measurable results.
- Practices a 93 percent effective leadership model.

The LMI Process™ is designed around a Strategic Development™ model with four vital components:

- Awareness
- Development
- Planning
- Results Management.

LMI® tools and processes have been making a difference in organizations and individuals for 40 years in more than 60 countries.



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