

UMUC Business and Executive Programs Podcasts
Executive MBA Education in Global World

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Glenn: Welcome to Executive MBA Education in the Global World, a weekly podcast that features highlights of the Executive MBA Program. Thank you for joining us. I'm Nancy Gentry-Glenn, Director of Administration, Business & Executive Programs, your host for this segment.

Our guest today is Ms. Rainette Bannon, Associate Director, National Leadership Institute.

The topic for today's show is Using Assessments to Develop Global Leaders. Our discussion today focuses on the National Leadership Institute at UMUC and the role of leadership assessment tools used in the Executive MBA Program to help participants develop and master leadership competencies.

Ms. Bannon, would you please describe the National Leadership Institute here at UMUC?

Bannon: The National Leadership Institute has been a part of the university system for 25 years. The National Leadership Institute has been an affiliate of the Center for Creative Leadership, known worldwide for the excellence of their leadership programs, and we were the first university to be affiliated with them. The focus of our work is behavioral, what people do and how they are perceived by others in their leadership or managerial role. Our connection to the graduate school is through the Executive MBA Program, where we interpret assessment instruments and we provide group coaching as people progress through the Executive MBA Program. We have been doing a variety of things for the graduate school for a very long period of time, but in the last couple years, we have focused on group coaching and assessment of instruments for the particular group going through the program.

Glenn: Thank you, Ms. Bannon. The National Leadership Institute has been instrumental in developing leadership skills in the Executive MBA Program. What are the kinds of assessment instruments used, and why are they important?

Bannon: In the MBA Program, we use self-assessment, which means that this is an assessment instrument that just the individual takes. We use a 360 multi-rater instrument, which is a self-rater, plus the individual gives it out to their boss, their direct reports, peers, sometimes to customers, to clients -- anyone who would be able to comment accurately on leadership behaviors that they note in the individual. The 360 currently used in the Executive MBA Program is Dan Goldman's *Emotional Competence Inventory*. The self-rater instrument is Hogan's Personality Inventories. The current self-rater instrument is comprised of three segments: the things that the individual possesses that are most

likely to enhance their leadership capability. A second report is values, the belief by the authors that people will find places most satisfying to them that connect to the values that they hold most important. The individuals get their reports; they see very clearly the things that make up their value system, and our belief is that when they focus on those things and find employment that enhances those things, they will probably be happiest. The third part of that assessment is leadership challenges, personality attributes that the individual has that will, if used in moderation, be positive, if used to excess, may be turn-offs to other people. These three reports are interpreted by our faculty, and people use that information to set goals which will help them enhance their leadership capabilities. The third instrument is a cultural instrument which will help people to better understand the global nature of business today, the world that they operate in, and the important qualities to be effective when the chances of your heading up a global workforce or a very diverse team are increasing almost daily. The National Leadership Institute historically has not focused on diversity to the extent that the MBA Program does, so this has actually been a great collaboration for us because we found that the instrument that they are using is very useful, and our own audiences that come to the National Leadership Institute workshops also are operating in that far more global and diverse workforce. So the addition of that instrument has been a big positive, I think, for this program.

Glenn: Thank you. And tell us a bit more about how the instruments are used by Executive MBA Program participants to improve their leadership capabilities.

Bannon: The way the program is currently structured, there's very innovative use, I believe, of the National Leadership Institute's capability, and also of the Executive MBA faculty. There's a group coaching cohort that begins at the outset of the Executive MBA and meets periodically throughout the program. That cohort group, comprised of four or five, six people, help each other, learn from the facilitator, and generally increase the application of the information that they have received from the assessment instruments by talking about real-world situations that they are dealing with in their work life and how they can enhance their leadership capability through the goal-setting that they have done in the actual assessment meeting, and then applying it and talking about it. What are the leadership characteristics that they are trying to improve? What are the stumbling blocks they're encountering? What are they actually doing on a weekly or a daily basis? And what is the impact that it's having? What are the changes that they see occurring? So they share that with the other participants in the group, and often they get help from the participants in the group. Often someone is going through an experience and it will turn out that another person in the group has had a similar experience and can give them some advice and insight. The coaches of these programs are all people who have had training and experience working with leadership development issues, and the coach often can give them tips and techniques for improving their leadership skills. So the coaching cohort groups, the advantage of them, is twofold. They get help from their peers and they get insights from the facilitator. The second part would be, when they meet one on one for a private, confidential discussion, they get insight from that assessment feedback coach. The assessment coach will go over each instrument. People find out when they take their assessments that they have some strengths that are helping them to achieve, and often they have a couple of things that are getting in

their own way. The coach helps them to sort out those strengths and to pay attention to continuing to enhance those capabilities, and also looks at the areas where some development is needed and the participant makes decisions around what would be most useful for EMBA participants to take advantage of. So in that one-on-one session, they actually go over every part of the assessment instrument and create goals. In the coaching portion, which is the ongoing portion, they work on those goals and they get assistance and support from the cohort group until that particular leadership characteristic has become integrated into the way they operate on a regular basis. Then they move on and they set additional goals. The value of having the coaching cohort and the assessment instruments gives people a clear focus on leadership development at the same time that they are gaining content knowledge in a variety of areas covered by the Executive MBA content courses. So the National Leadership Institute believes that this combination of coaching and content programs gives participants in this particular Executive MBA Program a real connection between classroom learning and actual application in the world that they operate in every day.

Glenn: Again, this is Nancy Gentry-Glenn. I'd like to thank Ms. Rainette Bannon for helping us understand the role of the National Leadership Institute in developing the leadership skills of our Executive MBA participants. And thank you, listeners, for joining Executive MBA Education in the Global World.

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