



Mars University –
Center for Creative Leadership

Filling the Senior Leader Pipeline



Center for
Creative
Leadership®

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Executive Summary

In 2006, Mars was growing faster than their talent pipeline could develop senior leaders, and the disparity was forecasted to grow even larger over the next decade. They needed a way to accelerate their leadership capacity. Mars partnered with the Center for Creative Leadership (Global Top 5 Provider of Leadership Solutions) to prime leaders who were mission ready for their next leadership role.

CHALLENGE

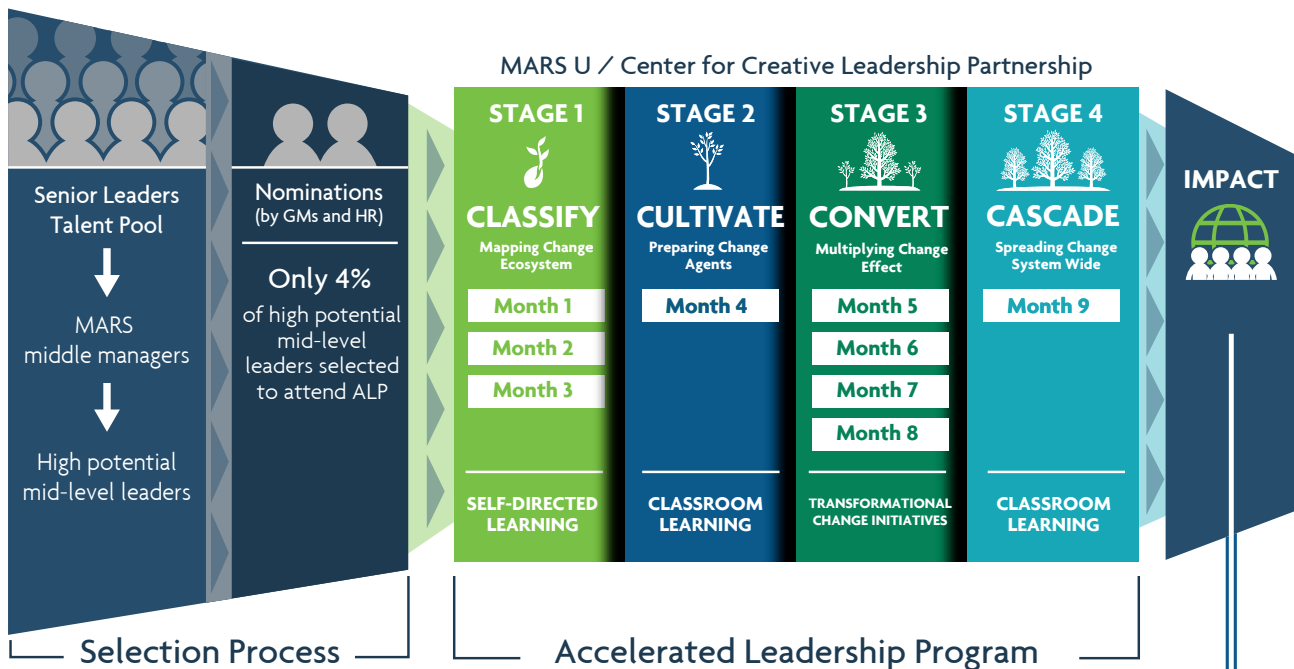


Increase the number of “ready now” leaders for senior leadership positions.



Accelerate promotion rate of high-potentials to fill the senior leader talent pipeline.

L&D INITIATIVE



IMPACT



20% increase in leaders ready for senior leadership positions



2x the rate of promotions to senior level positions

+ Bonus Impact +

7.1 Payback ratio from profit generated by the transformational change initiatives	\$300 thousand Incremental earnings per participant	\$15 million Incremental earnings to MARS in the last 3 years.
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9 years running

348 Participants in 19 cohorts

109 Senior Leader Mentors

11 Global Locations of F2F Sessions

“That is the secret behind the success of ALP,” said Tomi Lyle, Mars’ Global Director of People and Organization for Procurement. “You have this knowledge about who you are, you are navigating this business challenge and you have this incredible support network that enables you to progress. You have those constant three legs of a stool over 10 months.”



“Mars pushed us to start partnering in ways we had never been challenged with before,” said CCL’s David Dinwoodie, Vice President, Leadership Solutions. “Starting with applied research to determine the leadership success and failure factors inherent in the Mars ecosystem; to co-creating every component of every activity that participants undergo; to a radically different approach to coaching and mentoring over the nine-month process; to promoting the value of learning through failures; to measuring the financial business impact of each participants’ transformational challenge; to handcrafting a technology platform that provides a completely customized, seamless experience; to a flipped classroom where participants guide their own learning experience in powerful ways.”



Introduction

About the Team:

Mars Incorporated and CCL® have a 17 year partnership, which was strengthened through the development of the Accelerated Leadership Program. Mars University (Mars U) is the centralized location where Mars leaders are developed from first time managers to senior leaders.

MARS

Mars Incorporated (Mars) is:

- A 100-year old family-owned business that incorporates the five principles of Quality, Responsibility, Mutuality, Efficiency and Freedom into their products and practices.
- As a global manufacturer of confectionery, pet food and other food products and a provider of animal care services, the Mars Family of Associates is 80,000 employees strong in 78 countries around the world.
- A rapidly growing organization, moving to ensure highly-skilled leaders implement core principles throughout new acquisitions and organic growth.



Center for Creative Leadership®

Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) is:

- One of the top leadership development firms in the world. For over four decades, CCL has helped transform individuals, teams, organizations and societies to achieve powerful, measurable, and enduring results.
- A non-profit with offices across the globe, CCL helps communities in need through scholarships, volunteerism, donations, pro-bono work and sharing of talent, services and materials.
- Focused on practice and development of leadership for the benefit of society worldwide. CCL has supported tens of thousands of diverse organizations in more than 130 countries across 6 continents, helping more than a million leaders at all levels.



The Challenge

THE CHALLENGE

In 2006, Mars was growing both organically and through acquisitions faster than their talent management pipeline could develop leaders. Additionally, Mars was changing its management strategy from a geographic leadership model to a segmentation model in order to better manage its diverse holdings. The 10-year growth model at the time estimated that Mars would need to double its senior leader pipeline, growing from 400 to 800. A review of the top 1,000 jobs crystallized the issues that general managers across the organization had noticed – middle managers were not ready to take on senior level positions. As the company expanded, more leadership roles would open up, and the leaders who filled them needed to be mission-ready with a firm understanding of Mars’ culture and values.

Mars’ hiring strategy had brought in talented, high-potential leaders, but the existing talent management pipeline encouraged leaders to stay in their position for three years. With a goal of maintaining an 80% internal promotion rate, Mars realized it was on the brink of a severe talent drought. The processing time for mid-level leaders couldn’t keep up with the pace of Mars’ projected growth.

Jon Shephard, Mars’ Chief Learning Officer, was tasked with finding a solution to rapidly develop leaders just below the mission-critical level and prime them for the next leadership role. While each region previously had its own leadership school and related program via Mars U, developing leaders for these mission-critical positions was now a global challenge and required a centralized approach. The challenge was clear. Mars needed to:

- Increase the number of “ready now” leaders for senior leadership positions.
- Accelerate promotion rate of high-potentials to fill the senior leader talent pipeline.

“These mission-critical roles were positions that we couldn’t afford to leave open,” explained Kristin Colber-Baker, Global Director, Leadership Development. “We needed to prepare high-potential leaders more quickly for senior management positions that required successfully leading others and driving organizational change initiatives.”



The Commitment

THE COMMITMENT

CCL had already been supporting Mars' executive leadership program, Mars Leadership at the Peak, since 2001. In 2007, to make high potentials mission ready for their next leadership role, CCL and Mars committed to a new offering: the Accelerated Leadership Program (ALP). At the outset, groups within Mars analyzed how current leaders inside the company rose to the top. The conclusion was that these leaders needed to have a proven track record of taking on more complex business challenges and had to be well connected or networked across the organization. For this reason, ALP needed to include ways for leaders to make connections within the organization, as well as establish a track record of problem solving.

ALP is a comprehensive nine-month leadership development experience. The program builds on Mars' internal program and is structured around a four stage Eco-Change Model which takes delegates through the process of classifying, cultivating, converting and cascading organizational change.



Classify: Participants learn to map their change ecosystem by doing ethnographic research and conducting experiments.

Cultivate: Participants prepare themselves to impact their environment by learning their strengths and weaknesses of leading change.

Convert: Participants multiply their change effects by influencing key stakeholders across the business.

Cascade: Participants use storytelling or storyboards to spread their changes system wide and accomplish a significant milestone, which they then share with Mars' senior executives.

ALP evolved over nine years with two distinct versions designed around accelerating leaders to senior level positions.

[2 Dinwoodie, D. L., Criswell, C., Tallman, R., Wilburn, P., Petrie, N., Quinn, L., ... & McEvoy, L. \(2014\). Transformational Change: An Ecosystem Approach Lessons from Nature for Those Leading Change in Organizations. Center for Creative Leadership.](#)

Original Accelerated Leadership Program (2008-2013)

The first iteration of ALP consisted of traditional leadership content (assessments and coaching) with a focus on making participants progress on a particular business challenge, rather than a transformational change initiative. It focused on transforming the individual. “ALP was designed around that first time deep dive to understand who you are as a person, your different leadership skills and style and how you applied that to solving problems in the business,” said Mars’ Tomi Lyle.



“When ALP started, it was initially about getting our people ready,” added Mars’ Kristin Colber-Baker. “It was taking complex issues – whether it be global or from a cross-segment standpoint – and sorting out the business challenge, with many stakeholders involved, and getting it across the finish line.”

While many leaders were seeing success in the original ALP design, only 30% of leaders were making significant progress on their business challenge, falling short of the 70% goal.

Revised Accelerated Leadership Program (2014-2017)


Mars' business was becoming more complex, requiring leaders to understand and operate within interconnected networks. Promotion requirements were changing. The program needed to reflect the changing business environment, consolidation of segments and cascading effects of connectedness across the globe.

To facilitate the revised program, CCL conducted extensive surveys and interviews coupled with analysis of the previous five years of ALP data. CCL identified how and why some leaders progressed on their complex business challenges, while others fell short. The learning from these activities led to a revamped offering.

The New ALP:

- Emphasized the 70-20-10 rule (70% of knowledge is from job related experiences, 20% from interactions with others and 10% from formal educational events).² A significant investment in a technology platform was made to enable 70% of on-the-job learning.
- Redefined “business challenge” as a transformational change initiative that would solve a significant problem in the business and prepare participants to move to the next level. It focused on transforming an individual within a business context.
- Increased the commitment from all players involved—Mars, mentors, CCL trainers and coaches—to create a seamless experience for participants throughout the process. This entailed innovation in both the coaching and mentoring process.

² McCauley, C. D., Derue, D. S., Yost, P. R., & Taylor, S. (2013). Experience-driven leader development: Models, tools, best practices, and advice for on-the-job development. John Wiley & Sons.



“From that research, we crafted a Mars-specific change model,” said CCL’s David Dinwoodie. “We were 100% committed to replicate the ecosystem Mars was leading and driving change within. Embedded within this commitment was developing emotional intelligence to build relationships, influence the right people and successfully drive transformational change to step up in the leadership pipeline.”

A Sustainable Partnership that Evolved over Time

The duration and breadth of the program is a testament to Mars' financial commitment. ALP has been running for nine years, across four continents with 19 different cohorts. It has endured significant leadership changes from both organizations: There have been three different Mars CLOs and four different directors of the leadership college, as well several CCL account faculty and account teams.

"In the leadership space, it's hard to grow something that lives beyond the founders," said former Global Markets Faculty and CCL Lead Curriculum Designer for ALP.* "ALP transcended beyond multiple teams. On both sides, people put in the effort to keep it alive and impactful. It's grown and benefited from each person who has touched it—which is why it's such a successful program today."

"Mars' culture is based on five principles," explained Mars' Tomi Lyle. "Mutuality, responsibility and quality are among them. Those elements I see in CCL. Responsible is in terms of being cutting-edge leadership. Mutual is what is good for a person is really good for this business. Quality is the reputation for having a fantastic product for a fair price. I think those elements make our organizations work so well together. CCL continually helps us to learn and grow."

"Our 17 year partnership with CCL and 9 years running ALP has been a critical factor for how successful our leaders have been in driving business growth," said Mars Chief Learning Officer Antoine Mangin. "One of the keys to success is the alignment between CCL's core values and our Five Principles. That level of alignment has ensured that every leadership initiative not only helps us develop great leaders, but also makes a significant impact to our business."



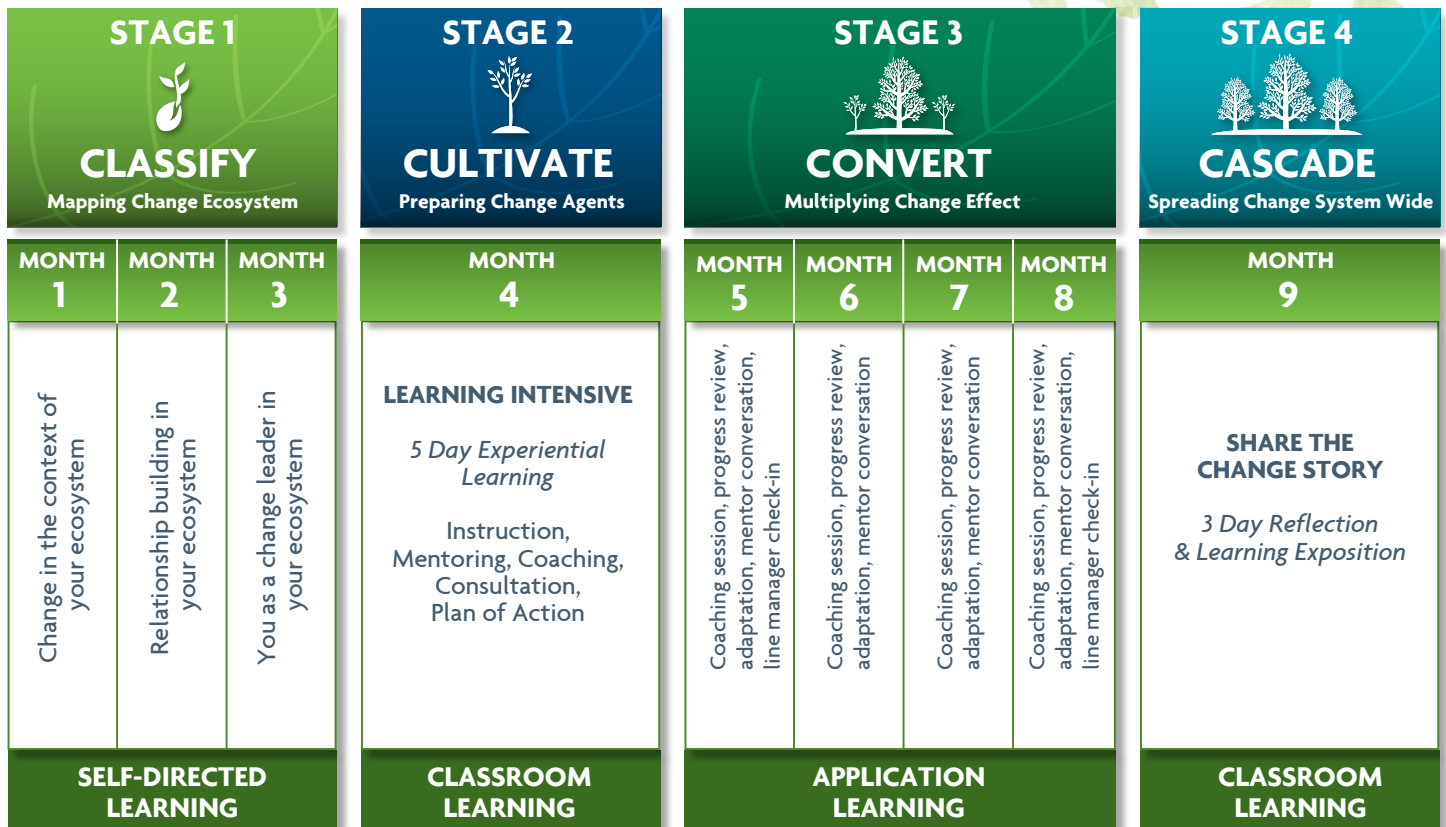
*Some names could not be listed for privacy requests



The L&D Initiative

The L&D Initiative

ALP adopts a learning-by-doing approach. Participants leverage storytelling and specific, unique business challenges to practice and codify their understanding. The program leverages individual assessments, expert facilitation, mentoring, peer consultation and executive coaching methodologies to help participants successfully execute their change transformation initiatives. The program lasts nine months and includes a range of face-to-face and e-learning solutions.



TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE PLAN

Ideas Into Action

Nomination Process

The participant selection methodology is rigorous. The pool is drawn from the top level within Mars' middle management who are rated as high-potentials and are likely to be promoted at least one if not two levels. The general manager and head of human resources must agree on the individual's nomination. Mars University Leadership College Executives must approve as well.

The Transformational Change Plan

The Transformational Change Plan (TCP) is at the heart of the program. It serves as a vehicle for leaders to learn through the experience of leading an organizational change initiative over a nine-month period. Examples of participants' TCPs include:

- Transforming P&O to a best-in-class function by adopting global standard processes, improving technology enablers and deploying associate service centers
- Fix, grow and transform a category that has been in decline in the last 20 years by re-engaging Mars associates and making massive organizational and culture changes
- Build a reliable and sustainable supply of Raw and Packing Material pipeline in coordination with Commercial, R&D, Logistics and Manufacturing to meet our regions significance growth strategy

For ALP, transformation is a process of profound and radical change that orients an organization in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness. Unlike 'turnaround' (which implies incremental progress on the same plane), transformation is a change of character that has little or no resemblance to the past.



Questions used to Guide ALP Participants in Building Their Transformational Change Plan

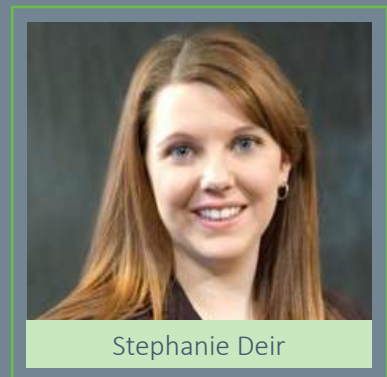
9 Steps:

1. Name Your Initiative: What is your transformational change initiative?
2. Changes to Make: What needs to change at Mars for you to be successful in driving the transformation?
3. Stakeholder Groups–Mapping: What stakeholder groups do you need to consider based on what needs to change at Mars?
4. Identify Change Agents: Which relationships need to be built in your stakeholder groups?
5. Know Your Agents: What do you need to know about yourself and others to build the relationships that will advance your transformational change?
6. Fortify Relationships: How will you fortify key relationships?
7. Focus on Relationships: What will you do to ensure that you focus on relationships when your natural default may be task-oriented problem solving?
8. Relationship Task List: Make a plan to focus on relationships.
9. Adapt and Influence: What have you learned?

Technology

Over nine months, participants spend eight days in formal classroom learning. The rest of the time they are working on their transformational change initiative hand-in-hand with their coach, faculty, mentor and line manager. It was therefore key to have a technological solution that supported self-directed and applied learning aligned to the 70-20-10 model.

“Early on, we discovered a major challenge: capturing a global executive’s attention over nine months, without making it feel like we are increasing their ‘to do’ list,” said CCL’s Stephanie Deir, Global Project Manager. “To solve this, Mars and CCL partnered to create an online platform that is both accessible to the global executive on any device, at any time and makes them accountable to the faculty, coaches and mentors.”



Classify

Month 1 - Initiate the Ecosystem

PURPOSE: To align your change transformation with the MARS ecosystem

In Month 1 you will be focusing on alignment with overarching organizational priorities and understanding the key factors in driving transformational change in the MARS ecosystem.

DELEGATE ACTIVITIES	
1.1 IDENTIFY: YOUR INDIVIDUAL SPONSOR	10 minutes
1.2 DO: REFLECT ON YOUR LEARNING NEEDS	10 minutes
1.3 DO: COMPLETE RATER LISTS AND BEGIN SELF-ASSESSMENTS	30 minutes
1.4 SCHEDULE: CALL WITH YOUR MENTOR	10 minutes
1.5 DO: TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE REFLECTION	Complete 45 minutes
1.6 WI FOR M	
1.7 RE SELL M	
1.8 DO TRANS	
1.9 DO CONVI	
1.10 S YOUR	



[Watch a short 2 min video that demo's the platform.](#)

The platform, a custom built technology licensed by CCL, holds the content and integrates learning through videos, reading, a virtual work-flow process and interaction with peers. It uses visual maps that shows users when and what they need to do, so there are no surprises or barriers.

100% of participants said that they were prepared to a “great” extent for classroom learning by completing self-directed learning on the platform. 93% of participants said that the platform helped them apply learning to a “great” extent.

“The platform was a powerful part of the best program I ever attended in my career,” said one participant.

Using Feedback to Monitor Change

To drive change, ALP includes three feedback systems: Assessments, mentors, and coaches.

“Through all the feedback and support, I was able to see that ‘I got this. I am capable. I have the confidence. Now I need the courage. So go and do it.’ That has lots to do with ready-now leaders,” said ALP alumna Saskia Connell, P&O Director, UK Wrigley.

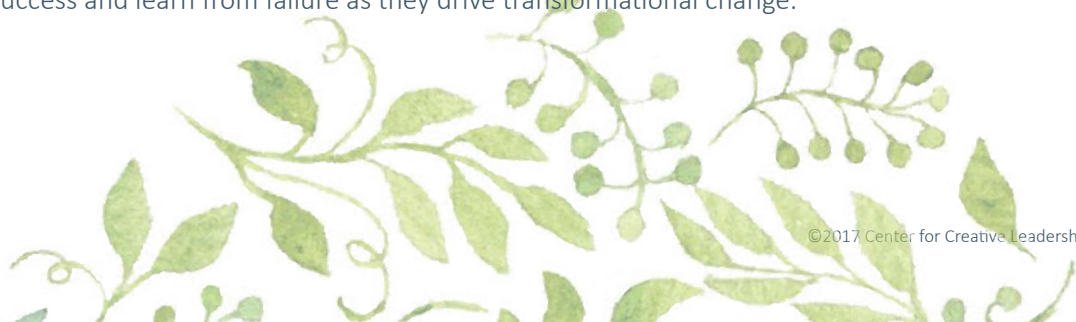


“It is quite impactful when you have a coach, mentor and line manager all aligned on leadership development,” added Sandra Manolescu, General Manager Royal Canin Canada and a participant on the 2010 ALP program. “One of the greatest things ALP gave me was power of awareness through all the feedback and assessment. Intent and impact need to match. My intent was always good related to my motivation. But I learned that the impact doesn’t always match. It was a great gift to see this.”



The five different assessments included two 360-degree assessments and three reputation-centered assessments looking at both participants’ bright and dark sides to their personality. Assessments were integrated in the first face-to-face session.

The ALP process requires eight mentors from each region to mentor up to three participants. These mentors are a diverse representation of senior leaders from across the business. They have relevant experience in leading change at Mars, are committed to the process and are approachable and available. In addition, they are very forthright in sharing their stories of failure and pushing participants to take risks, overcome adversity, celebrate success and learn from failure as they drive transformational change.



“Mentors play a huge role throughout the nine-month process,” said Phil Willburn, CCL Global Markets Senior Faculty. “They provide strategic insights, help participants work out their tough technical challenges and make connections for them across the business. Participants’ exposure to these senior executives through mentoring is often times the avenue to promotion.”

Mentors also benefit from the exposure, as the following quotes demonstrate:

- “As an ALP mentor, I was very impressed with the potential for organizational ROI based on the quality of the transformational change projects.”
- “Being a mentor is a huge and inspiring responsibility.”
- “I believe ALP helps drive accountability for the business outcomes.”
- “Learnt from my mentee that even a quick chat can have a big impact.”

The coach was involved throughout the program experience, supporting the participant through their self-directed learning. CCL led a day-long training for the coaching team. This session aligned the coaches around the goals and vision for the program. Coaches had access to program content so that they could then support and reinforce the learning points. They leveraged “coaching scripts”—key summary points used in their interactions with participants.

“CCL did a brilliant job in developing these scripts,” Mars’ Kristin Colber-Baker said. “This kept the transformational challenge central to the conversations.”

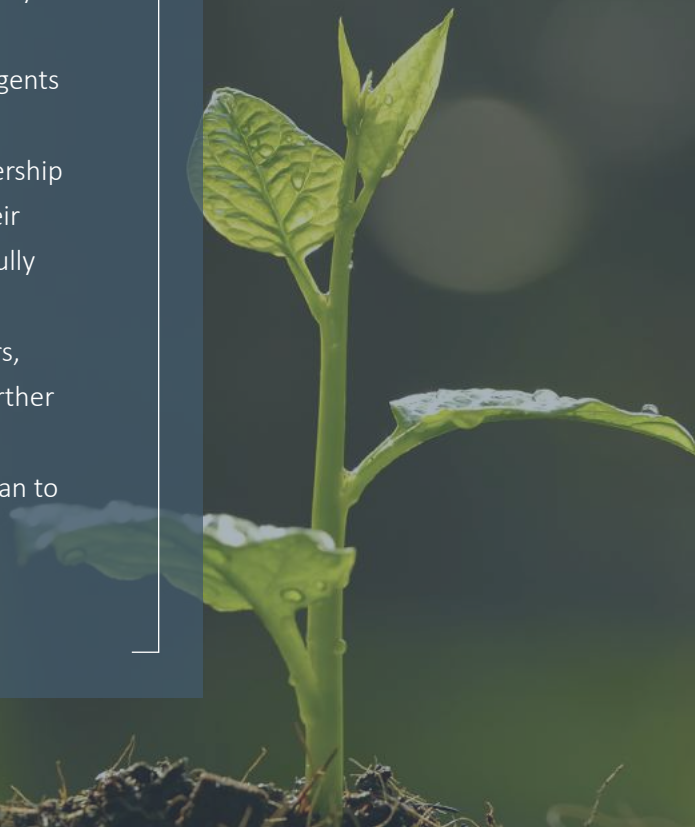
“We had to ensure that the coaching was sharply focused and that the coaches themselves were completely clear about the important role we were asking them to play,” said Sandra Ellison, CCL Lead Coach. “We consciously built a coaching team that was aligned and highly committed.”



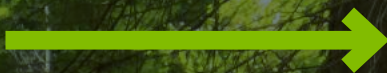
Learning Measurements

ALP was designed to ensure that leaders leaving the program were prepared to take on higher-level positions within Mars. For this reason, the process indicators and learning measurements were centered on both outcomes and competencies. Upon completion, participants would be able to:

- Lead significant change initiatives with organizational impact
- Identify enhancers and inhibitors that are critical to successfully execute the transformational change process
- Effectively frame the change process and influence change agents by employing emotional intelligence
- Assess their individual preferences, strengths, areas for leadership development and craft a developmental plan to enhance their leadership effectiveness and their contribution to a successfully executed transformational change plan
- Lead through others by harnessing the experience of mentors, senior management, peers, direct reports and coaches to further their goals and contribution to organizational success
- Apply the skills used to execute a transformational change plan to other organizational change initiatives
- Develop the ability to affect sustainable change in myriad situations/environments



THE IMPACT



Across the Business



Juan Martin

“ALP truly accelerates our high-potentials’ readiness and capacity to take on senior leader positions,” said Juan Martin, President of Multisales and the Mars ALP Executive Sponsor. “The rate of change is now faster than it was five years ago. ALP provides the platform for our top 4% of high-potentials to not only learn to drive change effectively across our global system, but also prepare themselves to take on senior positions more rapidly.”

ALP has made a measurable impact, not only to the talent pipeline challenge, but also to Mars’ ROI.

- The talent pipeline is fuller for higher mission critical roles and coverage rates than in 2008 when the program launched. There has been a **20% increase** in our promotion ready senior leaders in the past 5 years, largely due to the impact of ALP.
- ALP alumni get promoted to senior-level positions at **twice the rate** than similarly identified high potentials who have not attended the program.
- The earnings generated by the transformational change initiatives has resulted in a **7.1 payback ratio**.
 - o For every leader Mars sends through ALP, the business can expect nearly **\$300,000** of incremental earnings.
 - o Since Mars began tracking the financial impact of transformational change in 2014, ALP alumni have generated nearly **\$15 million** in incremental earnings for the business. This doesn’t take into account the financial impact prior to 2014.
- **9,396 key stakeholders** have been influenced by ALP alumni—an average of 27 stakeholders per participant.
- Over the last five years, the program has averaged a **rating of 4.88** (on a rating scale form 1-5) on outcomes. Additionally, senior leaders have been able to gain visibility to similar challenges faced by their peers across the globe. They can then leverage their insight into this network to combine efforts and streamline results.

The program impact has spilled into other areas related to Mars' business. Tomi Lyle specifically noted two new recruits who decided to leave competitors to join Mars in large part because of the company's commitment to leadership development. In both cases, she was able to communicate personal examples from ALP that demonstrate how Mars invests in developing leaders.

“What has made ALP an incredible home run is that you typically think of professional development dollars and time as something that will pay off over the long run,” said Mars' Kristin Colber-Baker. “The compelling surprise is that you can do unbelievable professional development like ALP while still generating ROI in the near and long term.”



Individual Transformation

According to Kristin Colber-Baker, alumni of the program on the whole are intentional about the leadership shadow that they cast. “This might impact the way they convey authenticity, motivate and give people freedom to deliver results within the business and demonstrate the critical importance of putting customers and consumers at the center of the conversation,” she said.

“This program changes the whole relationship that many managers have to leadership. It helps them gain confidence, the ability to network and solve real world problems,” says CCL’s Phil Willburn. “That doesn’t end when the course ends. It stays with them throughout their career. It truly makes them better change leaders and prepares them to take on more senior leadership roles and continually drive transformational change.”

“Through the program’s coaching and emphasis on managing stakeholders, I was much more prepared to have difficult conversations,” says Mars’ Saskia Connell. “It was helpful to see what I could influence, where I needed additional support and how to tap senior leaders who were aware of the project and were either peers of this difficult person or senior to him. It wasn’t something that I would have thought to do in the past.”

“Being a senior leader, you need to understand what you are good at, what you are not good at and what you are going to do about that,” Mars’ Tomi Lyle explained. “That was the biggest ‘aha moment for me’. I needed to gain perspective about how to lead through transformation. That perspective was around leading others through and not always getting things through on my own. It was a big step change for me.”

Tomi Lyle sees this type of impact for other ALP alumni as well. “I see a new confidence of individuals who are growing as leaders,” she adds. “They have different ways of thinking as leaders, as line managers and as team players. If you sum this up, it is about the critical thinking skills that have resulted. This has benefited the company the most. They are revitalized in terms of their energy for learning and taking on business challenges.”

APPENDIX

Sample ALP Storyboard



Rob Nagel

Mars ALP participant Rob Nagel, PPI and Facilities Manager R&D, outlines his leadership journey, which resulted in an additional \$5 million delivered back to Mars in the first year alone.

ROB WHAT IF... **R&D** AND MANUFACTURING SHARED A CULTURE OF CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT SO THAT WE ALWAYS DELIGHT CONSUMERS AROUND THE WORLD?

R&D **MANUF'**

TRANSFORMATION

Head in the Clouds
MORE THAN 6 Σ
INNOVATION!!!
PRODUCTS 'n' PROCESSES
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

EFFICIENCY
SCALE • LEAN
GROUNDED • LOW-RISK TOLERANCE

IN THE PAST... **2** SEPARATE CAMPS

MY GOAL: JOINT VENTURE

STRUGGLED FOR
CREDIBILITY & PULL

R&D-led
PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED
LARGE IMPROVEMENTS
NEEDED AT EVERY SITE

MY BIGGEST CHALLENGES

1 COMMUNICATING A CLEAR, COMPELLING STRATEGIC VISION

2 BUILDING COMMITMENT & TRUST THRU COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

\$5 MIL' DELIVERED BACK TO COMPANY THE 1ST YEAR!

SAVINGS DELIVERED QUICKLY, — WITH RESULTS AND REQUESTS Poured IN!!!

PILOT SUCCESS!
VISION & ROAD MAP
COPY ACROSS ALL SITES

CROWLEY & CO. — C. REG. GERSCH

Sample ALP Storyboard



Josh Olken

Mars ALP participant Josh Olken, Customer Marketing Director, Mars Chocolate US, uses a storyboard to explain how ALP prepared him to step into a new role and to find new ways to drive impact, despite dealing with difficult changes.





MARS UNIVERSITY

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