Booz Allen Hamilton helped a federal agency accelerate the development of its future leaders by integrating a customized simulation into an innovative, high-potential leadership development program.

The Challenge: Transforming Individual Leaders and Leadership Culture

As organizations transform to achieve greater productivity—improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of their services—they confront the challenge of keeping a trained and knowledgeable workforce in place to effect the change the public demands. During the next 5 years, about one-third of the federal government’s full-time permanent workforce will leave, most by retiring. These changes, along with the increasing complexity of the work government personnel are expected to complete, will require federal agencies to find creative approaches to retaining knowledge, accomplishing tasks, addressing leadership succession, and solving the most critical business problems.

Custom Solutions to Prepare Future Leaders

Booz Allen Hamilton, a leading strategy and technology consulting firm, partnered with the client’s Human Capital Office (HCO) and multiple business units to design a High-Potential Leadership Program (HPLP) focused on rapidly developing future leaders. We applied our proven record of designing and applying leadership development solutions in response to the federal government’s changing workforce to the client’s strategic workforce objectives. As a result, we helped the client create an accelerated approach to leadership development aimed at filling its leadership pipeline with exceptional, talented personnel who are prepared to tackle the client’s toughest challenges.

Booz Allen worked closely with the client to design and develop the HPLP to identify high-potential emerging leaders and prepare them for executive positions by mid-career. This program offers a range of learning activities to help participants efficiently master required leadership competencies and facilitates their advancement to leadership positions quickly, in 3 to 5 years, compared with the 15 to 20 years it can take to reach leadership roles through more traditional career pathways.
An essential element of HPLP is the Leadership Challenge Simulation, a team-based decision-making exercise Booz Allen developed for the client to bring to life the complex challenges associated with rapid advancement. The simulation highlights how the development of leadership competencies, both individually and within a team, affect—and are affected by—job performance, career advancement, institutional politics, mentoring relationships, and peer networking.

In the simulation, facilitators guide teams through multiple rounds of decision making, consequences, and discussions to emphasize individual, team, and cohort performance. After the simulation is over, the facilitator provides feedback on performance outcomes for individuals and teams to foster additional reflection and discussion.

By combining an immersive experience with rich feedback in a safe environment, the simulation prepares participants to recognize the complex demands of leadership at multiple levels and to create, compare, contrast, and evaluate different responses to balancing these demands. Participants face evolving circumstances throughout the simulation that push them to adapt as they pursue resolutions. They then are able to reflect on their leadership behavior and absorb the lessons learned during the simulation. Ultimately, the Leadership Challenge Simulation prepares participants to demonstrate—in rapid fashion and in real time—their leadership competencies and sharpen and improves skills they can apply in their current position and in future leadership roles.

By using this simulation to develop leaders and deepen their level of knowledge in realistic situations, Booz Allen is helping ensure the client’s leaders are fully prepared to guide the organization well into the future.

**Helping Our Client Be Ready for What’s Next**

Our expertise in delivering comprehensive leadership development solutions with a customized Mission Leadership Simulation provided the client’s leaders with transformational learning experiences and the skills to prepare for what’s next. By bringing together expertise in human capital management, learning and development, modeling and simulation, strategic communications, and project management, Booz Allen was able to partner with the client to effect meaningful and sustainable leadership and cultural change and to meet strategic workforce objectives during challenging times.

**Ready to Help You**

Booz Allen is ready to apply its range of leadership development services to help you meet your most important workforce challenges. Our proven Mission Leadership Simulation will help you accelerate leadership development by immersing current and future leaders in demanding yet safe learning environments. We can apply simulation to a wide variety of settings, including development programs, team meetings, and more.

Booz Allen’s leadership experts will work closely with you to determine the most appropriate and effective solutions to confront critical challenges. We will leverage our leadership expertise and our full range of additional capabilities to help you create a workforce ready for today and prepared for tomorrow.

**About Booz Allen**

Booz Allen Hamilton is a leading provider of management and technology consulting services to the US government in defense, intelligence, and civil markets, and to major corporations, institutions, and not-for-profit organizations. Booz Allen is headquartered in McLean, Virginia, employs approximately 25,000 people, and had revenue of $5.86 billion for the 12 months ended March 31, 2012. (NYSE: BAH)