



For Immediate Release

FIVE YEAR STUDY FINDS LAGGING CONTRIBUTION BY MANAGERS AT U.S. AND CANADIAN COMPANIES

Preliminary Results include Manager Transition Challenges and Fatal Assumptions

Centennial, Colo. (May 7, 2008) – According to preliminary results from a five year study of 2,600 managers at 149 Fortune 1000 and other large organizations across the United States and Eastern Canada, more than 86 percent of managers are not fully engaged in their roles as managers. Most are still operating primarily as individual contributors or are stuck in transition to the manager role.

“Our proprietary research reveals that this leadership crisis among managers is more than 10 times worse than the 1970s and at least four times worse than the 1990s,” said John Davis, chief executive officer of ConceptReserve™, a training firm that specializes in manager transitions and employee engagement. “The hard reality is that if managers do not make a timely transition to the manager role once they become managers, they will not make the kind of contribution their organization requires. Managers who continue to act as individual contributors frustrate those they manage as well as themselves and the productivity and satisfaction of everyone involved suffers.”

In the study, a subset of 1,200 managers was asked to identify the challenges they face in making the transition to the manager role. The five most difficult transition challenges in order of frequency were: 1. Doing versus managing the work; 2. Managing former peers; 3. Letting go of being the expert; 4. Lack of time to get things done; and 5. Producing results versus developing and coaching people.

“Early in our discussions with the 1,200 managers, it became obvious that most of their challenges were symptoms of much more fundamental issues,” said Davis. “This lead us to the fatal assumptions managers make that derail the transition to manager.”

The “fatal assumptions” identified were: 1. My individual contributor success will translate into management success; 2. It’s out of my control – someone else can and should fix this; 3. Being the expert is the most important factor for my credibility; 4. It’s the rational and logical approach or solution that counts; 5. The people I manage are just like me (in their thinking, approach, expectations, goals, and priorities); 6. Competent people do not need help.

“Essentially, these assumptions and others like them describe the mindset of most individual contributors,” noted Davis. “It is that individual contributor mindset or perspective that has to change for an individual to be able to successfully complete the transition into the manager role.”

“We call this change the *psychological shift* and we have learned from working with managers that this shift can be made if a manager gets the right kind of help. We have also learned that it has very little to do with learning so-called management skills. While important at the appropriate time, developing such skills will do little to facilitate the transition if emphasized too early in the process. In fact, overemphasis on a manager’s skill development, without addressing the required psychological shift, is often fatal to the transition,” said Davis.

The 2,600 managers studied were primarily from Fortune 1000 and other large organizations in the private sector with minimal representation from government and non-profit groups. They represented virtually every industry in North America. Education and health care were under-represented, although the issues reported by those groups were quite similar. The managers came from every level of responsibility in their respective organizations, from informal group leaders and project leaders through first-line supervisors, managers of groups and departments, all the way to senior managers who lead functional organizations.

The final results of the five year study will be released in summer 2008. In addition to transition challenges and assumptions, the results will include data that quantifies the transition from individual contributor to manager. The disparity between self assessments and assessments by others regarding manager transition issues will be covered. The breakdown of the percentage of managers at each point along the Transition Continuum™ will also be examined.

About ConceptReserve™

ConceptReserve™ is a research-based training firm that specializes in manager transitions and employee engagement. ConceptReserve helps employees transition from individual

contributor to manager roles, resulting in higher levels of contribution. The firm also increases employee engagement by helping individuals apply their talents to their work. CEO John Davis, a leading expert on transitions and the Stages of Contribution™, heads up a team of training, consulting, research, marketing, customer service, and programming experts who deliver products and services that are unique in the training industry. ConceptReserve is the exclusive marketer and provider of The Leverage Transition™ Workshop, the RoleTrak™ transition assessment, the Transition Roadmap™ , and other products and services from content producer Conceptual Reserve™.

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