



Leadership Lessons Come to Life at The Gettysburg Leadership Experience



Many elements coalesce to create each Gettysburg Leadership Experience (GLE): skilled instructors, informed guides, interested participants, compelling classroom sessions, and impactful visits to the battlefield itself. Enhancing and amplifying the experience are the deep connections created between these elements.

One of the most powerful and long-lasting points of connection is between an individual participant and the others in his or her group, or cohort. This connection delivers shared knowledge from the collective experience and from the individual participants, insights into managing people in different environments, and understanding about personal management styles and how they can impact others.

“Whether part of the same organization or from different but related organizations, each Gettysburg group finds parallels in the challenges they face back in the office, and participants learn from each other as much as from the classroom lessons,” says John Regentin, Senior Consultant in FCC Services’ Organizational Effectiveness Group. “This is where the power of the experience really delivers, when participants take the lessons and the dialog about shared experiences and recognize opportunities to apply new ideas to their own situations.”

The connection among participants is actively fostered by the instructors through small group interactions during the classroom sessions, which include segments from the movie *Gettysburg* that reveal certain aspects of the Battle of Gettysburg and the leadership skills demonstrated. It’s also fostered on the battlefield itself, where participants are led by professional battlefield guides steeped in the history of the battle.

“In the classroom, we share the leadership lesson and prime participants so that when they go out on the battlefield, they’ll start making connections with what they’re experiencing in their own lives,” says Dr. Robert Ginnett, a GLE instructor. “We facilitate dialog in the classroom, and then also give



participants questions to consider out on the battlefield, and foster both paired and small group discussions after each battlefield experience.”

Holding a PhD from Yale University, Robert is one of GLE’s high caliber instructors who strive to create their own connections to individual participants, and who focus on facilitating the experience for participants. This approach opens the way for open communication and lively discussion, and capitalizes on the experiences of both instructors and participants.

“Our approach is more to open a thought process rather than deliver a lecture,” says Robert. “The diversity of our staff helps participants connect with individual instructors, all of whom are relatable because of the breadth of where they’ve been and what they’ve done.”

The diverse background in the roster of instructors and guides enables John to select specific leaders for specific groups based on identified challenges or goals, although all instructors are well-versed in all program modules, and all the guides are licensed battlefield guides. Typically, a GLE program will cover 3-4 modules, and have three instructors and three guides.

“To a person, we had wonderful and impressive instructors and guides,” says Linda Feuss, Vice President and General Counsel for Bayer Corporation, Law, Patents and Compliance, CropScience Division. Linda worked with John to develop a custom program for the Crop Science legal department in advance of a potential corporate merger. “Everyone on our team made a strong connection with at least one, but usually two or even three, of the program leaders. We also strengthened the connections within our team, building a deeper level of trust that we’ll need as we face a time of significant change.”

A key connection point at GLE is to the history of the Battle of Gettysburg and the decisions made in a time of turmoil that led to the battle’s resolution. Participants recognize parallels with the types of decisions they need to make and leadership they need to demonstrate as their own organizations face change and evolution.

“The program builds on stories about battle leaders who were faced with a very dynamic environment and needed to employ effective strategies with outstanding leadership,” says John. “Being guided across the battlefield, almost everyone feels a powerful connection to the historic events that were so critical to our nation, and appreciates the scope of the challenges that needed to be overcome.”

Despite the strong connection with the history of Gettysburg, the program is less a history lesson than about the character of the individuals who were in that historic time and place, and how their leadership decisions impacted the outcome of the challenges they faced.



“The Gettysburg Leadership Experience uses history as a metaphor for examining applied leadership,” says John. “The historical framework supports parallel thinking and transferable knowledge that participants can use to strengthen their leadership abilities to benefit themselves, their teams and their organizations.”

For more information on The Gettysburg Leadership Experience, please go to <http://www.gettysburgleadershipexperience.com/> or contact John Regentin at john.regentin@fccservices.com.