



Transforming Schneider Leadership: The Legacy of a Partnership



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Back in 2016, a new executive-education partnership between **Schneider Electric** and **INSEAD** was given an ambitious title: **Transforming Schneider Leadership**. Designed to support a strategic shift towards the digitalization of energy management and industrial automation, the intent was to develop leaders who saw themselves as symbols and architects of transformation. Leaders who understood that if they wanted their organization to transform, they needed to start by changing their habits, and their relationships. Leaders who thought and acted differently, and challenged the status quo effectively, to bring about organizational evolution – in a volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous, and increasingly digital world.

Seven years, 57 intakes, and 5,000+ participants later, the multi-level leadership program was officially one of the largest – and most highly rated – in the history of both **INSEAD** and **Schneider Electric**. The original brief now looked prescient. TSL (as it came to be known) unfolded against a backdrop of global turbulence: escalation of the climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical unrest and economic instability, the rise of AI, and the emergence of new employees' expectations for meaning, well-being, and social contribution. These upheavals made it ever clearer that transformative leadership was needed far beyond the requirements of a strategic move towards digital.

This document captures the legacy of TSL as a catalyst of personal and leadership transformations.





Gianpiero Petriglieri
INSEAD professor of organizational behavior

Transforming Leadership by Transforming Learning

Even before TSL was conceived, **Schneider Electric** was a global frontrunner in energy management and automation for homes, buildings, data centers, infrastructure installations and industrial plants. It was present in over 100 countries and had 150,000 employees, a significant proportion of them engineers and technical specialists. But the industry, and the world, were changing rapidly, and the change presented a generational opportunity: to become a global leader in sustainable energy management and industrial automation. Seizing that opportunity required a radical change in focus: from analogue to digital; from products to services; from hardware to software, from internal processes to customer satisfaction; from tried-and-tested methods to new ways of working that fostered bottom-up agility.

With these considerations in mind, in 2015 the board launched a new strategy with five pillars: Do More; Digitize; Innovate; Step Up; Simplify. But Schneider managers were comfortable with the old ways of doing things. Many had risen through the ranks because they'd excelled in the old system. Executives became aware that the success of the new strategy hinged on helping managers let go of old habits and embrace change, to become role models of a new way of thinking and doing things.

Around this time, senior representatives of the Schneider Leadership Academy happened to attend a conference where **INSEAD** professor of organizational behavior, **Gianpiero Petriglieri**, was presenting his work, centered on the idea that "a new way of leading requires a new way of

learning." Traditional learning practices focused on disseminating new knowledge and mandating the acquisition of certain skills, he argued, were insufficient to foster the deep personal and cultural changes that were required for organizational transformations. Petriglieri's work resonated with the observations of the Schneider members of the audience. They invited the professor to meet Tina Mylon, then SVP of Talent and Inclusion, and **Olivier Blum**, then Chief Human Resources Officer, to discuss how they could apply his approach at Schneider. Mylon, who is now Senior Vice President, Talent, Inclusion and Culture, recalls:

“Originally, there was more emphasis on the business skills, but as we went through our conversations internally and with **INSEAD**, we realized that the leadership shift – making people more empowered, intentional in their transformation – had to be the core. That was the red thread. We needed to foster collective responsibility not just for the top executives, but for the leadership talent pipeline, to engage in this, to lead this transformation, together.”

Together, Mylon, Petriglieri and their teams began to work with the CEO and other executives on a learning initiative that would signal and support transformation. "The **INSEAD** team became more than a supplier," says Mylon. "The relationship was a partnership, a dialogue that provided a mirror."

Personal. Practical. Digital.

The **INSEAD**–Schneider team worked together to devise a learning intervention that would free up company’s leaders to change and allow them to transform the business.

“We were intellectual sparring partners,” says Professor Petriglieri, who was now the official program director. Taking the professor on his word, Schneider executives made it clear that they weren’t interested in the traditional leadership programs the school was familiar with delivering. Instead, they sought to develop a novel leadership development system, which included a set of common principles for the whole organization, and a portfolio of workshops that addressed the needs of leaders at different levels. “What I loved was that they rolled their sleeves up and got stuck in,” says Tina Mylon.

The **INSEAD** experts conducted dozens of interviews with people at all levels of the company – from high-potentials who were possible participants to the executive committee. “We wanted to understand the macro and micro imperative,” explains Petriglieri. “What was the Ex-Co trying to achieve? What did their people think? Where was the motivation... and the resistance?” These conversations were foundational. They were also, in a way, a precursor of the kind of conversations that the **INSEAD** team hoped to foster among Schneider leaders within, and most importantly, beyond the programs.

As the design team reviewed and debated insights from these conversations, two key ideas emerged. First the program itself should be innovative and digital, rather than a traditional program about digital innovation. And second, it should honor the context of the digital transformation but not be anchored on it. As genuine leaders, the participants should be encouraged and empowered to examine their leadership and then choose what changes to take forward in their work and their workplace.

Eventually the discussions coalesced on three principles: “Personal. Practical. Digital.”

To apply them across a whole system of learning experiences, the **INSEAD**–Schneider team came up with a multi-layer suite of learning journeys that would touch every part of the organization. Each of the four levels targeted a different layer of the Schneider leadership pyramid and was designed to dovetail with the other levels in such a way that participants could progress upwards through them and cascade the learning downwards to their teams (see diagram).

Four levels of leadership transformation

Levels	Key Program Objectives	Stages of Leadership Journey
L1 Exec. Level (SVP/ EVP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shape the future of the company and steer the vision for enterprise wide leadership 	<i>Leading with Vision</i>
L2 Senior Leaders (VPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift your mindset and ability to lead transformation and business growth in a fast changing environment, with a clear sense of purpose and conviction 	<i>Leading with Purpose</i>
L3 Mid Career Leaders (Directors/ Senior Managers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop your mindset and ability to navigate and influence for driving change and business results Apply a toolkit for innovation and strategic business execution 	<i>Leading with Influence</i>
L4 Early Career Leaders (Managers/ Individual Contributors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find your own leadership voice and lead yourself and others to sustained success Develop your business acumen and embrace the complexities of digital transformation, high-paced innovation, and customer centricity 	<i>Stepping up to Leadership</i>

At L1 through L3 levels, a face-to-face workshop focused on experiential learning that gave people space to question the assumptions that got in the way of personal and organizational transformation – by building a community for transformation. And a digital learning journey focused on strategic principles and frameworks that gave participants the tools to advance their transformation agenda, and to integrate their learning from the program into their daily work.

All participants learned about both strategic innovation and leadership, but content was tailored for each level. In addition, to turn the program's huge ambition into a large-scale reality, the delivery method was tailored to fit each level. To reach thousands of high-potentials, for example, the L4 curriculum was delivered online. Conversely, for higher levels, there was more bandwidth for intensive experiential learning in groups (see table for a summary of content and delivery).

For the online learning journeys (at L2, L3 and L4) participants also had to identify an individual **Action Lab**, a live strategic experiment or case study, whereby they could put their learning into practice in real time. Depending on their area of the business, this could be anything from a new service for customers or a project serving internal clients.

The scale and breadth of the undertaking was only made possible thanks to the wide range of expertise at **INSEAD** – from **Professor Chengyi Lin's** ground-breaking work on digital learning and **Professor Nathan Furr's** research into innovation (presented in his bestselling book *The Innovator's Method: Bringing the Lean Start-up into Your Organization*). The work of **Professor Peter Zemsky**, the school's deputy dean at the time and expert in digital strategy, also featured prominently in the program. **Professors Derek Deasy, Declan Fitzsimons, Svenja Weber, Mette Stuhr, Noah Askin, Enoch Li, and Jasenka Lukac-Greenwood** at different times during the initiative, directed and taught in leadership modules. As well as faculty colleagues, Professor Petriglieri, was able to call on **INSEAD's** teams of highly skilled leadership consultants, coaches, and online-learning developers.

Four complementary levels of content and delivery

Level	Theme	On campus delivery	Digital/remote delivery
L1 Executive leaders (SVP/ EVP)	Leading with Vision	5.5 days: Mainly leadership, with workshops, experiential learning and coaching. Additional content digital strategy and cultural change.	Ongoing leadership coaching
L2 Senior leaders (VPs)	Leading with Purpose	5.5 days: Mainly leadership, with workshops, experiential learning and coaching. Additional content conducting business across cultures.	5 weeks: Strategy in the Age of A.I. and Digital Disruption plus ongoing leadership coaching
L3 Mid Career Leaders (Directors/ Senior Managers)	Leading with Influence	3.5 days: Mainly leadership, based on a personalised leadership profile and coaching. Additional content preparing for online module.	4 weeks: The innovators' method plus ongoing leadership coaching
L4 Early Career Leaders (Managers/ Individual Contributors)	Stepping up to Leadership	None	4 weeks: Leading yourself and others 4 weeks: Strategy for turbulent times

By request from the Executive Committee, an L0 version was also added, for the entire Schneider top team, including its CEO, to go through a similar learning journey than their colleagues were experiencing. An additional initiative was developed and delivered for women leaders. When the pandemic hit in 2020, L2, L3 were redesigned to be delivered entirely on-line, albeit synchronously.



Leadership development at unprecedented scale

	Number of intakes/classes	Total number of learners
L1	5	179
L2	11	485
L3	34	1,646
L4	7	3,032
Total	57	5,342

By the end of 2023, there was a sense that the leadership culture of **Schneider Electric** had changed, if not transformed. **Anja Thiemann**, who joined Schneider as head of the Leadership Academy in 2022, immediately became aware of a significant difference in terms of culture and leaders' behavior compared to her prior employers. During her onboarding conversations at Schneider, and meeting leaders while on the **INSEAD** campus, she noticed "many behaviors that stood out - an overall openness and generosity, a willingness to co-create and support, an eagerness to contribute to other people's success paired with a strong and mature business acumen," across all program levels.

At that point, 5,000+ individuals had participated in one or more of the intakes and 300+ had completed the "sister" program for women. "Graduates" had reached a critical mass in all parts of the company.

The three letters "T, S and L" were recognized as a badge of leadership potential. At the same time, **Schneider Electric** had embarked on a new strategic plan with a new CEO. It was time to take stock. As she reflected on the next steps of Schneider's leadership development journey, Thiemann wanted to know "if the impact of TSL could be made 'tangible' in any way. We all know the limits of calculating an ROI of a development program, so my ask was getting beyond numbers and really tell a meaningful story."

How were the company's leaders thinking and behaving differently as a result of the TSL initiative?



Assessing the significance of TSL: words, numbers, or... both?

Evaluating executive education is always a challenge, but TSL is a special case. We have over 5,000 individual stories and seven years' worth of data at our disposal. To name just a few sources, there are: responses to questionnaires for each intake; a full business review of TSL conducted by Schneider in 2018; and two **INSEAD** impact surveys from 2019 and 2024 respectively. The program has won industry awards for innovation and excellence from the EFMD, CLO Magazine, and Brandon Hall.

At an organizational level, as well as the usual indicators of business success – the company's share price has tripled in the years TSL unfolded – **Schneider Electric** has won awards for achievements that are potentially linked to the program. The evolution of employee engagement data, both from annual surveys and one-off focus groups, provides yet another perspective on leadership at Schneider.

Using data analytic methods, Marine Amoudru of Schneider Leadership Academy has undertaken a statistical analysis of TSL graduates' career outcomes in comparison with retrospectively constructed "control groups" (of employees at a similar level who did not attend the program).

She says:

“By aligning program objectives with data-driven insights, we affirmed the value of our investment in strategic leadership development. This approach has illuminated a path toward a future where data will play a pivotal role in our decision making.”

Yet numbers can only tell part of the TSL story. In the following pages, we therefore combine quantitative data with individual narratives offered by TSL alumni to illustrate how they changed as both people and leaders as a result of the TSL learning system. And to use, Professor Petriglieri's formulation once again, to look into how "deep personal transformation" might contribute to a "broad organizational transformation," concluding that leadership indeed provides the link between the two.



Personal transformation

“TSL changed my life,” says **Sharon Hua**, Global Director of Strategy and Marketing for the Services line of business, who has been with Schneider for over 17 years and completed both L4 and L3 along the way.

She talks enthusiastically about the module on mindfulness in L4 but says that the real mindset change came with the face-to-face interaction of L3. In particular, the group coaching had a profound impact on her life. Her role involved much work travel, and with the help of her colleagues and coach, she was able to have more meaningful and honest conversations with her loved ones about how the travel was impacting them all. These conversations did not just allow her family to accommodate her work. They invested them in it and let her feel less stressed and more supported as a leader, ultimately improving both her well-being and work performance.

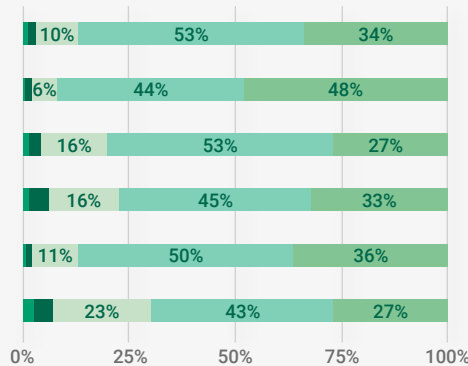
Frédéric Pinglot, VP Human Rights, also highlights the power of the coaching in small groups. “We became so close that we shared things we wouldn’t share with anyone else,” he says. “It was a safe space and we built strong bonds, which we’ve maintained through a WhatsApp group.” Like for many other participants, those bonds became sources of support and venues for ongoing development.

Sharon and Frédéric, based in China and France respectively, provide particularly profound examples of personal transformation. Feedback from **INSEAD**’s impact survey of all TSL graduates, conducted in 2024 on a sample of 1,000 participants across levels, suggests that they are not alone. Over 78% of respondents agreed that TSL had a “positive influence on my well-being” over 86% that TSL “had a positive influence on my confidence” and over 94% that it “helped me increase my self-awareness”.



Overall, in fact, a staggering 93% of respondents agreed (around half of them strongly) to the statement: "I benefited from the TSL program as a person". Many of these added supporting comments, such as: "I am more mindful", "I communicate differently" and "I've become more proactive". Or, as one TSL graduate put it, "I've started to step into the shoes of others to understand their challenges better". Participants, it seems, learned that self-awareness was not a personal indulgence, but a necessity for becoming more empathic and present to their team, and to the changes happening within and around **Schneider Electric** as a whole. And self-awareness required community.

TSL changed my leadership for the better at SE

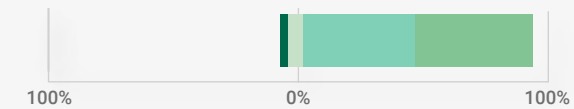


Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither agree or disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Personal change is even an outcome of L4, proving that "online" doesn't equate to "impersonal". As one L4 participant noted, "Mindfulness brought a completely new perspective and tool to manage my own stress and life balance." Meanwhile, participants at other levels talk of "seeing themselves through other people's eyes" and "being the best possible version of myself in all situations". One alumnus even remarked: "It's like Pokemon Evolution – I've just jumped to a new level!"



I benefited from the TSL program as a person



Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither agree or disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Personal transformation to leadership transformation

“I channel my inner TSL to get things done!” reports **Premika Chandrasekaran**, a director of e-commerce based in India, highlighting the link between personal and leadership transformation. In particular, she talks of the way the online modules of L4 brought discipline back into her work and helped her to move from being a specialist to becoming a leader. But, she adds, the TSL impact is also about **simple behavior change**, such as ways of giving feedback.

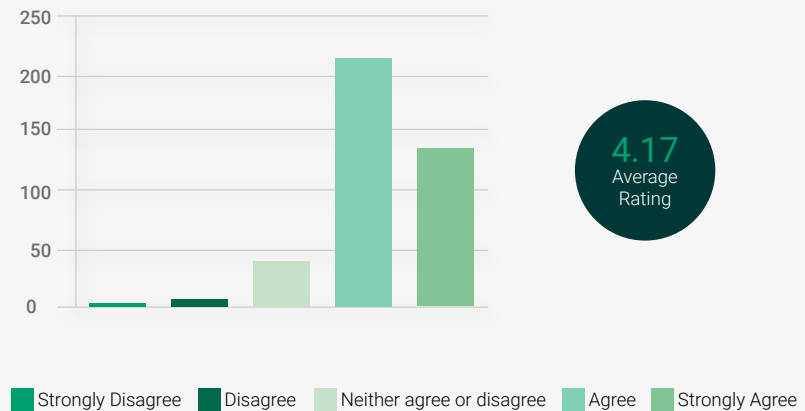
“ I use the “situation, behavior, impact” model to make my feedback more specific and helpful, rather than just saying something like: “you did a great job”. I use it in my personal life too, like when a friend drops me off in their car instead of leaving me to catch the bus! TSL opened my eyes to the power of feedback. ”

Similarly, **Lauren Mahoney-Pick**, VP Creative Marketing Experience, who completed both L3 and L2, says that TSL enables her to see herself through a leadership lens:

“ Since doing TSL I see new reflection when I look in the mirror. I’ve always considered myself self-aware, but now I also understand how I make other people feel. ”

The feedback about leadership transformation from the 2024 impact survey is overwhelming. Nearly 87% of those who responded agreed that TSL “changed my leadership for the better at **Schneider Electric**”. This is a remarkable result by any standards, especially as it comes from surveys completed months – and in some cases years – after attending the program. The results are very similar to those of the 2019 impact survey. Then 92% said that practicing the leadership tools learned on the program had made a “positive impact on my professional life”. This data suggests that TSL has delivered consistent and enduring change over the years.

The TSL program changed my leadership for the better at Schneider Electric



More specifically, in 2024, alumni agreed that the program helped them: lead with more courage (78%); lead with more care (81%); enhance their resilience (74%); clarify their intent (84%); increase their ability to influence (76%); build closer relationships (74%); manage, diverse groups (82%); and build a broader network (79%).

Survey respondents also point to “increased curiosity”, “stepping out of their comfort zones”, “actively listening”, all discrete behavior changes, but with huge potential for leadership transformation, when repeated every day. **Frédéric Pinglot** gives one telling example:

“ Just yesterday, a colleague asked me if Schneider had any tools for digital risk screening of suppliers. Before TSL, I’d have said “I don’t know” or I’d have tried to find out everything I could on my own and spent hours creating a perfect report for him. Instead, I told him I’d heard something about digital risk screening and circulated some rough slides to anyone I thought could help. Immediately, I started getting responses and realized there was huge potential for simplifying and optimizing the way we use these tools.”

One reason that TSL graduates were so keen to put the leadership learning into practice is that they could also see the change reflected by their own managers. Everyone who was involved in designing and owning the program also attended as a participant, including the CEO and the Executive Committee. Beyond the signal of commitment, it created a shared language and gave top executives a lived experience of the TSL offering. Tina Mylon recalls her own experience of TSL:

“ It was disruptive and different. Many of us went in thinking, ‘Oh, I’m going to a classic business school leadership program’, but the experiential nature of the learning, coupled with the holistic approach, the coaching, the personal attention... it was a jolt. I remember vividly the insights about my leadership that I consolidated through the coaching. What I found particularly powerful was having the coaches present throughout the program, and then following up when we were back at work. We formed a relationship, they saw us in action, so they could really help bridge what we learned on campus with our work context.”

Schneider's current CHRO **Charise Le**, a TSL alumna like most of her colleagues on the Executive Committee, reflected on the program's impact:

“ The program was designed to challenge our leaders. We invited them to be curious, admit they are never too experienced to learn, and make this leadership development program a priority on their agenda. I was glad to see our leaders unlearning and learning, embracing feedback, and stepping into a new level of awareness. One of the benefits of the program was to humanize our leadership suite starting from within, at a very personal level, to understand not only oneself but also one's impact on others. In an era that is getting more digital, I believe it's key to lead with a human touch, create trust among teams, and build an environment in which people feel safe to be themselves, to contribute, and to make an impact. The leaders who went through the program are living proof: they inspire others on the same journey, are coaches to their teams, and shape the future of our business and culture. ”

In 2023, while Schneider was planning for its future strategy and culture evolution, research by employer branding agency, Atomic, appeared to find evidence of TSL fingerprints throughout Schneider's leadership culture. The researchers' interviews and focus groups from Boston to Bangalore identified that the company was a place of “psychological safety”, where “everyone has a voice” and “senior leaders make time to support and develop employees”. Other recurring themes included the company's “learning culture”, “collaboration” and “inclusivity”, which are all elements of the TSL philosophy.

In short, all sources of available data point to a genuine leadership transformation at Schneider. The various follow-up surveys also elucidate the link between leadership and personal transformation. A key finding was that participants experienced a shift from a habitual replication of traditional ways of doing things to a conscious, reflective, and often more collective engagement with their role as leaders. They were provoked by TSL to show up differently and fulfil their roles in a way that was more awake to the possibility of collaborating with others to change the business for the better.

The link between personal and organizational transformation, then, was leadership – a renewed sense of agency and responsibility for the company, its results and its culture.

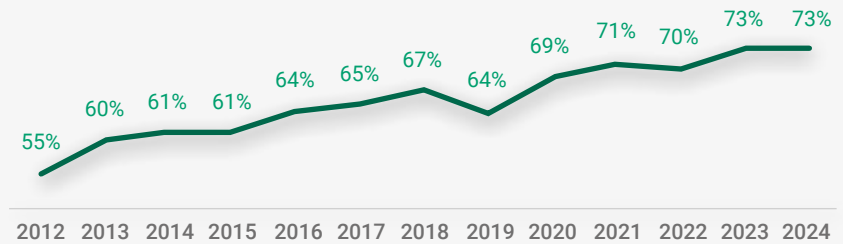
Leadership transformation to organizational transformation

Since joining forces with **INSEAD** in 2015, **Schneider Electric** has gone from strength to strength. Strategic acquisitions have continued the evolution from hardware and products to software and services. 2023 was another year of record revenues: up 13% on the previous year to €36 billion. In 2024 the company rose up the Fortune Global 500 list, climbing 34 places to #387.

The corporate trophy cabinet also boasts an impressive array of awards. To name just two of the most recent, in June 2024, **Schneider Electric** was named the world's most sustainable company by Time magazine and in May 2024, it was among the winners of the inaugural annual Glassdoor Award List of the Best-Led Companies in the USA. In 2023, Schneider entered Boston Consulting Group's list of the world's most innovative companies (at #25) and was recognized by the World Economic Forum as a 'Lighthouse' for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Furthermore, between 2015 and 2023, the years in which TSL was designed and deployed, Schneider's Employee Engagement Index rose from below the global average score for comparable companies to well above average – very close to the ambition of reaching 75% by 2025 (see graph).

Employee Engagement Index (EEI) Evolution



Back in 2019, when **INSEAD** conducted its first impact survey of the first 13 TSL classes, a staggering 85% said that there had been a positive impact on the business. By 2023, however, TSL (including L0 and the sister program for women) had only touched fewer than 5,500 individuals directly. How can it have changed an entire organization numbering 150,000 employees?

First, it's important to remember that the participants were not a random group. They were selected precisely because they were an influential group. Indeed, survey results and headcounts all attest to the **cascading and ripple effect** of TSL. Every single participant of the program was in a leadership position or at the time identified with potential for higher roles. **Lauren Mahoney-Pick**, whom we met earlier, joined the organization as a fresh graduate 14 years ago and, in July 2024 took up a C-minus-one position, reporting directly to the Chief Marketing Officer. It is her third promotion since embarking on L2, which means her TSL experience will soon have touched four different Schneider teams. She says:

“

I know that many people have come back from **INSEAD** and used pieces of the program with their teams. I've run Professor Petriglieri's quiz on "what motivates you?" with my direct reports and I've heard other leaders do the same in the room next door. When I start my new role, it's going to be one of the first exercises I do with my new team.”

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Second, in addition to the cascading and ripple effect, there is a **community-building effect** of TSL. All participants interviewed for this article are in contact with former classmates, whether through individual connections, ongoing contact with their whole study groups or whole-class WhatsApp groups. Indeed, "networking" was the most-used term, when 2024 survey respondents were asked to explain the leadership benefits of TSL in their own words, with connections extending across cohorts. But the most interesting connections are those that extend across different TSL cohorts.

Mahoney-Pick maintains that for the company, it's hugely important to teach the next generation of leaders a shared language for leadership and strategy before they work together. This was not a by-product, it was an intentional outcome of a program built on the assumptions that relationships can hold leaders back or elevate their consciousness and capacity – and designed to develop precisely the kind of relationships that leaders need throughout their careers, to progress, perform, and transform.



The community-building effect stretches far beyond the TSL alumni. Sharon Hua observes:

“ It was during the L3 simulation of driving business transformation that I had my personal “aha” moment. It might be obvious to westerners, but in Chinese culture we’re encouraged not to bother people. It’s probably also harder for women to put ourselves forward. But I suddenly realized that networking within Schneider isn’t selfish. It’s for the company’s benefit because it builds trust and helps resolve or prevent conflict. Now, whenever I travel for work, I make a list of people I should catch up with, even if I’ve never met them.”

Third and finally, TSL has a **leverage and multiplier effect**. “Small changes can make a big impact,” says **Simarpreet Grover**, Global Business Development Director for Industrial Control and Drives, who credits his growth and evolution to a role with global reach partly to L3.

“ Every member of my coaching group has taken something different back to their business/function. Quite often it’s something that you know subconsciously – like the mindfulness exercise in L4 or the team activity in L3 – but it has to come to the surface at the right time, channeled effectively through TSL.”

Indeed, there is something uniquely powerful about a multi-level program that runs frequently – several times a year in the case of L3 and L4. Every time a new cohort graduated and went back to work, alumni were reminded of their own learning, and how they might put it into practice.

During her individual TSL journey (L4 in 2020 and L3 in 2023) **Premika Chandrasekaran**, the e-commerce leader mentioned above, built an **e-commerce channel** for the “Greater India” region from scratch, generating tens of millions of euros in annual revenues, assembling a team of 12 people across 3 locations and creating a model for Schneider to follow in other geographies. Her story reads like a case study of the Innovators’ Method taught in L3. She adopted a start-up mentality, with her eyes and ears open to new opportunities, and worked with uncertainty rather than fighting it. She pivoted when necessary and moved fast to gain first-mover advantage. Of course, TSL is not the only explanation for her success. It helped that no competitors had attempted anything similar and that the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital transition. But, says Chandrasekaran, “The pieces all fell into place at the right time. And, partly thanks to TSL, we made hay while the sun shone!”

There is always an element of serendipity and timing in any successful business venture. But, through TSL, it is as if Schneider has created a mechanism for manufacturing its own luck.

Counting the TSL contribution

Ultimately, it seems reasonable to conclude that TSL has contributed to Schneider leaders' ongoing growth, and to the company's transformation since 2015.

The challenge is to try to quantify that contribution. Besides the participants' self-reported data, the company's analysis of its internal data (highlighted on page 19) revealed some interesting results. Participants of L3 and L4 between 2019 and 2022 received significantly more promotions, within one year of completing the program, than members of the retrospectively identified "control group".

However, this was not the case for participants higher up the ranks (L2 and L1, typically VPs and SVPs respectively), who were competing for fewer roles. Where promotions are less prevalent, lateral moves become a more important indicator of program benefit. A lateral career step suggests flexibility and willingness to apply one's leadership style in different parts of the organization. Indeed, 20% of L2 graduates made a sideways career step within the company, compared to just 11.9% of the control group – and the difference was even more pronounced for female participants. For the relatively small number of L1 participants, it is impossible to draw meaningful statistical conclusions.

On the other hand, patterns of attrition (quite low overall at Schneider) and reasons for leaving the company were similar among participants of L3 and L4 and the relevant control groups (albeit with slightly lower leaving rates for TSL alumni).

Yet, Tina Mylon insists:

“ A key aspect of the original TSL ambition, and I still stand by that, was to support the evolution of Schneider into a talent hub. We are a place that attracts great people and gives them opportunities to do great things. Whether they stay their whole career or not, we want them to receive an amazing development experience, in their job and in learning initiatives like TSL. If they stay in the company and get a bigger job as a result, that is amazing, and if they leave and do great things elsewhere, then we are proud of that. ”

For his part, Professor Petriglieri reviewed these outcomes through the lens of the original TSL intent:

“ For talent such as TSL participants, staying at the company signals that they consider Schneider a supportive environment for their working lives, and a community where they can thrive and make a difference. Promotion is clearly a signal that their managers recognize their potential and their performance, supported, at least in part, by the TSL learning. But what I am most proud of is the data showing that the new relationships built within TSL had a lasting impact, and empowered participants to think and act as leaders, to stay engaged not just at Schneider but for Schneider, using their new insights and resolve to make positive changes. ”



Frédéric Pinglot, the human rights VP quoted earlier, echoes that conclusion. He believes that the program gave participants the freedom and space to shape their own leadership rather than socializing them into a traditional corporate leadership mold. The frames provided by Schneider’s expectations of leaders and strategic intent only provided a starting point, an invitation to consider in what way each participant could bring them to life and move them forward in their work. Paradoxically, this empowering demonstration of trust only inspired participants to achieve even more for the company.

“ We didn’t talk about **Schneider Electric**. There weren’t even any subliminal messages. But by the end, I felt I was a better version of myself, and I wanted to build a better Schneider. ”

Many of the survey responses, often written years after attending TSL, provide supportive evidence that this was indeed the case, reflecting the program’s principle that deep personal transformation goes hand-in-hand with broad organizational transformation – mediated by conscious engagement in leading. Some supporting examples of comments from the 2024 impact survey are given in the box.

Personal transformation: changes in awareness

- It made me gain consciousness on the fact that **you cannot split the person from the professional**. Your team doesn’t do it, nor do you do it yourself.
- With L2 I became **a more conscious leader**. I became aware of the type of culture I promote when I nominate a certain manager. I became aware that I was not proactively collaborating with my peers, I became aware of how culture impacts the way we behave and the misunderstandings this can cause. I became less quick to judge and take more time to self-reflect. As a person, I became more aware of how my past played into my present and which unconscious fears were driving me.
- I took with me one very special exercise on how as a team **you can get much more when you try not to win against others**.
- I have a growth mindset to continuously shape our industry and delight our customers. **I learn every day** to keep up with the market and adapt to new challenges.
- My **thought process has changed from individual contributor to team contributor** for the betterment of the whole of Schneider.



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Leadership transformation: changes in behavior

- It made me more conscious of my automatic reactions, which allowed me to **choose my actions more consciously**.
- Self-awareness led to some changes I made consciously: being **more outspoken, more courageous to challenge decisions**.
- The program helped me in many ways. It was very much focused on the blue-red innovation approach and on the need to pivot fast. **I restructured the way I approach new challenges**.
- L2 provided a lot of insight into how I operate in team dynamics and under pressure. This has helped me be more conscious of **when I need to ask for help and how to better delegate**.
- I have been far better at participating in a management team that leads a whole division – with clear **communication and coherent actions of change**.

Organizational transformation: concrete examples of business benefit

- Our team had not been able to take advantage of a new market opportunity, in great part due to fear of experimenting, fear of the unknown, fear of failure. By leading the team into a riskless experiment and learning-opportunity mindset, we were able to engage and progress this new opportunity. This resulted in **a new service being shaped and available to customers in four months**.
- Example 1: I led a negotiation with a complete “willingness to pay” study and convinced the customer to better understand the value proposition, as a result of which we managed **enhanced gross margin of 25% for a high-value order**. Example 2: I am leading the transformation (and managing the legacy offers) in our portfolio to be more impactful and profitable, as well as creating better customer satisfaction and experience.
- I am about to complete **a first AI project on images**: getting approval of people to accept some faults (not perfect results) and accepting to let go of some control for a better outcome. This is a small success in terms of impact but a door opener to mindset change for the whole community.
- My Action Lab was **digitizing a sustainability offering** for the mid market. It’s a real software solution today, which I incubated and led.
- In my current role, we have been one of the fastest growing sectors of the company and I have leaned on what I learned in TSL to push through some internal resistance to ensure we supported our customer and developed new offers that ended up growing this account... and a new capability for **Schneider Electric** to gain a **multi-billion dollar contract**.

Moving forward

By 2024, nearly eight years after first approaching **INSEAD**, it seems that TSL has contributed significantly to building a better **Schneider Electric**.

As Anja Thiemann puts it, reflecting on her experience and the findings reported here, “of course, TSL is not the only factor influencing our culture and how leaders show up, but we are sure it had a big part in where we are today.” The organization is still evolving and is better equipped to excel in today’s turbulent world. The evidence suggests that it supported leaders as they humanized the culture and digitized the business.

The learning from TSL has evolved **INSEAD**’s approach to humanizing leadership, and it now informs the leadership development systems of companies for which **Schneider Electric** is an inspiration. Both parties continue to evolve and strive to improve.

In the meantime, perhaps the greatest achievement of TSL is its legacy of transformation. Thanks to the partnership, **Schneider Electric**’s leaders are still transforming themselves, their company and – thanks to Schneider’s ambitious commitment to the energy transition – our entire world.



Tina Mylon sums up the remarkable process of change that is still ongoing.

“If you look at the broader Schneider leadership, and especially at the top 1,000 leaders, compared to when we started TSL, I believe that we have a stronger, more engaged, more purpose-driven community of leaders driving **Schneider Electric**. The leadership is more diverse. Their caliber is stronger. They are braver. And they are more empowered to drive results and develop people wherever they are in the company, and in the world.”

“**Olivier Blum** was CHRO at the time of TSL’s launch. Known for his people-centric leadership style, he had always believed strongly in the value of developing leaders and building teams to keep the company at the forefront of technology and innovation. He saw TSL as a key lever in Schneider’s transformation. Three years into the initiative, he received France’s Chief Human Resources Officer of the Year Award in recognition of the way he “transformed Schneider’s leadership at global scale.” Soon after, he moved to a different Executive role, and was appointed Schneider’s Chief Executive Officer in 2024. He summed up the effect of TSL on the organization’s leaders as follows: “Wherever I travel in the world, I meet people who say they’ve changed the way they lead as a result of the program.”

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