

Case Study

How ingenious leadership development drove an ambitious market growth strategy for one investment bank

A major global investment bank created a fresh new division to tap into a previously unexploited market area. The leadership team set out an extremely ambitious strategy – which happily recognised the need to develop the individuals and teams within the organisation if the goals were to be achieved. At the same time, the sheer pace of change meant that precisely when management skills at all levels were most needed, everyone involved was extremely busy and did not have time to build these skills ‘on the job’.

The challenge for the team was to rapidly adopt the behaviours of a truly high performing leadership team – rather like setting sail and building the remainder of the ship whilst en route. No easy task.

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Contact Us

Vybrant Organisation

Directors: Julie Goodwin, Alan Sears

Phone: 01635 862559 • Email: hellovybrant@vybrant.org • Web: www.vybrant.org

The project: leadership development to fuel an ambitious growth strategy

The project involved the creating the concept for a programme which met the gap in management and leadership skills in this part of the business – and then delivering it. In practice this meant focusing on:

The individual relationship: managing one-to-one

The team-leader relationship: managing and leading small groups or teams

The leadership role: leading and motivating the larger group



Whilst generating awareness of all the different strands of leadership, the programme was centred firmly on the 'people' strand, sitting squarely within the

client's existing developmental model. The programme was aimed at making clear the difference between leadership and management, whilst producing tangible skill developments in both areas, and simultaneously creating the excitement and desire to do more development work.

The client had a 2-day offsite planned for the leadership team and wanted to use 1½ days of this as a launch event for the programme.

The 1½ day launch event was designed to capture the necessary development points whilst taking different personal needs and starting points into account. The need to develop the team as a whole without individual members feeling threatened was seen as key – and great efforts were made to see that an atmosphere of trust and mutual co-operation prevailed.

The design focused on behavioural development, using a pre-workshop diagnostic instrument to set up a number of related exercises and activities. This meant that a very interactive style of delivery was backed by

a high degree of intellectual content, maintaining the engagement of the group throughout.

As a part of the launch event the team identified a number of critical areas for further development, these included:

- Team-working across departments to develop synergy
- The need for more 'creative conflict' and a need for more better ways of group brainstorming and problem-solving
- Developing and coaching people in order to delegate more responsibility downwards – seen as essential for the growth of the division
- The need for skill development across the division in business planning and performance tracking

A training needs analysis was conducted to gather and analyse individual needs. An ongoing programme of small ½ day masterclasses, typically with 4 – 6 participants was created, backed up by individual coaching available to members of the team on request, and action learning workshops using a real life business issue as the focus of the work, and learning to use the appropriate methods and behaviours to produce solutions or ideas to address the issue. A further proposal to carry out individual behavioural assessments of each member of the team by workshadowing and Behavioural Event Interview, to fully tailor development plans was put forward but held in abeyance.

The result: leaders developed, financial targets smashed

Feedback for the launch and follow up events was overwhelmingly positive. The programme of masterclasses was revised at the end of Year 1 and continued for a second year. The consultant team was asked to present some of the learnings and results to the Bank's New York office. The division hit its main start-up and growth targets and has gone on from strength to strength.

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