

## OTA Nextgen Speech

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Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen; the video we just saw is a great snapshot into a day in the life of the OTA's NextGen program. Lots of learning and lots of laughs – mostly with, not at, each other. Clearly, based on how happy everyone looked – it was not the “watch yourself on video” day – certainly an interesting one. I strongly encourage you to listen closely as the future success of your business could depend on it. I have the privilege of representing the 2014 graduating class of the OTA's Nextgen program and I am here to talk to you about why it is imperative that you identify the future leaders of your organization and send them to this program.

Before I get to some of those details I would like to recognize and congratulate the graduating class this year. As well, I want to thank The Humphrey Group for being such great teachers. While a few different instructors participated throughout the year, Brenda Allen and Adam Grove were instrumental in inspiring us to get outside of our comfort zone (the video camera comes back to mind here), think through our actual day to day work challenges, think outside the box, and to inspire those around us to lead as well. Again, a big thank you to both of them for their role in shaping the Nextgen program this year.

I am proud to be a part of such an esteemed class of both current and future leaders. The NextGen sessions that are held throughout the year require a significant commitment with many travelling hours to attend; however I know that each of us would agree that it has been well worth the time and energy. The program has provided each of us with a valuable set of tools that we will continue to leverage throughout our entire careers.

You heard both Jacquie and Alex reference something in the video that, if you personally take one thing away from this – make it this: Every interaction you have is an opportunity to lead or to inspire others to lead.

One of the key benefits of the OTA Nextgen program is that it is custom designed, with the challenges of our industry in mind with input by OTA staff, the inaugural class and the Humphrey Group. It has been designed in a module style, focusing on specific topics each day at a pace that is both easy to absorb, content rich and highly effective.

The four module program focuses on four main topics:

Engaging and Inspiring Others

Developing executive presence

Speaking off the cuff

Leading in Meetings

While these topics are seem simple by description and independent of one another they each build on the foundation. The foundation that every time we speak is a leadership opportunity. When you consider the next leaders of your organization, they are the people who never say “I have too much already”, “I don’t have time for you right now”, they are not simply in at 8 and out at 4, they are already exhibiting some elements of the module topics – they just need some refining and guidance. We, as an industry, are already incredibly focused on training. We train our drivers to stay safe, our technicians to keep up on the latest technology, our sales staff on the latest trends – so why are we not investing more heavily in training the future leadership of

our industry – those who will guide us, those who will make the key decisions that will ultimately dictate whether our business will succeed or fail?

The program is not restricted to any one segment of our industry. This year we had members from the carrier community as well as supplier partners. Nor is it focused on training the sons or daughters of current executives, although we did have a number of them this year. The program is focused on inspiring and enhancing leadership qualities to key members of your company's future. This leader could work in dispatch, maintenance, accounting, administration or maybe IT. I would encourage you to look deep within your organization, seek out your current leaders and value their input on who are the up and comers. Invest in those people – they will be the key to your future success.

Finally, the OTA NextGen program is not just about education. It provides a great transition step for those new to the OTA experience. Your future leaders will meet like-minded peers in similar stages of their careers who will likely be new to OTA events. These young leaders all have fresh ideas and are getting an opportunity to bring them to the table at a time where our industry is going to face some significant challenges; especially with the no longer looming, but imminent driver shortage. Having this group of peers to grow up with in the OTA will certainly help create more sustainable and participative members.

While I cannot promise you that by participating in this program you will see a reduction in turnover, an increase in operational efficiency, a more robust sales presence or a streamlined administrative process – what I CAN guarantee you is that if you do not make an INVESTMENT in your future – you cannot expect to see an increased return. I CAN guarantee that acceptance of the status quo will eventually lead to stagnation within your business. And I can guarantee

that a failure to recognize and acknowledge your future leaders within your organization will open the door for them to seek opportunities elsewhere.

It is with these thoughts and the group experience that we shared this year that I call upon you, the membership of the OTA to act. I implore you to identify those leaders within your organization, make the investment and enrol them in this program. I assure you – you will not be disappointed.