

Title: The Effectiveness of the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* Training Program: Perceptions of Change for Training Participants in a Public State-Supported Higher Education Institution

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This study examined the extent to which the leadership development training program, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, produced perceptions of behavioral change in trainees at the individual level and the organizational level. This research also assessed to what extent the demographic factors of age, gender, and position in the organization influenced the participants' perception of both individual and organizational change.

The conceptual model for this study theorized that when an organization is confronted with internal or external change, training can provide a means for individuals to obtain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to learn to adapt to the changing environment. As individuals change their behavior/attitudes by applying the training the organization itself changes. This creates a continuous change and learning loop, which is characteristic of a learning organization.

This research utilized existing survey data collected by a public state-supported higher education institution where *Seven Habits* training was conducted. Three research questions were investigated. The first focused on the perception of change before and after training for behaviors/activities associated with the *Seven Habits* and the traits of character, competence, and trust. The second addressed the perception of change related to key institutional change initiatives identified by the university. Finally, this study sought to determine whether the

demographic factors of age, gender, and position in the organization influenced trainees' perceptions of both individual and organizational change.

The data demonstrated that there was a statistically significant perception of change at the individual level, for all demographic groups, for each of the seven habits and the traits of character and competence. The perception of positive change for Trust was mixed. No major differences in perception, based on any of the demographic factors, were identified. The majority of respondents indicated a positive perception of change for all key organizational initiatives, as a result of the Seven Habits training. The only consistent demographic factor that appears to have had an impact on perception of organizational change was age.