

LEVEL X

The Leadership Velocity Experience



GO BIG CREATIVE LAB

Program Overview

Needs Identification

- Leadership development is a critical issue facing organizations today.
- Level X is a way for emerging and experienced leaders to utilize design thinking to work through leadership challenges in an immersive, peer-to-peer environment.
- Design thinking has been successful in solving “wicked” problems across a wide variety of industries, cultures, and markets.
- Design thinking has been successfully implemented by Fortune 100 companies and organizations of all sizes to solve challenges ranging from product design to global human crises.

Program Description

- Level X is a leadership program that uses design thinking for organizational development
- Level X actively engages participants in the hands-on design and build of a custom electric vehicle
- Level X uses the concept of velocity and metaphors found in vehicle dynamics (power, conflict, steering, traction, support, etc.) to prompt leadership discussions and activities
- Level X features purposeful team-building activities and discussions that illuminate leadership challenges, provoke inquisitive, human-centered solutions, and produce outcomes-based results

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn how the concept of velocity and metaphors related to vehicle dynamics can help frame and address leadership challenges
- Collaborate to build a tangible representation (the car) of their organization and culture
- Use design thinking to uncover leadership issues within their organization — not just the symptoms of those problems
- Learn how to creatively work through iterative processes to design solutions for leadership challenges
- Practice empathy in discussions regarding specific leadership issues
- Learn how to apply Systematic Inventive Thinking (SIT) as one model for problem solving
- Create an actionable design brief and road map for implementation, complete with timelines

Success Benchmarks

- Specific client outcomes are unique to each organization. Success benchmarks will be identified as part of the Level X program with outcomes defined in the design brief.
- Participants will be held accountable for implementation by program peers as well as the Level X facilitator and/or coach(es)
- Level X facilitator and/or coach(es) will follow-up with participants to measure progress. Standard follow up intervals are 1, 3, and 12 weeks after program date and can be modified as necessary

Frequently Asked Questions

Where does the Level X name come from?

Level X is a pseudo-acronym for Leadership Velocity Experience (**LE**adership **VE**LOCITY **eX**perience).

Why Velocity?

Speed describes how fast an object is moving. Velocity defines both how fast *and* in which direction the object is moving. In this same way, leaders define velocity within their organization. In addition to setting the pace, they plot the specific direction as well.

Why build a car?

Experiential learning has been proven to increase the absorption, retention and application of information. It also engages multiple learning styles (visual, aural, verbal, physical, logical, social).

More than a fun exercise, the car and the build process is a tangible manifestation of the organization. Participants will customize their vehicle to represent their particular corporate culture, including corresponding opportunities for organizational growth.

What is a Wicked Problem?

Wicked problems are not evil, just difficult to solve. Design thinking approaches these problems as exciting opportunities for creativity and innovation. A design thinking approach does not assume a solution from the outset but creates iterative tests that are subsequently refined based on successful outcomes.

Who should participate?

Ideally, a mixture of emerging and experienced leaders. This includes those in the C-Suite as well as those who report up. All participants should have some leadership role within the organization.

We are not a creative organization, why would we do this program?

While Level X utilizes design thinking, this is not to be confused with design in the aesthetic sense. Design thinking is strategic and outcomes based. The Level X program features design processes as a means to solve tangible problems.

Everyone is creative in some capacity, and part of the program is freeing that creativity. Level X requires the participation of all individuals and leverages each person's unique strengths to solve specific organizational challenges.



Design thinking is a human-centered approach to problem solving.

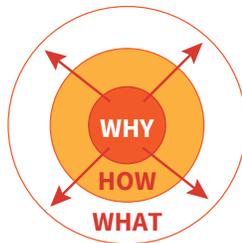
Design thinking is...

Human Centered

- Empathetic and seeks to understand people's needs in order to creatively meet those needs
- Asks "what makes life better?"
- About understanding culture and context as much as information gathering

Inquisitive

- Seeks to ask the right questions in order to solve the right problems, rather than just symptoms of those problems
- Starts with the "Why?" and communicates inside out to drive behavior



Iterative

- Recognizes that problem solving is a cyclical process of understanding, exploration, prototyping and evaluation
- Features rapid prototyping to speed up the process of innovation; building in order to think

Divergent

- Concerned with creating choices and exploring new ideas and alternatives
- Asks "how might we...?"

Participatory

- Shifts from passive to active experiences that are about participation and not consumption
- Requires and benefits from participation of all, even "non-designers"

Collaborative

- Integrates opposing ideas and constraints to create new solutions
- Solves challenges by utilizing the people who face them every day
- Finds intersection between desirability, viability, and feasibility



Outcomes Based

- A design brief is created to define desired outcomes, map out action plans, identify accountability benchmarks, and measure success criteria.

How It Works

Intake Assessment

Level X begins with an intake assessment with the executive leadership team, HR, or other key stakeholders within the organization. The purpose of this initial assessment is to define perceived issues that exist within the company and discuss the desired changes and outcomes. The Level X curriculum will further confirm or challenge findings of this initial assessment.

Time commitment: 1-2 hour meeting prior to scheduled Level X session.

Level X Session(s)

- 1 full day; can be broken up into 2 half-day sessions if necessary
- 8-12 people, typically a mix of seasoned and emerging leaders



Discussion Topics

Each discussion topic begins with a correlation of leadership to velocity and vehicle dynamics. This is designed to stimulate creative thinking

and allow for interesting pathways and connections to be discovered. Discussion points and their related vehicle components include:

- Power (Engine)
- Authenticity (Grille)
- Support (Frame)
- Illumination (Headlights)
- Conflict (Accelerator/Brake)
- Direction (Steering Wheel)
- Fear (Firewall)
- Detox (Exhaust)
- Traction (Tires)
- Vision (Windshield and Mirrors)

Activities

In addition to deep-dive discussions and the hands-on customization and build of the electric vehicle, Level X includes individual and group activities that stimulate mind and body while furthering the velocity/leadership connection.

Follow Up and Measurement

The action plan created as part of the program will be implemented and Go Big Creative Lab will follow up at predefined intervals to maintain accountability and ensure success.

Level X works well as part of an ongoing executive coaching program. Go Big can work with consultants already in place, recommend expert coaches, or partner with internal HR resources.

illumination

About the Facilitator

Joe Watson is the Principal of Go Big Creative Lab and the creator of the Level X program. He has over 20 years of experience as a design thinker, brand consultant, and educator. An innovative thought leader, Joe believes that design and the creative process have tremendous power to impact businesses and organizations.

Over the course of his career, Joe has provided strategic and brand development for hundreds of organizations, ranging from startups and non-profits to Fortune 100 companies. As an educator, he has taught an MBA course at The University of Akron and senior-level design curriculum at Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College.

Joe has lectured and conducted professional development seminars regionally and nationally, including featured presentations at the Interaction Marketing Summit, National REIAs Midyear, the XMPie User Conference, and national leadership conferences for AIGA: the professional association for design.

In the community, Joe served as President and advisory board member of the Cleveland chapter of AIGA: the professional association for design. He co-created Go Big Fundraising, a unique fundraising model for non-profits, as well as programs that tackle social issues like Texder's Distracted Driving Crusade.

Joe is naturally inquisitive and passionate about learning and personal development on a wide variety of topics. He is a Sandan (4th degree black belt) and internationally certified instructor in Isshin Ryu Karate. Joe is also a lifelong musician and together with The Front Porch People is excited to launch *Riffs on Riffs*, a new podcast on the collision of original and sampled music.

In his free time, Joe enjoys time with his daughter, basketball, golf, woodworking, making music, and seeing all the ways life's dots connect.



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