

THE CHALLENGE: CREATING A CULTURE OF CAPABLE LEADERSHIP

- Organization was full of “supervisors” but not leaders. Supervisors did “box-checking” exercises at best. Seniority or rank did not equate to skill at performing a role instead it was a culture of leadership by accident.
- Leadership skill development was *ad hoc* at best; performed if manager felt like it with no defined development path, identification of outcomes, or requirements.
- “Leadership development” was a classroom exercise for skills acquisition. There were no expectations of application.
- Asked to implement a leader development program that produced leaders who lead based on a shared set of values and vision. Create leaders who could shift the culture to leadership competency not just supervision. This included identifying emerging leaders, training, coaching, and mentoring them into executive leadership.

THE TECHNIQUE: DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- New leader development would be cohort-based with shared vision and identity. The cross-organizational reach would allow ideas to populate across silos, spreading a new leader culture.
- Selection criteria were based on performance and organizational success, not tenure.
- Values and culture of a new culture aligned with organizational strategy.
- Principles of program centered on personal growth, leadership skill growth, and building leadership network across organization, practical application and demonstrating results.
- Development model based on phased skill and knowledge acquisition:
 - Understanding strengths and gaps,
 - Visualizing a better future organization,
 - Acquiring the tools to build that future, and
 - Building the future.
- Modular approach allowed each cohort to customize skills and tools selected so that they best fit their needs.
- Time-in-training remained roughly equivalent to previous leadership programs.

THE INTERVENTION

- Phase 1 of program focused on targeted coaching intervention. Applied multiple psychometric instruments to participants and performed extensive individual and group work to understand how personal preferences and blind spots help and hinder success in the workplace.
- Phase 2 targeted deep understanding of what builds a highly performing workplace.
- Phase 3 required participants to analyze their own needs and request specific support on those skills and tools needed to achieve a better performing workplace.
- Phase 4 provided ongoing individual support, group support, and additional skills as graduates targeted change within their workplace.

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THE RESULTS

- Employees returned to their units with a greater understanding of themselves and how they could influence the performance of their groups.
- Leadership program expansion to thousands of staff with satisfied supervisors requesting that their entire team be enrolled in the program.
- The level of performance was measurable and sustainable over time. Even during stressful organizational challenges, the organization held on to the training and utilized the tools to overcome various hardships.