2026 Leadership Retreat
LEAD Program Feedback

In cohort groups, leaders discussed two questions:

WHAT WENT WELL?
What aspects of LEAD created the most value?

EVEN BETTER IF…
What could strengthen the experience going forward?

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and, importantly, highly consistent across groups. Participants also offered several practical ideas for strengthening future leadership development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What Participants Valued Most

Across the cohorts, five themes emerged most strongly:

1. INTERACTION + COHORT LEARNING

Participants consistently valued learning with and from one another.

They specifically cited:

- Interaction
- Team building
- Collaboration
- Learning about peers and their personalities
- Exposure to different perspectives across departments
- Breakout discussions that allowed people to connect and speak freely
- Cohorts that were easy to work with

What this tells us: The cohort structure was not simply a delivery mechanism for LEAD. Peer learning and cross-functional connection were part of the value of the program itself.

2. COACHING + INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Coaching appeared repeatedly as one of the strongest elements of the LEAD experience.

Participants highlighted:

- Coaching
- 1:1 meetings/coaching sessions
- A safe environment to discuss personal and work-related situations
- Accountability created through coaching

One group specifically noted that the individual coaching environment allowed participants to talk openly about real work and personal situations.

What this tells us: Participants valued having a confidential space to move from leadership concepts to their own leadership challenges and behaviors.

3. PRACTICAL CONTENT + APPLICATION

Participants appreciated content they could actually use.

Specific comments included:

- Management-applied concepts
- Strategizing
- Communication
- Use of the G.R.O.W. model
- Helpful resources
- Zoom presentation/instructions
- Grab & Grow sessions being inclusive and efficient
- Assessments
- Acronyms and tools that supported learning

What this tells us: LEAD was strongest when participants could connect leadership concepts to real situations, conversations and decisions rather than experiencing the program as theoretical leadership training.

4. ASSESSMENTS + UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

Assessments—particularly DiSC—were identified as valuable.

Participants noted:

- Assessments as a positive component of LEAD
- Learning about peers' personalities
- Expanding DiSC beyond supervisors helped start conversations within teams

What this tells us: Participants see value in having a shared language for understanding behavioral differences, particularly when that language extends beyond the leadership cohort and can be applied with their teams.

5. CONNECTION ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION

Several comments point to LEAD creating relationships that might not otherwise have developed.

Participants valued:

- Different views from different departments
- Opportunities to connect through breakout groups
- Team building
- Collaboration
- Learning more about peers

What this tells us: LEAD appears to have created value beyond individual leader development by strengthening relationships and understanding across functions.

EVEN BETTER IF…

The improvement suggestions were also notably consistent. Rather than calling for a different program, participants largely asked for **more continuity, structure and reach**.

1. CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT

Participants specifically requested:

- Continuation of the program
- Continued leadership development
- More structured accountability-partner interaction

One group simply captured the sentiment as:

“The program continues.”

Opportunity: Treat LEAD as an ongoing leadership-development journey rather than a program with a hard stop.

2. EXPAND DiSC

This was one of the clearest suggestions.

Participants recommended:

- Employees/adjusters complete DiSC
- Everyone take the DiSC assessment
- Share DiSC results with management

One group noted that expanding DiSC outside supervisors had already helped initiate conversations within teams.

Opportunity: Consider whether a broader DiSC strategy could create a common behavioral language across Connect and give leaders more tools for adapting communication, feedback and coaching.

3. CREATE MORE STRUCTURE AROUND ACCOUNTABILITY

Participants asked for:

- More structure with accountability partners
- More direction for accountability-partner conversations
- Continued accountability following the formal program

Opportunity: Provide a simple framework for accountability partnerships—specific questions, expectations, cadence and follow-up—rather than relying solely on participants to create the structure themselves.

4. REFINE COHORT FORMAT + TIME COMMITMENT

Participants identified several logistical opportunities:

- Consider the length of sessions
- Consider timing during the month
- Make participation optional, where appropriate
- The Cohort Challenge was time-consuming
- Consider a 60-minute cohort meeting
- Consider cohort-group rotation

Opportunity: Preserve the value of cohort interaction while evaluating session length, frequency, timing and workload to make participation sustainable.

5. CREATE GREATER VISIBILITY + FOLLOW-THROUGH

Participants suggested:

- A cohort/training dashboard for task and meeting completion
- More structured follow-through
- A “one-page guide”
- A 360 or additional feedback mechanism
- Continued connection after formal sessions

Opportunity: Create a lightweight system that makes the development journey, expectations and progress more visible without adding unnecessary administrative burden.

WHAT THE FEEDBACK TELLS US

Taken together, the feedback suggests that LEAD's greatest value came from the combination of:

CONTENT + COACHING + COHORT + APPLICATION

Participants did not simply value learning leadership concepts.

They valued the opportunity to:

Learn something → discuss it with peers → apply it to their own leadership → receive coaching → understand colleagues differently → take it back to their teams.

That combination appears to be an important part of what made LEAD effective.

The feedback also suggests that participants are not asking for leadership development to end.

They are asking for the next iteration to become even more embedded in how they lead.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Based directly on the participant feedback, the following opportunities are worth considering as Connect plans the next phase of leadership development:

Opportunity	Potential Next Step
Continue leadership development	Establish an ongoing cadence rather than treating LEAD as a completed event
Preserve cohort learning	Continue cross-functional peer learning while evaluating shorter/more efficient formats
Strengthen accountability	Give accountability partners a simple structure, cadence and conversation guide
Expand DiSC application	Explore broader employee participation and practical team-level application
Continue coaching	Preserve access to coaching/individual development where feasible
Make progress visible	Consider a simple dashboard or one-page development roadmap
Increase feedback	Explore 360 or other structured feedback opportunities
Keep application central	Continue emphasizing real-world leadership challenges over content alone