

Growing Minnesota Leaders

Program outcomes of the U-Lead program in the State of Minnesota, coordinated by the University of Minnesota Extension Service, 1996 – 2002.

Summary of the Study

To analyze outcomes associated with the U-Lead program, a pre- and post-survey was administered to participants. A research team from the Center for Small towns became involved to objectively analyze the results in the spring of 2004. Donna Rae Scheffert, Leadership Development Specialist at the University of Minnesota, conducted the study. Ben Winchester and his assistants were the primary members of the data analysis team. The Community Leadership Program Survey, developed by Dr. Kenneth Pigg of the University of Missouri, was used.

The goal of the U-Lead program is to build the skills and confidence of emerging, existing and elected leaders. Cohort groups of U-Lead participants who experience leadership education over a longer period of time have the best chance of experiencing positive outcomes. In 2002, a study of 183 persons from eight U-Lead cohort groups was done.

Participants in the U-Lead program experienced:

- Five major broad impacts: A sense of shared future and purpose, civic engagement, personal growth and self-efficacy, community commitment and community knowledge.
 - Enhancements in 43 specific areas of leadership development including skills, aspirations and knowledge.
 - Renewal of leadership commitment by taking on leadership roles and/or becoming active in a new group.
- Value for their time and money, with 95% saying the program was “well worth it!”

Who were the Emerging Leadership Program Survey Participants?

Note: When totals do not reach 100%, data is missing

Year	# of Respondents <i>183 leaders participated in the survey</i>
1996	4.6%
1997	8.7%
1998	5.2%
1999	9.8%
2000	19.1%
2001	30.6%
2002	5.8%
Unsure	13.9%
Did not complete.	2.3%

Demographics

Age of participants	(Mean =)
Gender: Male	58.2%
Female	41.8%
Marital Status: Married	93.7%
Median number of years participants lived in their community	21
Percentage with family members living in the community	68.8%
Employment	
Full time	58%
Employed part-time	14.8%
Self-employed	20.5%
Other	6.7%
Education	
High School Graduate or GED	11.4%
Vocational, tech or business	12.6%
Some college	16.6%
College graduate	35%
Post college / Graduate work	24%

Total Household Income.	
Less than 10,000	1.8%
At least 10,000 less than 20,000	2.9%
At least 20,000 less than 30,000	6.5%
At least 30,000 less than 50,000	21.2%
At least 50,000 less than 100,000	48.8%
More than 100,000	10.6%
Missing / Refused	8.2%

Outcome:

U-Lead Program Participants were more active in local community organizations.

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- **52%** of participants took on an active membership or leadership role in at least one new organization following the program.
 - Before the program, 48% of participants held a leadership position in at least one organization. **Following the program, 70% held leadership positions** in at least one organization.
 - A total of 63 active membership and leadership status positions were held before the leadership program by participants. This jumped to 87, **an increase of 38%**, after the program was completed.
 - A total of 26 leadership positions were held by participants before the program. After the program, a total of 46 leadership positions were held, **an increase of 77%**.

Outcome:

Participants spent their leadership time wisely.

- Participants removed themselves from groups in which they held an inactive status. Following the program there were only 29 inactive positions held, **a reduction of 28%**.
- 30% of participants held **leadership positions in more than two organizations** following the program, up from 24%.

Top areas of improvement – according to participants

- I know the steps needed to obtain broad-based support for activities in my community.
- I understand how new ideas are adopted in my community.
- I understand the importance of building agreement or consensus versus “majority rules” in solving problems.
- I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in public issues.
- I understand the importance of having a collective sense of mission or purpose in my community.
- I feel I could do as good a job in public office as most other people.
- I move out of my comfort zone and learn to grow.
- I know the difference between management and leadership.
- I use my leadership skills in different settings.
- I have knowledge of local, county and state resources.

What changes did the participants see in themselves?

These participants are highly engaged in civic matters.

- “I think that I am better informed about public issues and government than most people are.”
- “I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people.”
- “I seek to forge connections and strengthen ... bonds among members in my community and professional bonds.”
- “I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in public issues.”
- “I have a pretty good understanding of the important issues facing our community.”

These participants expressed a future and purpose for their community.

- “I talk optimistically about the future of my community.”
- “I have confidence that my community will achieve its goal.”
- “I envision new possibilities for my community.”
- “I articulate a convincing vision of the future for my community.”

Participants experienced personal growth and self-efficacy.

- “I do not try to control everything.”
- “I know the difference between management and leadership.”
- “I respect a variety of leadership styles.”
- I have understanding and patience when working with others.”
- I regard change as a source of vitality.”
- I endeavor to improve my credibility as a leader.”
- “I seek out different perspectives.”