



CENTER FOR
**Independent
Distributor
Leadership**

PROGRAM GUIDE



AD

Together, we win.



WHAT IS THE CIDL?

The Center for Independent Distributor Leadership (CIDL) is AD’s holistic education initiative to prepare the next generation of independent distributor leaders with the competencies and experiences to build long-term, sustainable success for their companies.

By leveraging the CIDL, AD member companies gain the resources needed to develop and retain top talent, including comprehensive leadership programs to fuel business and professional growth.

The CIDL includes three main leadership certification pathways:



**LEADERSHIP
EXPERIENCE**



**DISTRIBUTOR
SALES LEADER**



**DISTRIBUTOR
OPERATIONS
LEADER**

In addition, we offer development programs that provide the foundation for a wide range of industry focus areas and are great options for those looking to participate in one of the three leadership pathways in the future.

Each program’s curriculum is created in collaboration with university instructors, leadership coaches, and independent distribution thought leaders.



LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Leadership Experience is a certification program designed for those committed to being in leadership positions within their organizations. The certification track develops leaders who will build upon the success of independent distributors and ensure the sustainability of the independent business model.



Program Details

Leadership Experience places each participant in a four-year cohort of 25 to 30 participants that will stay together for the full program. Cohorts provide a network of member leaders that will grow together and be a resource after the Leadership Experience is completed.

As shown below, each year of the Leadership Experience curriculum has a focus area on an independent distributor’s advantage, with multiple core competencies for participants to learn and implement.

- Year 1:** Chart Your Own Destiny
- Year 2:** Strategic Generational Growth
- Year 3:** Employee, Customer and Community Connection
- Year 4:** Nimble & Flexible Decision Making

Learning experiences happen quarterly, in the form of two-to-three-day training events with a call-to-engagement to follow. The in-person training events will take place at Texas A&M and Villanova University, and participants should budget for travel and lodging.

This program brings together industry thought leaders and best-in-class instructors to provide a balanced learning experience between academia and industry.

Who is this program for?

Leadership Experience is designed for CEOs, current executive leaders and those who are being considered to lead and grow independent distributors. Recommend candidates include:

- CEO and Chief Officers
- Presidents
- Vice Presidents
- High-level Directors and Managers

INVESTMENT

\$25,000 four-year cohort experience
\$6,250 per year





DISTRIBUTOR SALES LEADER

The Distributor Sales Leader curriculum provides sales professionals with a long-term development track including courses and interactive workshops to learn sales strategies ready for immediate field application. The certification integrates with your internal sales training program and elevates your sales team to better grow top-line revenue in highly competitive markets.

Sales leaders will improve their skills and tactics through instructor-led and self-paced learning, with solution-based sales as the core philosophy throughout the certification program.

The solution-based sales approach focuses on discovering customer needs and developing solutions to deliver on a strong value proposition. This approach continues throughout all aspects of the sales certification program.



3 Pillars



150 credit certification



Annual recertification



Program Details

The Distributor Sales Leader curriculum combines solution-based sales strategies with industry-focused insights into best practices. The curriculum involves three parts:

- Product (50 credits):** Introductory Sales Training; Product and Distribution Value Proposition
- Purpose (50 credits):** Professional Sales Training; Solution-Based Sales and Customer Decision-Maker Classes
- Performance – Educate, Equip, Empower (50 credits):** Industry Specialized Sales Training; Customer Application and Environment Needs Analysis

The 150-credit program can be completed at your own pace, and participants will receive a badge after finishing each knowledge area. The certificate is awarded after achieving all three badges.

The Product Training is a customizable set of online courses designed for self-paced learning, while the Purpose Training and Performance Training are live, instructor-led classes delivered virtually. In-person course options are available - contact us for more information.

Who is this program for?

The Distributor Sales Leader program is meant for a company's sales team members looking to improve their skills and grow with an independent distributor. Recommended candidates include:

- Sales Professionals (Outside Sales, Inside Sales, Customer Service & Counter Sales)
- Regional Managers
- Sales Leaders
- Anyone who wants to learn more about customer-facing roles (marketing, operations, etc.)

INVESTMENT

\$7,500 annual company subscription provides your entire team unlimited access and enrollment to the courses.



DISTRIBUTOR OPERATIONS LEADER

The Distributor Operations Leader program is designed to help operations leaders learn and implement best practices that optimize profitability and performance of independent distributors.

The certification program covers the entirety of distributor operations and provides leaders with the road map, tools, and network to drive sustainability and growth among their companies.



4 weeks virtual

or



3 days in-person



Maximize profit



Program Details

The Distributor Operations Leader curriculum offers classroom and experiential learning to be applied across industries. The curriculum contains three master classes focusing on different competencies:

- Supplier Optimization**
 - Competency: Sourcing
- Inventory Optimization**
 - Competency: Stocking
- Pricing Optimization**
 - Competency: Selling & Shipping



Each course will be offered as a three-day, in-person session hosted at Texas A&M University and includes guidance on a best practice project with post-course instructor support and networking.

Completion of each course comes with its own certificate representing mastery of the competency, while completion of all three courses earns the Distributor Operations Sales Leader certification and designation.

Who is this program for?

This program is taught by some of Texas A&M's top instructors. The Distributor Operations Leader program is for operational leaders responsible for driving continuous improvement and innovation to deliver sustainable growth for an independent distributor. Examples of recommended candidates include:

- Vice Presidents of Operations
- Operations Managers
- Supply Chain Directors
- Logistics Managers
- Business Analysts
- Data Analysts

INVESTMENT

\$2,750 per person per course

Development Programs


Development programs as part of the CIDL provide overviews to a wide range of disciplines that impact the success of an independent distributor. These courses build the framework for the core competencies that are expanded upon in Leader programs. The Distributor Manager Development Program is our first development program, with the potential for more to follow based on AD member and supplier feedback.






DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

— DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM —

The Distributor Manager Development Program delivers emerging managers an introduction into the financial, operational, and sales disciplines required for a thriving independent distributor.



The curriculum is developed in conjunction with Texas A&M University’s Industrial Distribution Program in the College of Engineering, among the most well renowned and prestigious distribution programs.

-  4½ days in-person
-  Bi-annual cohorts
-  25-30 person cohorts



Program Details

The Distribution Manager Development Program is offered as a 4½ days in-person course at Texas A&M University.

This course acts as an effective prerequisite for the three core Leader programs in the CIDL, however it is not required.

Are development programs right for me?

Development programs are designed for future candidates for manager, director, and eventual executive positions with an independent distributor. Examples of recommended candidates include branch managers and those with high potential in the following disciplines:

- Operations
- Supply Chain
- Purchasing
- Sales
- Management



INVESTMENT

\$3,750 per person



The Talent Development Council engages participating members in a long-term research initiative to advance best practices, practical methods, and tools for B2B distributors and manufacturers to implement talent development in their businesses. Each year, the Council will focus on one talent area.

The Research Team, comprised of members of the AD Education Team and Texas A&M University, will meet with each participating company individually to gather insights into their current practices related to the topics being researched. The findings are then consolidated and used to inform and build out a virtual workshop, which participating member companies will have exclusive access to.

-  2 research meetings and 6 online workshops
-  6 online workshops (2 hours each)
-  25-30 companies



Membership Includes:

- One-on-one interview-style strategymeetings.
- Access to comprehensive digital and print resources you can take back to your company.
- Unlimited attendance in six virtual workshops hosted by AD in partnership with Texas A&M University.
- Networking opportunities with other distributor participants.

Who is this offering for?

The Talent Development Council is for human resources professionals and managers focused on attracting, developing, and retaining talent. It is also available to all employees at participating member companies, regardless of job title or expertise.



The curriculum is developed in conjunction with Texas A&M University’s Industrial Distribution Program in the College of Engineering, among the most well renowned and prestigious distribution programs.

INVESTMENT

The **\$10,000** membership fee covers all council benefits, providing your company with access to best-practice methods and tools essential for talent acquisition.



CENTER FOR Independent Distributor Leadership

Mission

Our mission is to develop the current and future leaders of independent distribution. Through our comprehensive learning paths, we help leaders develop the competencies, relationships, and experiences to deliver the Independent Leadership Advantage.

Vision

We aspire to provide the most valuable development and education programs for independent distributors to compete, win and thrive – today and into the future.

Core Value

We believe the independent business model is the best model for distributors. Our in-depth and structured development opportunities provide the pathway for distributors to fully benefit from being independent.



For more information about the CIDL or an individual program, please reach out at CIDL@adhq.com or connect with Brandon Hagen directly:

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Learn more at adhq.com or connect with AD via LinkedIn.