Meet Vic Hatridge, LeadNext Venue Executive and former CIO of Nashville Electric Service. Vic and a rotating group of executive coaches facilitate the LeadNext Program, each bringing a wealth of industry experience, personal insights and keen understanding of today’s utility customer service operations.

MISSION STATEMENT:
To partner with utility customer service executives to train high-potential supervisors and managers in a Program that focuses on a coaching relationship and utilizes CS Week as its curriculum. Participants acquire a deeper knowledge and broader understanding of all aspects of the customer experience lifecycle.
WHY?
Preparing for the future is both a personal responsibility and a corporate obligation. Utilities large and small recognize the criticality of knowledge transfer and succession planning. They also want help grooming high potential supervisors and managers so they grow to become effective leaders. Now more than ever, “brain drain” created by long-tenured retirements combined with workplace mobility trends are challenging utilities to prepare the next generation of leaders.

WHAT?
At CS Week 2017, an educational partnership was born between CS Week and supporting utilities to address the “Why?” Its 12-month program, LeadNext begins and ends with CS Week. Participants are assigned executive coaches who share broad, deep experience in the customer experience lifecycle.

In YEAR 1, participants and coaches attend:
- Dedicated opening and closing receptions,
- CS Week College of their choice (Mon),
- Business process-focused Synergy Group of their choice (Tues),
- CS Week Conference (Tues pm – Fri am)
- 8 monthly phone webinars lasting 2-3 hours each at a mutually agreed time/day that includes homework, and
- 2 site visits to large industry-leading utilities (each lasting 2 days)

In YEAR 2, participants and coaches attend:
- CS Week Executive Summit (Mon and Tues),
- Conference (Tues pm – Fri am), and
- Dedicated opening and closing receptions

WHO?
LeadNext is an investment of time, energy and support. Here are testimonials that echo participants’ viewpoints:

“It’s such a boost to my self-esteem that my utility sees me as a potential leader and wants to invest in me.”

“The site visits were fabulous.”

“We bonded as professionals and as friends... we all become stronger by bouncing ideas off each other and broadening our point of view”

HOW?
The keystone to LeadNext’s success is executive commitment. Utilities agree to financially support their participant’s:

1. Program fees and travel expenses for 2 CS Week Conferences;
2. Travel expenses for the 2 utility site visits (each lasting 2 days); and
3. Worktime to perform Program assignments and attend designated CS Week venues, monthly webinars and utility site visits.

Each LeadNext class is limited to 14 participants. Utility customer service/supporting IT executives are urged to nominate those in their companies who have a track record of commitment, will appreciate the Program’s value and will fully participate.

WHEN?
The nomination process opens each summer after Conference ends and closes when the class is full.