

THE WORLD'S LARGEST SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

The Extraordinary Leader™ delivers the next generation of leaders.

THE CHALLENGE

The Scientific Society was concerned about its leadership pipeline. With 160,000 members, the world's largest scientific society relies on 2,200 members to run nearly 200 local sections and 33 technical divisions. Another 3,000–4,000 members are involved in other forms of leadership. But with almost half the Society's leaders older than 50, officials were anxious to develop the group's next generation of leaders. "As with all associations, our people are busy," said the director of professional advancement at the society. "They're working longer hours, having kids later in life, and don't have as much time to participate in professional associations." With dwindling leadership availability, the Society also struggled with leadership capability. Chemistry relies on advanced education, but that rarely includes leadership development programs. Determined to cultivate new leaders, they sought to implement a long-term leadership development system and looked for an expert partner.

THE SOLUTION

Zenger Folkman proposed a leadership model that represented the capabilities the society needed for the future. *The Extraordinary Leader*, a leadership approach that relies on decades of research and over 200,000 statistical profiles from more than 25,000 managers/senior managers, was recommended. Each participant collected feedback from peers, managers, and direct reports on their perception of the managers' capabilities in 16 researched leadership competencies.

"Zenger Folkman stood out because of their emphasis on research," officials said. "They were the only vendor who presented a data-driven approach."

The solution included a one-day development experience program and a 360-degree feedback process. *The Extraordinary Leader* approach also emphasizes building strengths which flows from the firm's extensive research showing that great leaders don't lack weaknesses but excel in a few key areas.

THE RESULTS

Top Society leaders participated in the development experience pilots. The Society President liked the course so much she took it twice.

AT A GLANCE

The Challenge

- The world's largest scientific society was concerned that half its leadership pipeline was nearing retirement.

The Solution

- They chose Zenger Folkman's research-driven *Extraordinary Leader* course to train the highly educated Society's next generation of leadership.
- Two pilot courses resulted in 100 percent agreement among participants that their leadership skills improved and that they would recommend the course to others.

The Results

- Participants cited the course's emphasis on improving strengths and its 360-degree feedback component as major appeals.
- They now offer the course twice annually for members, in conjunction with national and regional meetings.
- They also train internal staff members using the same leadership framework and principles.

"In 24 years, I've taken a lot of leadership courses," she said. "And I'll tell you, *The Extraordinary Leader* workshop is not just among the best—but the best—course I've ever taken."

The early success of the course led to an expanded pool of participants. It was offered to the Society's 2,000 employees in classes of 20 people at a time.

The results have been solidly positive. "We really highlight the research basis of the material. Participants love focusing on improving strengths."

One hundred percent of participants agreed they had received the knowledge and tools to increase leadership effectiveness and said they would recommend it to others.

"This is a significant member benefit that will expand our pool of leaders and provide the next generation of leaders for the Society," agreed society officials.