

REPORT: 2014 LEAD 360 GLOBAL LEADERSHIP FORUM HELD AT THE NEW ORLEANS MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER IN NEW ORLEANS, LA ON 21/06/2014- 23/06/2014

Report Prepared by

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Introduction

2014 LEAD 360 global leadership forum brought together 20 upcoming food science and technology professionals from 12 countries. The forum was designed to train participants on leadership in the dynamic food sector. Four members from the 2013 LEAD 360 were also in attendance who acted hosts. The three days training took place in New Orleans, LA USA concurrently with the IFT Annual Meeting and Food Expo. The Annual Meeting and Food Expo brought together talented food science and technology professionals in various sectors from different industries and universities (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Posters and exhibition Hall

The latest scientific innovations and developments were showcased through presentations either on posters, scientific sessions or by exhibiting the actual products.

The global leadership training was conducted using panel discussions, group discussions (facilitated by the hosts) and lectures. The panel discussion by food science professionals who had been in the sector for a long time, shared what motivated them to rise into their current positions. The group discussions were facilitated by the hosts, and through the discussions, the members came up with the big idea which is expected to be the main output from the group after 12 months. The lectures/ talks were by professionals who had being in the sectors and they covered different areas such as leadership, lecturership, consumers' studies, emotional intelligence and anticipatory foresight planning.

The following are some of the lessons from the training:

1. Lectures

- a. **LEAD 360 Leadership Training:** the session gave an introduction to the skills that should be possessed by leaders. Discussions in this session were on the leadership competencies and how to view oneself/ others as a leader(s) and how to improve the skills. Participants were introduced to the five practices of exemplary leadership and on evaluating oneself to know the areas one is strong at and where one can improve to improve his/ her management skills using the leadership practices inventory. Participants learnt about the behavioral styles for measuring attributes and traits; this was through feedback on individuals DiSC assessment and the groups DiSC assessment results.



Figure 2: Participants follow proceedings during a training session

- b. **Driving instructions with data during lectureship:** Dr Diane Ebert- May introduced the concept on Fennema Lectureship to improve learning at the institutions. Participants learnt on importance of using models for analytical thinking, to develop arguments and for easier communication across science disciplines.
- c. **Consumer studies:** the facilitator brought out the importance of knowing consumer expectations in the food industry. She also brought out the disharmony between behavioral survey researches and what consumers do in reality. Through research, consumers may say something while they do a totally different thing, hence the importance of understanding their behaviors and attitudes. We were trained on what to look for in consumers' behavior and attitude evaluation.
- d. **Transforming global leadership with emotional intelligence:** the latest concept on leadership was introduced to the participants. This concept was on emotional intelligence. We learnt on the skill set of emotional intelligence and how to apply it in the sector.
- e. **Anticipatory foresight planning:** the team members were introduced to IFT's Anticipatory Foresight Project. This is a proactive way of new product development and uses the current trends to anticipate the future needs in product/ process development. At this point, the participants watched a video on the current trends and were supposed to anticipate the industry's trend, both in the short-run and in long-run.

2. Panel discussion:

A panel constituted by five food science and technology professionals shared to the participants what had made them get to the point they were, that is, what motivated them to progress in their careers. This was designed to motivate the participants on the food science career. Participant learnt from the experiences of the panels, how to overcome challenges faced, and how they move on in the career.

3. Food Expo and Scientific sessions

The participants visited the different booths to learn more on new products development, ingredients and technologies. Educational sessions on the latest scientific trends were also visited.



Figure 3: Exhibition hall and different stands

4. Discussion on the on big idea by the 2014 LEAD 360 team

The 2014 LEAD 360 team came up with the idea of mentorship of new professional as their next big idea. This was arrived at after reviewing ten challenges of importance in the food sector. The team found it necessary to retain as many food science professionals especially at the early stage of a person's career. The team is expected to work on the project within the next 12 months by dedicating some time every month for discussions. The expected output will be to develop a framework for mentoring new professionals in the industry.



Figure 4: Participants tackling the big idea together with 2013 hosts

5. LEAD 360 Host

The hosts, who were part of the 2013 LEAD 360 team, guided the members during the discussion on the one big idea. The hosts also had a panel discussion with the team at the request of the members.



Figure 5: Panel discussion by LEAD 360, 2013 hosts

6. In addition, 2014 LEAD 360 members were given an opportunity to attend the following:

1. IFT awards celebration
2. How to feed, one healthy, sustainably sourced meal at a time: the talk was on minimizing food losses which is a major cause of food insecurity
3. International division social

Conclusion

As a participant, the following are some of the lessons learnt,

1. Integrating emotional intelligence in global leadership in the food sector
2. Leadership, leadership skills, behavioural styles of measuring leadership and DiSC assessment interpretation
3. Anticipatory foresight as a means of being proactive in the sector
4. How to assess consumers' disharmony between what they say and what they mean
5. Use of models to improve students' analytical thinking to improve lecturership

Acknowledgement

I am immensely grateful to IFT for the opportunity to be part of the 2014 LEAD 360 team. The lessons learnt from the global leadership workshop will go a long way to shape my career. The opportunity to meet and interact with emerging, global, highly talented, food science professionals from 12 nations is greatly appreciated. The big idea will be a platform to ensure the team interacts for sharing of ideas, and the opportunity to be part of the group is immensely appreciated. I am also grateful to Kristy Nelson and Katie Paffhouse for their assistance and provision of information before, during and after the workshop. I also pass gratitude to Food Science and Technology Platform of Kenya, through its Patron, Prof. Ruth Oniang'o for nominating me for this opportunity. I pass gratitude to the hosts and facilitators for the training which will go a long way. Last but not least, I appreciate every member of the 2014 LEAD 360 team for the nice time and the information shared. It was a great learning process.