Chapter 1

Getting Started with LPI Online

In This Chapter

▶ Choosing the LPI Online product that's right for you

▶ Registering and logging in to LPI Online

▶ Understanding roles and assignments

*I*f you're reading this book, you've probably been exposed to LPI Online in some way or another. Perhaps you're a leadership educator who is looking to use it in your course. Maybe you're a leadership or talent development professional in charge of a large LPI Online rollout for your organization.

In any case, we've got you covered in this chapter. We give you a bit of background on LPI Online. We talk about the different versions of the product and how to figure out which one is right for you. We give you a basic overview of the site and talk about the different "roles" within LPI: Administrator, Leader, and Observer. (We get into more detail on each of those later in this chapter, in the section, "Understanding Roles and Assignments.")

Getting to Know LPI Online

LPI Online is the convenient Web-based version of Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), an assessment tool developed by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner. It started out as a research

project. In 1983, Kouzes and Posner began by asking thousands of people to describe their "personal best" leadership experience through a series of open-ended project-related questions such as

✔ Who initiated the project?

✔ How were you prepared for this experience?

✔ What special techniques and strategies did you use to get other people involved in the project?

After administering thousands of surveys and analyzing the results, Kouzes and Posner concluded that the best leaders often had some methods in common — what the two researchers identified as The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership:

✔ Model the Way

✔ Inspire a Shared Vision

✔ Challenge the Process

✔ Enable Others to Act

✔ Encourage the Heart

The Leadership Practices Inventory is the result of their research: A quantitative way to measure the frequency of these leadership practices in leaders. And LPI Online is a convenient way for you to benefit from their research. To use LPI Online, all you need is to have access to

✔ A Windows machine running XP, Vista, or Windows 7; a Mac running OS X; or Linux

✔ Internet Explorer 6.0 or later, Firefox 3.0 or later, or Safari 2.04 or later

✔ An Internet connection

REMEMBER

Although you can use LPI Online with any of the listed operating systems or browsers, LPI Online has been optimized for use with Internet Explorer 6 and 7 on Windows XP.

But before you can get started, you have to choose the version of LPI Online that's right for you.

Choosing the Right LPI Online Product

LPI Online (Figure 1-1) isn't exactly Baskin-Robbins, but it does come in three flavors: LPI 360, LPI Individual, and Student LPI. We detail them in the following sections.

Figure 1-1: The LPI Online Public home page.

LPI 360

LPI 360 is an observer-based assessment tool. Leaders (who are the subjects of the assessments) are evaluated by Observers, who answer 30 questions anonymously via a Web interface. They answer the questions based on their personal experience with the Leaders. Leaders answer the same questions about themselves. After the questions (Surveys) have been completed, Administrators can run reports to see the results. We go into more details on the different roles (Administrators, Leaders, and Observers) later in this chapter, in the section, "Understanding Roles and Assignments."

LPI Individual

LPI Individual is a self-assessment tool. In other words, Leaders answer the questions about themselves rather than soliciting responses from Observers. One advantage of LPI Individual is that it offers simplified administration and rapid results because Leaders don't have to assign Observers and wait for them to fill out their surveys. On the other hand, they don't receive the feedback of others on their leadership behaviors, either. But if you want to provide a single leader or group of leaders with an introduction to The Five Practices model and a quick self-assessment of their leadership behavior, LPI Individual is the way to go. You can view and print your reports in PDF form after taking the 30 assessment items. (Most Leaders only need 10 to 15 minutes to take the assessment.)

Student LPI

Student LPI (`www.studentlpi.com`), shown in Figure 1-2, is a version of LPI geared for — you guessed it — students. The Student LPI is aimed at high school and undergraduate students with little or no business experience. Master-level and higher students may have real-life business experience; for them, regular LPI Online is a better choice.
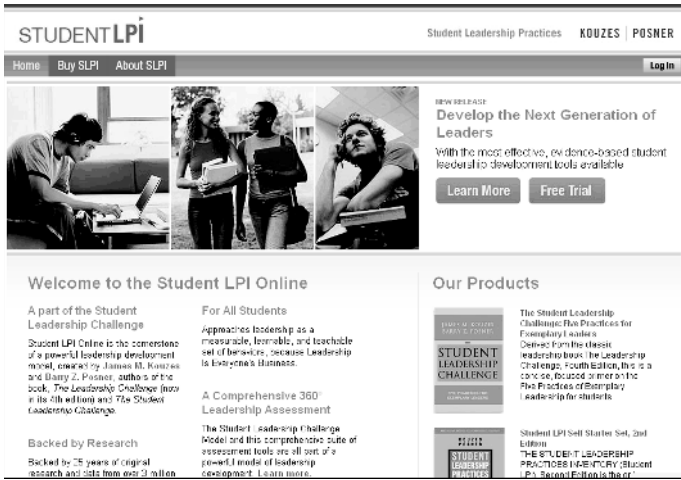
Figure 1-2: The Student LPI home page.

Browsing the LPI Online Public Pages

If you're still not sure which version of LPI is right for you, or if you would like more information, you can find out more at the LPI Online Web site at www.lpionline.com. In the next sections, we explain what kind of information you can find there.

Getting an overview of LPI Online

Click on the About LPI button or click the Learn More at the LPI Online Web site (www.lpionline.com) to view a description of the product, detailed system requirements, pricing info, and more.

For similar info on LPI Individual, go to the LPI Online Web site and click the LPI Individual button. This brings up the LPI Individual home page, where you can find info about the assessment, see sample reports and questions, get pricing information, and purchase the product.

To access the Student LPI Product Overview, visit the Student LPI home page at `www.studentlpi.com` and click the About SLPI button.

Purchasing LPI Online

To purchase tokens for LPI 360 Online, you can simply click Buy LPI at the top of the LPI Online home page. To purchase LPI Individual, click the Buy Now link at the top of its home page; the Student LPI home page has a similar Buy SLPI link on its home page.

You can also purchase LPI Online through an LPI Leadership Consultant. To do so, e-mail `leadership@wiley.com` or call 866-888-5159.

Tokens are a way of managing licensing for the product, sort of like a special form of currency for LPI. They control, in essence, how many leaders you can assess with the LPI product you purchase. One Leader taking one LPI assignment costs one token. Thanks to tokens, Administrators don't have to be the same people who actually purchase LPI. The purchaser can transfer tokens to the Administrator, allowing them to take it from there. We cover tokens in more detail in Chapter 7.

Registering for the First Time

When you're ready to log in to LPI for the first time, you'll have to register. You can register either before or after purchasing LPI Online. Click the Register Now button under the New to LPI Online? heading. You'll see a Privacy Policy statement — read the legalese if you're the cautious type, or just click I Accept to move on. This brings up a registration form like the one shown in Figure 1-3.

Figure 1-3: Registering to LPI Online for the first time.

You're expected to fill in some pretty standard questions, including name, e-mail address, and organization name. Only those fields in red are required. As you type in your e-mail address, you'll notice that your e-mail address also automatically appears in the Username field. That's because your username is, by default, the main e-mail address you enter.

In addition, you'll have to answer some secret questions of the "What is your mother's maiden name?" variety. These questions and their answers will be used to confirm that you are who you say you are if you forget your password. In the Secret Question section, use the drop-down boxes to select a couple of secret questions and then supply the answers in the Answer boxes to the right. If you have more than one e-mail address, list your secondary addresses in the Email Alias section.

> **TIP**
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> If you're taking LPI Online with more than one Administrator, they may know you by more than one e-mail address. For example, your school administrator might know you by your `yourschool.edu` e-mail address, whereas your work administrator might know you by `yourcompany.com`. By listing those various e-mail addresses as e-mail *aliases,* you can ensure that no matter who is adding you as a Leader, they will find your account in LPI Online. And, you'll only have to remember one username and password.

If you're an Administrator, you need to select the Yes radio buttons in the Additional Information section to indicate that you're administering the program to other leaders. (If you're an Administrator, you'll know it because you'll be creating assignments, adding leaders, and doing all sorts of other stuff that Leaders don't have to worry about.) If you're not an Administrator, leave the No button selected.

If you buy tokens, either from Wiley or from a reseller, you don't *need* to answer this yes or no: You will be granted the Admin role automatically. It doesn't hurt anything to select Yes, however. And you don't become an Administrator by default just by clicking Yes. Someone needs to transfer tokens or assignments to you, or create a share for you, in order for you to get the role. See Chapter 7 for more on token management.

When you finish filling out all the required fields in this form, click Next. A confirmation screen appears. Click the Sign In to My LPI Online button if you want to get started right away.

With your username and password that you created during the registration process in hand, you're ready to log in.

Logging in to LPI Online

Logging in is simple as can be: From the LPI Online Public home page, look for the Sign in to LPI Online area. Type your username (by default, it's the same as the primary e-mail address you entered) in the Username field. In the Password field, type in the password that you created during the registration process. When you log in for the first time, you'll be confronted with more legalese in the form of the LPI Online License Agreement and Terms of Use. Click Accept to move past it.

If at any time you forget your username or password, click on the Forget Your Username? or Forget Your Password? links next to these fields to be walked through a process of recovering this information.

Understanding Roles and Assignments

Congratulations! You're going to get started on the road to helping others to better leadership skills with LPI Online. But what's next? To get started, it will help you to understand a little bit about the three basic roles in LPI: Administrator, Leader, and Observer.

Administrator

In LPI Online terms, an Administrator is in the driver's seat. An Administrator is the one asking the Leaders to take the LPI Online assessment. Administrators can be professors, workshop leaders, consultants, HR people, or anyone in charge of leadership development.

In LPI Online, Administrators have a whole host of special powers (no, leaping tall buildings is not among them). Administrators are often (but don't always have to be) the people who purchase LPI Online. (More on that in Chapter 7.) In addition to creating the assignments that Leaders have to complete, Administrators can do a lot of, well, administrative stuff, too. For example, if a Leader is signed up to do an assessment but then goes on a leave of absence, the Administrator can reassign that assessment to someone else as long as it's not yet in progress. Administrators control to some extent which questions that the Leaders have to answer, and most importantly, Administrators are the only people who can view and print reports after the assessments are done.

Leader

Leaders are really what it's all about in LPI: They're the ones being measured. In LPI 360 and Student LPI, each Leader responds to the 30 LPI items about themselves and then sends the assessment on for others (Observers, which we cover in the next section) to answer about them. In LPI Self, Leaders are pretty much the end-all be-all: They (and no one else) answer questions about themselves in this self-assessment tool.

Observer

Observers are the other people who provide the valuable feedback in LPI. They know and usually work closely with the Leaders. The four types of Observers in LPI Online are Direct Reports, Coworkers, Managers, or Other. In the case of Student LPI, Observers may be teachers, coaches, or teammates: Anyone who has first-hand knowledge of the student in a leadership role. In any case, due to a relationship with the Leader, they're in a unique position to give that Leader feedback via the LPI 360 or Student LPI, and they do it by responding to the 30 LPI Observer items.

LPI Individual is a self-assessment tool and as such does not have Observers.

Assignments

For those of you who are used to working with older versions of LPI Online, we've got a bit of new terminology: assignment. No, it's not like back in high school when you had to read *The Scarlet Letter* and write a ten-page term paper about it. An *assignment* is an instance of a Leader taking the LPI at a particular time. An Administrator creates assignments for a Leader. Each Leader can have only one active assignment per Administrator at a time.

Folders and files

Another concept new to the updated version of LPI Online is that of folders and files. For long-time users of LPI, *folders* and *files* replace *organizations* and *groups.* The folders and files (or sub-folders) are simply a way of organizing different assignments.

Much like Windows Explorer consists of files that are organized within folders, LPI Online organizes assignments into folders (for example, XYZ Organization or Department) and, within those folders, files (for example, the XYZ folder could contain files named Sales Team, Marketing Managers, Fall 2010 Semester, and so on). Folders can only go two levels deep, by the way, so you can't create a folder within a folder within yet another folder.

Navigating the LPI Online and Administrator Home Pages

When you log on to LPI Online, you will find yourself at the LPI Online Secure Home page. What you see will vary depending on what your LPI role is: Leader (or Student Leader), Observer, or Administrator. From the LPI Online Secure Home page, you'll be able to see the tools and features that you have access to at the bottom of this page. For example, the LPI Online Secure Home page of an Administrator looks like Figure 1-4.

Click the Home link next to the Administrator heading to access the Administrator Home page (Figure 1-5).

The Administrator Menu on the left side of the screen features a list of links that allows you to do many of the tasks an Administrator needs to do, from downloading reports to creating and managing assignments, managing shared administrations, and more. In addition, if you have tokens in your account, a Token Summary displays at the bottom of this menu, giving a summary of how many tokens you have available in your account. (We cover tokens in more detail in Chapter 7.)

Click here to go to the Administrator Home page.

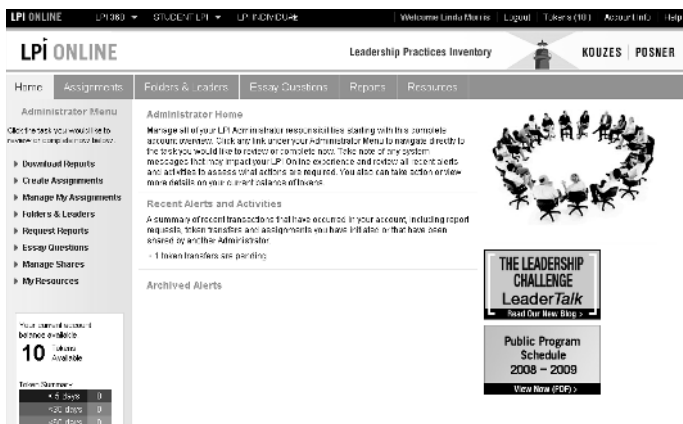**Figure 1-4:** The LPI Online Secure Home page of an Administrator.

Figure 1-5: The Administrator Home page.

The Administrator Menu on the left side of the screen features a list of links that allows you to do many of the tasks an Administrator needs to do, from downloading reports to creating and managing assignments, managing shared administrations, and more. In addition, if you have tokens in your account, a Token Summary displays at the bottom of this menu, giving a summary of how many tokens you have available in your account. (We cover tokens in more detail in Chapter 7.)

(TIP) In the middle of the Administrator Home page is a Recent Alerts and Activities area that summarizes recent transactions for your account, such as report requests, token transfers, or assignments shared by another Administrator.

The Leader Home page is much simpler to navigate than the Administrator Home page, simply because Leaders have far fewer tasks to accomplish in LPI Online. The Leader Home page is basically a launching pad for Leaders to get started taking their assessments and setting up the Observers who will provide feedback to them. We cover those tasks in depth in Chapter 8.