

CASE STUDY

Leadership Development

Problem #1: A media company was facing significant changes to their business model driven by technology enabled audience lifestyle changes. They recognized that excellence at innovation would be necessary for future success, and asked for assistance identifying the leadership competencies and cultural elements necessary to enable this fast-paced performance. Following this assessment, we were to partner with them to design and deliver a leadership development university that would help develop the changes in their system as well as teach an innovation process that could be successful in their culture.

Approach: We began by immersing ourselves in an understanding of the current state, and reviewed many organization materials such as financial statements, business plans and attitude surveys. We also interviewed the CEO, eight other senior executives and key members of the Human Resources organization to help determine areas of agreement/disagreement regarding the vision and focus.

We worked with an internal design team to develop an organizational learning process, and included a cultural assessment that would help them realize the hidden cultural dynamics that would support or oppose necessary changes. We also worked with a network of other colleagues and practitioners who could best deliver selected skill or competency building modules.

In line with their desire to create an environment of openness and trust, we extended the concepts of Appreciative Inquiry and café conversations into original, dialog-based approaches that opened up their business processes for inclusion of ideas, understanding and buy-in.

Results: The entire development program served as a model for more open, inclusive communications by creating safety for new ideas, practice fields to apply new skills, and opportunities to share observations, results and learning between colleagues as well as multiple organization levels.

- We served as dialog facilitators for initial sessions, but also worked with the senior leaders to enable them to serve as dialog leaders on an ongoing basis.
- Ideas and realizations from these discussions became the basis of action learning assignments. Real business challenges were assigned to diverse teams, each of which was sponsored by a member of executive leadership.
- The value to current senior leaders has caused them to seek additional coaching.
- The dialog processes along with selected skill building is being shared with management levels beyond the original audience.
- As their culture shifts, there is more open dialog on issues of concern, and this dialog has been expanded to include larger groups of employees and stakeholders. There is also noticeably more information sharing, networking across platforms, and openness to new ideas regardless of source.
- We introduced the organization to an original process model for



innovation that drives common understanding, expectations and trainability.

- Given our combination, we were also able to raise our client's awareness of the cultural and process misalignments that would have to be addressed in order to build enduring competence at innovation. The client is now actively pursuing these issues.

Problem #2: A client who has enjoyed steady growth with a stable workforce expected a significant number of retirements from its leadership ranks within a 2-3 year timeframe. Current leadership was not confident that their next generation was ready for the impending succession.

Approach: TMT Associates worked with the senior leaders to identify the current and future requirements for leaders within their industry and also their particular culture. Next, we worked with the succession planning process to identify talent pools as well as talent gaps. A portfolio of leadership development activities was then custom developed, including the creation of a leadership development university, targeted job assignments, individual coaching and special project assignments that would offer experiential learning on real issues with immediate impact.

Results: All efforts are underway and great enthusiasm has been generated within the company. To date:

- There has been a significant increase in awareness of effective leadership practices.
- The company has implemented a leadership supply program that will also help to retain top talent
- Supporting systems such as performance management and succession are being adjusted to align with this leadership model.