



AgTexas

LENDING COOPERATIVE:

Cultivating a Pipeline of Future Talent

THE
SODERQUIST
CENTER

The background of the slide is a photograph of a lush green field, possibly a cornfield, stretching to the horizon. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue, filled with numerous soft, white cumulus clouds. The text is overlaid on this image.

The leaders of AgTexas were facing a serious challenge.

This very successful agricultural lending cooperative realized it needed to focus more on senior talent development and succession planning to secure continued growth.


Recognizing this, they took a very different approach to finding a solution to their challenge.

Riding a wave of record high earnings, AgTexas turned to a trusted and experienced external partner to help them shape their leadership bench strength, rather than assume their current success would guarantee future growth.

The leadership team was *solid & cohesive*

and had worked together closely to build the business into its current success. However, the long tenure of most of the current leaders presented an impending leadership gap in the organization. AgTexas needed to strategically grow a pipeline of leaders for the future.



A yellow tractor with large black tires is parked in a grassy field. The tractor is positioned on the left side of the frame, with its front facing towards the right. The background shows a clear blue sky and some distant trees. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

They needed to build leaders with the
***abilities, confidence
and commitment***
to continue the positive trajectory
of AgTexas, and they needed to
start investing in them **now.**

They partnered with
The Soderquist Center to
help them not only
set the stage for future
success, but begin
training the leaders
who would eventually
run the business.

AgTexas sought out The Soderquist Center because of its *proven track record* for delivering high quality leader development and for exceeding expectations for service and business needs in their prior Soderquist experiences.

They tasked the Soderquist Center to design a cohort-based program specifically tailored to fit their unique culture and business; with the feel of AgTexas, but built on the expertise and knowledge of Soderquist facilitators and personalized leader development content, assessments, and experiences.



AgTexas Leadership Academy focused on three key objectives.

The first objective established executive sponsorship to demonstrate the investment to participants, connect development directly to important business objectives, and set accountability between the business and leaders.

All too often, businesses that outsource training outsource the responsibility for development as well. AgTexas Leadership Academy Session One began with a charge from the COO to communicate the organization's investment in the program and expectations placed on the future leaders sitting in the room.

The second objective integrated self-assessments and individualized leader development planning.

This process merges important knowledge and awareness of self and team with specific, tangible development actions. At the same time, the cohort experienced the characteristics of an effective team and the power and impact of leading well at any level of the organization, to include crafting and sharing elements of their personal leadership philosophy as measure of mutual accountability to one another.

Finally, the program integrated experiential learning focused and tailored for participants to lead self, team and organization to higher success.

This multi-session approach developed skills, abilities and confidence at progressively more complex and demanding levels of leadership in the business. The Soderquist Center came alongside each leader to offer continuing challenge and support between sessions, which reinforced the development process and ensured deeper learning.



After the third session of AgTexas Leadership Academy,
the transformation within the group was remarkable.

During the first session, it was apparent that the cohort viewed themselves at varied levels of leadership within the organization.

The final session revealed a markedly different group—
one who saw themselves as the future leaders of the company
and began using “we” language instead of “they,”
when referring to organizational leadership.

The cohort demonstrated more able and confident ownership of current leadership roles and responsibility to solve issues on their teams and functions. The leaders also began to recognize and embrace their obligation to lead the organization in the future.

As a result of the success of AgTexas Leadership Academy, a second cohort has begun this program.

With the leadership pipeline now flowing and a solid partnership for leader development established with The Soderquist Center, AgTexas is much less susceptible to challenges of succession planning and senior talent development and much better positioned to continue on a path of organizational success.



“

The Soderquist Center has helped develop a pool of leaders within the organization.

This pool has expanded our options for succession planning with internal candidates to preserve the culture and success of our organization.

—ALAN WATSON, COO of AGTEXAS

SODERQUIST.ORG

