



Rethinking Leadership Development: A Personalized Approach

A Case Study Performed by:

The Healthcare Center for Excellence, LLC
and the
Professional Leadership Academy

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Executive Summary

For years, leaders and aspiring leaders have been told that the way to become a better leader is to accumulate a certain amount of “leadership skills”. Unfortunately, the top academic organizational leadership programs approach teaching leadership as a journey where aspiring leaders discover themselves as they develop their personal leadership philosophy and are provided ongoing mentoring throughout the program. The Healthcare Center of Excellence (HCOE) sought to apply a similar approach while incorporating improvement measurement tools in a program designed to increase leadership awareness, assess leadership potential and encourage leadership practice.

In an ongoing leadership development training program, the HCOE conducted 3 cohorts of the Professional Leadership Training (PLT) program at Norwegian American Hospital, a 200-bed, acute care facility on the northside of Chicago. The second cohort included leaders who reported directly or indirectly to the organization’s C-Level and other top executives to the leaders, who participated in the first cohort. The second cohort was the largest and the one which yielded the most data to analyze, which is the subject of this case study.

The proprietary Leadership Impact Survey (LIS) was used to quantify and monitor the results of the leadership improvement training, with the survey taken before the course and at 3-month, 6-month and 12-month increments after the course completion. When analyzing results from the pre-course survey to the 3-months post-course survey responses, the cohort realized leadership improvement from 3% to 22% across all 9 dimensions measured, with an average improvement of 10% and median of 8%.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that Professional Leadership Training is an effective program for improving leadership throughout an organization and can provide measurable results for an organization to track leadership improvement.

Program Overview

The Professional Leadership Training (PLT) Program is a leadership improvement journey based on the proprietary 5-step, Professional Leadership Process™ described in the book, *Prescribing Leadership in Healthcare*. The program begins with personality, leadership and situational assessments followed by onsite or online coursework. It continues with scheduled leadership coaching check-ins, as well as planned leadership reassessments to chart participants’ leadership improvement progress. **It results in the participants creating a personalized, continuously-improving leadership plan that is adaptable to almost any situation.**

The PLT program is built on a unique, proven and comprehensive approach to leadership improvement. It’s called ‘Professional’ because it utilizes the same learn-practice-review process followed for decades by professionals around the world and is distinguished from other leadership development programs based on:

Professional Leadership Training	Other Leadership Training
12-month improvement journey	1 class (one and done)
Process-based approach	Skills-based approach
Personalized & continuously-improving	One-size-fits-all
Built-in follow up and feedback loop to monitor proper implementation & leadership growth	No follow up or feedback loop

The PLT program is delivered over a 12-month period utilizing the following schedule:

Month	Activity
Pre-Course	Personality Assessment
Pre-Course	Leadership Impact Survey
1	Professional Leadership Training Course
2	Leadership Coaching - Follow Up
3	Leadership Impact Survey – Refresh
4	Leadership Coaching - Follow Up
5	Leadership Resources Update
6	Leadership Impact Survey – Refresh
7	Leadership Coaching - Follow Up
8	{Continued Leadership Growth}
9	{Continued Leadership Growth}
10	Leadership Resources Update
11	Leadership Impact Survey – Refresh
12	Leadership Coaching – One-Year Review

Leadership Resources Update represents the additional leadership resources, i.e., articles, books, videos, etc. made available throughout the program to encourage continuous learning.

Continued Leadership Growth is time for independent self-assessment and reflection.

It is designed with 3 primary goals:

1. **Improving Leadership Awareness** by providing participants with a clear understanding of leadership, a personalized leadership plan and a continuously-improving process they can return to regularly.
2. **Assessing Leadership Potential** utilizing various leadership and personal assessment tools throughout the program.
3. **Encouraging Leadership Practice** with scheduled ongoing reflection and coaching sessions.

Methodology

The HCOE conducted 3 cohorts of leadership training at Norwegian American Hospital (Norwegian) in Chicago, Illinois. The first cohort included most of the organization’s C-Level and other top executives. The second cohort included the next level of leaders who reported directly or indirectly to the leaders in the first cohort. The third cohort consisted of a managers and directors from throughout the organization. It is important for the top executives to be exposed to the same training as the rest of the staff to minimize the inconsistencies from the staff learning and following one approach to leadership and the executives not modeling the same. In this case, most of the executive team was involved in the initial training cohort.

The PLT onsite course is 2 full-days of interactive class work with exercises and discussions. After a brief leadership introduction, the course follows the 5-step leadership process resulting in the participants leaving with a completed workbook that includes their personal leadership plan built through exercises in the class.

Prior to the first session, the participants take a personality assessment and the leadership assessment. During the first day, they also have another leadership assessment completed by their peers. The use of multiple assessments enables them to have a complete view of who they are as a person and who they are as a leader. These results become the starting point for their individual leadership vision and philosophy. With an articulated vision, the participants can create an execution plan using six leadership tools. The next step in the process involves creating a plan for regular reflection of how they performed as a leader and how they can improve. Lastly, they are taught the importance of coaching and mentoring with the PLT acting as a “kick-off” to a long-term coaching and mentoring relationship.

By the end of the course, the participants have improved their **awareness** of leadership and have assessed their **potential** for leadership. The **practice** of leadership is encouraged through follow up coaching and leadership surveys and continued learning.

The first individual leadership coaching sessions are conducted 30 days after the course completion with the specific goal of answering any questions they may have about what they learned in the course, how they are implementing the process and any challenges they may be facing. These sessions are confidential between the participant and the coach with no direct information shared with management. Each of the three coaching sessions has a specific goal to be addressed with the participant.

Leadership Impact Survey

To quantify and monitor the results of the leadership improvement training, the proprietary Leadership Impact Survey (LIS) is utilized. This tool examines and tracks the participants’ leadership growth through the PLT program. Its 9 dimensions are summarized into two categories: the Potential for leadership and the Practice of leadership.



The results are visualized in a box and whisker diagram with the line (whisker) representing the maximum and minimum values from the population studied and the box representing the respondent’s variation from the population average. The population average represents the average value for all who have taken the survey, whether they participated in a leadership program or through a conference proceeding. Green boxes represent a positive individual response versus the population average with the top of the box representing the respondent’s value and the bottom representing the average value for all respondents. The red boxes represent a negative individual response versus the population average with the bottom of the box representing the respondent’s value and the top representing the average value for all respondents.

The LIS enables assessment of where participants are before the course and tracks their improvement progress after the conclusion of the course. By documenting the improvement results, it helps also organizations quantify the leadership improvement as well as measure their return on investment.

Results

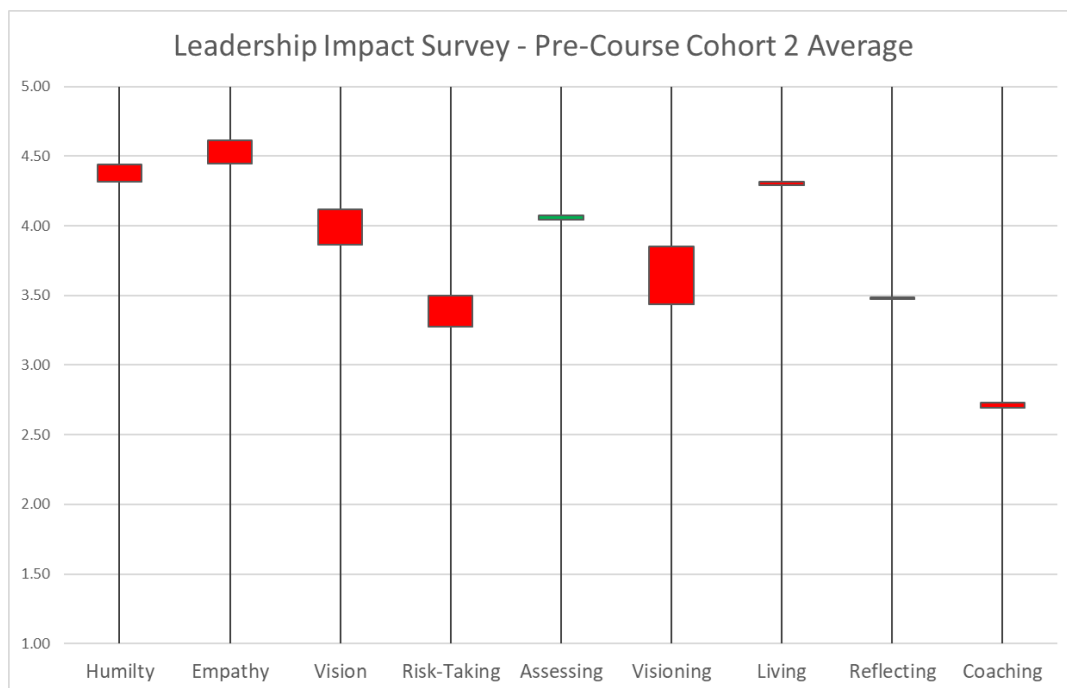
After the course, the participants had a better awareness of leadership and how they could improve using the 5-step Professional Leadership Process™. After completing 3 assessment tools, they were able to evaluate their potential for leadership with a better understanding of who they were as a person and as a leader and could articulate a personal leadership vision that they could follow every day. They were able to differentiate between the six tools for living their leadership and evaluate the importance of reflection and coaching. Most of all, they left the course portion of the program with their personal leadership plan.

The coaching provided in the program is meant to provide support as they continue on their leadership journey. They are encouraged to identify and find their own coach and mentor before the program coaching ends.

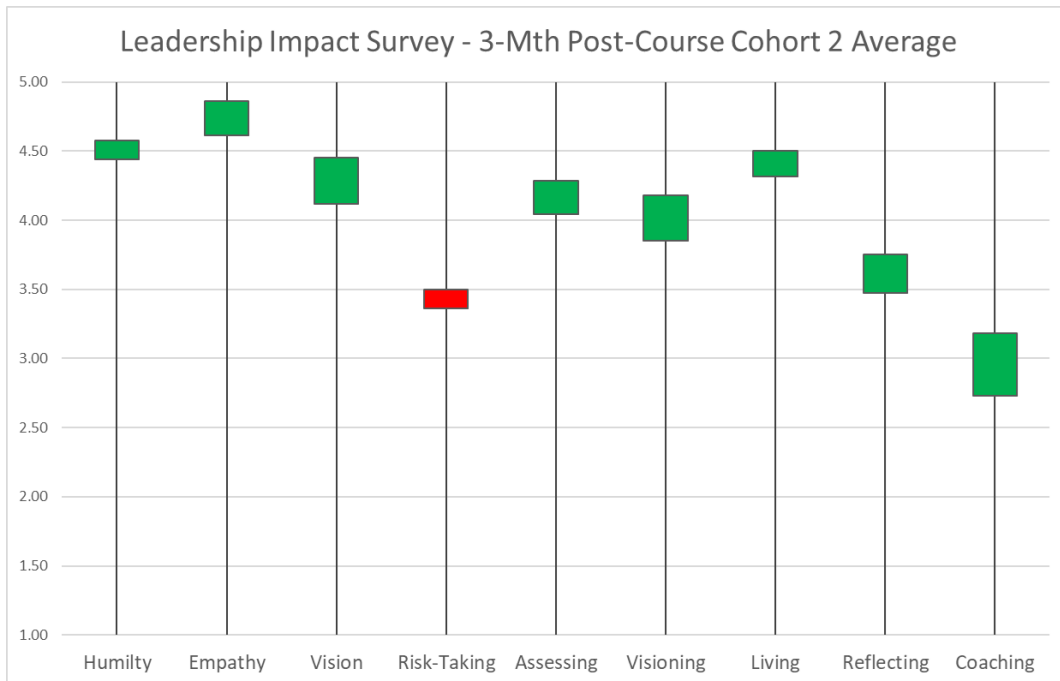
Enthusiasm for the program has remained high after 2 follow-up coaching sessions with several mentioning how they referred to their workbook to stay on track or used the process to address a work situation.

Leadership Impact

The pre-course average LIS (below) for the cohort indicated they were below the population average across 7 of the 9 dimensions and only slightly above average for 2 dimensions, assessing and reflecting.



The 3-month post-course average LIS (below) indicated improvement in all 9 dimensions. Even though risk-taking was still below the population average, it represents a 3% improvement from the pre-course survey. This dimension is expected to improve slowly over time as the participants become more confident in their practice of leadership.



When analyzing results from the pre-class survey to the 3-months post-class survey responses, the cohort realized leadership improvement from 3% to 22% across the 9 dimensions measured, with an average improvement of 10% and median of 8%.

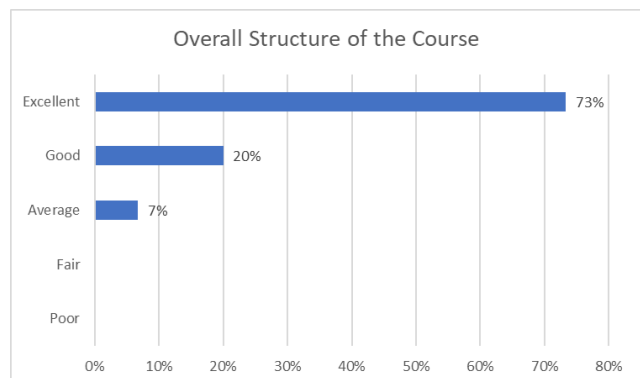
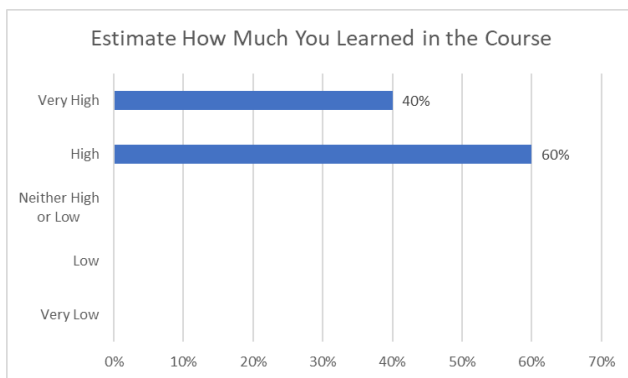
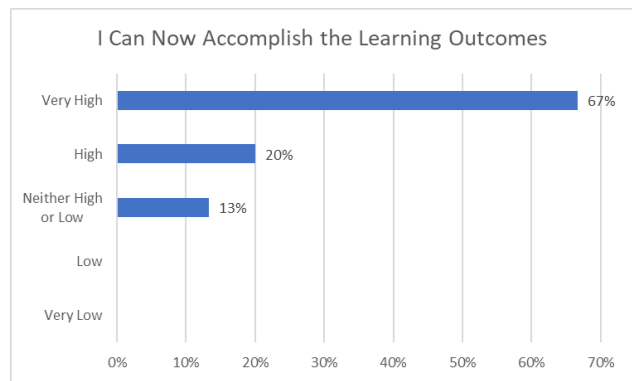
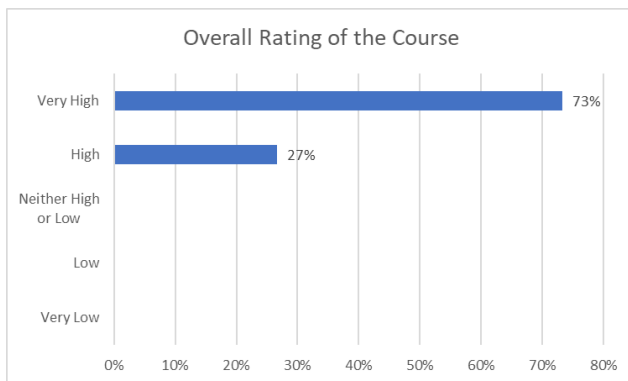


Based on the results of this analysis, an additional distinguishing feature of the professional leadership training program from other programs should be added the table - **measurable results**.

Professional Leadership Training	Other Leadership Training
12-month improvement journey	1 class (one and done)
Process-based approach	Skills-based approach
Personalized & continuously-improving	One-size-fits-all
Built-in follow up and feedback loop to monitor proper implementation & leadership growth	No follow up or feedback loop
Measurable results	No measurable results

Course Evaluation

Overall, the course was highly rated by the participants. These ratings were consistent among all 3 cohorts.

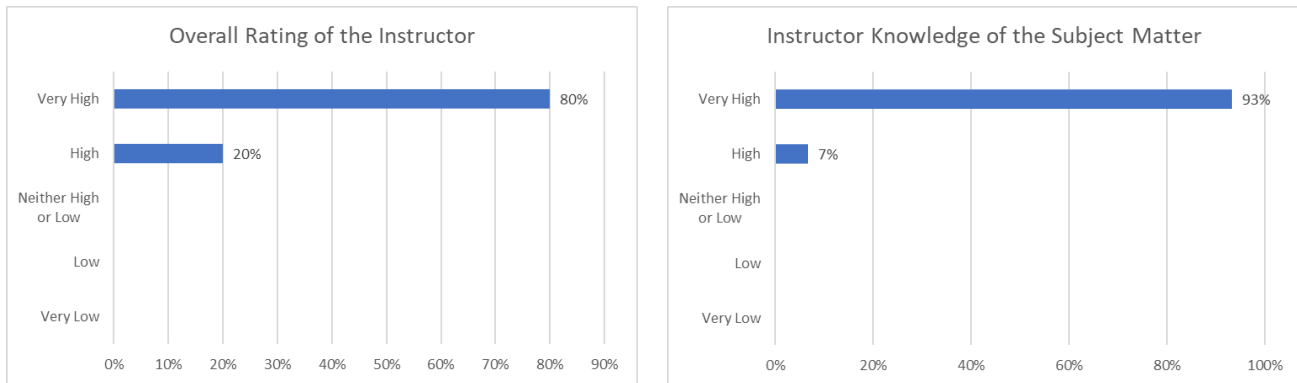


Some representative course feedback includes:

- High: Bryan was enthusiastic and genuine. He answered all questions and has good examples of concepts.
- 10/10 - great course and recommend to all leaders and future leaders.
- I really enjoyed and learned so much. Bryan thank you for being so humble and awesome and teaching the way you did.

See **Appendix A** for additional course evaluation comments.

Participants were also asked to rate the instructor. The instructor was also highly rated, which was also consistent among all 3 cohorts.



Some representative instructor feedback includes:

- Intelligent and dedicated. Instructor had a great presence and made everyone feel welcomed.
- The class kept me engaged and informed and enlightened.
- I think he explained the topics very well and utilized story telling in the process.

See **Appendix B** for additional instructor evaluation comments.

Hospital Impact

Norwegian has been positively impacted by implementing the professional leadership training program. They engaged the graduates of the program to participate in a variety of initiatives to improve the employee and patient experience. Particularly noteworthy was the use of this team to formulate a new patient experience vision statement for the hospital and identify process changes that would improve patient care.

The training provided new insights to seasoned leaders who participated in the program. It also improved the confidence of those aspiring to become leaders. For the aspiring leader participants, the program enabled them to engage more intentionally throughout the hospital. Instead of bringing a problem to a superior or executive for a solution, participants feel better equipped to make decisions at their level, especially when it pertains to the hospital operating units.

During the follow up confidential coaching sessions, participants expressed how they believed the training worked for them. Some of the representative comments included:

- It helped them overcome some of the struggles they were facing in their role;
- They felt more confident in themselves, thus making them more comfortable sharing information with their team;
- Many have incorporated more of the tools they learned in the course like storytelling and social leadership;
- Not only have they sought coaches for them personally, but they have begun coaching others and changed how they approached situations with their team members;
- The training has helped make their daily huddles more effective.

Conclusions

Based on these results, it can be concluded that Professional Leadership Training is an effective program for improving leadership throughout an organization and can provide measurable results for an organization to track leadership development effectiveness.

The training program can also be used as a supplement to ongoing internal organizational leadership training initiatives since the PLT coaching sessions are confidential between the participant and their assigned coach. Participants may be more likely to be responsive to a 3rd party versus an internal resource, which could drive higher leadership improvement.

The 2-day onsite, which was used in this case study, and the 6-week online guided-study course are the standard and most effective course delivery models. The online guided-study course features weekly one-hour live lectures, which are also recorded for participants who can't make the live session.

Based on feedback from prior cohorts, the following course delivery models have been added:

- A 1-day onsite accelerated course for executives who are not able to allocate 2-full training days in their schedule;
- An online self-study course for participants who's work schedule makes it difficult to keep up with a 6-week course pace. This course uses pre-recorded lectures and participants are expected to complete the course within 6 to 10 weeks.

Course design improvements that have been suggested from this cohort and others, include:

- Adding videos from some of the many leaders referred to in the course. {New and/or available videos from the leaders discussed in the course will be added.}
- A deeper dive into some of the course topics, especially the tools for leadership. {Master classes will be developed on some of these topics. They will be half-day onsite workshops or live one-hour online webinars.} Topics under consideration include:
 - Storytelling for Leaders
 - Effective Social Leadership
 - The Art of Empathetic Leadership
 - Improving Your Leadership Observation

“Leadership is not a skill to be learned, but a process to be refined.”

- J. Bryan Bennett

“Lead Every Day!”

- J Bryan Bennett

Appendix A – Representative Course Evaluation Comments

Please explain your overall rating of the course.

- High: Bryan was enthusiastic and genuine. He answered all questions and have good examples of concepts.
- 10/10 - great course and recommend to all leaders and future leaders.
- Excellent course that helps shed light to reevaluate oneself in their role and roles for the future.
- I really enjoyed and learned so much. Bryan thank you for being so humble and awesome and teaching the way you did.
- The way you structured the course allowed me to engage and understand. Thank you so much.
- The class was fun, very interactive and educational.

What did you like most about the course?

- Steps to become a leader and examples given.
- The personalization of the surveys, analytics, and participation.
- The integration and activity was hands on and not just a seminar.
- Great speaker who engaged everyone into the course.
- The team interaction and PowerPoint presentation. Also, the way the professor taught.
- It forced you to be open minded about yourself and the people you work with.

What did you like least about the course?

- Nothing
- Sharing
- Would like to see videos of some leaders given a snippet of advice.
- None. Good pace as well.
- It only lasted 2 days.

Did you hear any new concepts?

- Leadership is a process with ongoing learning among other items.
- Learning how to be a better leader.
- I learned that in order to be a more effective leader you need to have those innate qualities.
- I learned that I must be more patient, listen and do not overreact.
- Reflecting what went well and what did not.

What can be improved in relation to the structure, format and/or materials, if any?

- Nothing
- More activities that include the group to talk. Some video presentation as well. Overall great work!
- More open-ended discussions and active learning.

Appendix B – Representative Instructor Evaluation Comments

Please explain your overall rating of the instructor of this course.

- Bryan was extremely knowledgeable.
- Efficient and extremely knowledgeable yet relatable and real!
- Intelligent and dedicated. Instructor had a great presence and made everyone feel welcomed.
- The class keep me engaged and informed and enlighten
- I think he explained the topics very well and utilized story telling in the process

What specifically did the instructor do well?

- Provided examples of concepts.
- Explained every concept clearly.
- Engaged others into participating in class.
- Communicated the material well.
- It was almost like he was teaching each of us individually

What recommendations do you have for the instructor to improve?

- Nothing, continue his enthusiasm.
- We all need to reflect. I can't find anything that needs improvement but I'm sure Bryan will find things.
- He has been doing this for so many years, he has a lot to offer.

Has this course helped you with any leadership challenges you may be facing?

- Yes empathy, humility and selfless.
- Yes, with my boss.
- Yes, tips from the class.

Would you recommend this course to a colleague? Why or why not?

- Educational and helps to be successful.
- It's important to learn the terms and concepts explained.
- This course will help the leader understand their role, and how to address difficult situations.
- It is worth it because it helps you understand what you need to improve and also teaches you new things.
- I think it helps you internalize many abstract concepts.
- Learning to be a better person professionally and personally is always a good thing.

About the Healthcare Center for Excellence

The Healthcare Center of Excellence (HCOE) is a privately-funded healthcare research, training and consulting organization dedicated to helping healthcare organizations identify, understand, implement and manage the technology, processes and human resources needed to be successful in today's changing healthcare environment.

Our research studies are designed to understand how the healthcare transformation is progressing. These studies include results from predictive modeling research, ethnographic studies of physician engagement, healthcare transformation progress and management surveys. Published research studies include:

- ✓ Challenges to Implementing Healthcare Analytics
- ✓ State of Population Health Analytics
- ✓ Process – The Neglected Continuum in Healthcare

Professor J. Bryan Bennett is the founder and Executive Director of the Healthcare Center of Excellence. He is the primary researcher and blogger for the Center's website as well as an international speaker on the subjects of leadership, analytics and healthcare technology transformation.

He has been recognized as one of the "Top African-American Leaders in Healthcare" for 2018 and 2019 by Becker's Hospital Review.

He is a course developer and adjunct professor for several schools including Northwestern University, University of Chicago and Judson University where he develops and teaches courses in leadership, analytics and marketing. His passion for leadership development was regularly displayed in his university course evaluations. Not only were his courses frequently the highest rated leadership courses at the school, but they were the highest rated of all the courses taught for the terms throughout the adult education program.

He is the author of the books:

- ***Prescribing Leadership in Healthcare***
- ***Competing on Healthcare Analytics***
- ***The Path to Professional Leadership (upcoming)***

His work has been recognized by Gartner and he has had an academic whitepaper published in *Capco's Journal of Financial Transformation*.

Visit www.healthcarecoe.org to learn more about the work performed by the Center and view presentations made by Professor Bennett.