



## IGNITE! CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

# AUTODESK

## Building Better Managers for a Worthy Cause

When Autodesk leaders were looking for a management development training provider, they searched for a company equipped to deliver the highest quality content globally. "I wanted to work with a company with experience delivering management training around the world that could offer a model for learning that leaders in various cultures would embrace," explained Heather Cowan, director, learning and organizational development.

Cowan was familiar with SLII® from The Ken Blanchard Companies and knew it would work for the managers at Autodesk. But she also wanted a companion program that could be taught to the employees to ensure that everyone was using the same language and model. She knew if only managers were being trained, there would be a gap in understanding when they returned to the workplace and tried to use their new skills with their teams. When Cowan learned that Blanchard offered a companion program for frontline managers called Self Leadership, she knew she had the right combination for her company.

The SLII program teaches leaders how to set clear, attainable goals with each direct report, how to diagnose the direct report's development level on each task, and how to provide the appropriate leadership style to help each person be successful. Self Leadership helps direct reports learn how to ask their leaders for support and direction by teaching a mindset and skillset of taking personal responsibility for getting their needs met. When these two programs are used together, managers and direct reports are able to use a common language to improve the quality of their conversations.

"By providing people at all levels around the world with the same skills, we are building trust and improving the performance of all of our staff," said Cowan.

**Ken**<sup>THE</sup>**Blanchard**<sup>®</sup>  
COMPANIES

The SLII and Self Leadership programs are part of a broad curriculum recommended for completion during the first year of employment or the first year of a new role within the company. The training is offered in ten locations around the world.

“Blanchard has trainers available at most of our locations, which enables us to better manage travel expenses. And Blanchard facilitators are excellent. We know the quality of the experience will be great for the participants,” continued Cowan.



## THE BENEFITS OF WORKING IN A COMPANY THAT EMBRACES LEARNING

“One of the nice things about working for a company that values learning is that people are more likely to focus on getting the skills they need to succeed,” explained Cowan. “However, a strong culture of learning also means that we need to make sure the training programs support our corporate strategies with reliable, proven techniques—and SLII and Self Leadership meet that requirement.”

When new programs are offered, an internal communications campaign is launched to build excitement.

“Managers and employees are invited and encouraged to attend our programs.”

The company also has a monthly news article called Actions for Managers that increases the internal press and buzz about training.

Autodesk’s investment in training sends a clear message that the role of a manager is very important—and that managers are expected to develop their employees. People at Autodesk realize a comprehensive curriculum gives them a competitive advantage.

“Our employees feel valued by the investment we make in training,” said Cowan. “In addition to learning new skills, the training curriculum builds trust, improves communication and morale, and helps support our innovative work environment.”



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