

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. A culture of leadership by accident.
- Leadership skill development was ad-hoc at best: selected if manager felt like it, no defined development path, no identification of outcomes or requirements.
- “Leadership development” was a classroom exercise for skills acquisition. No expectation of application
- The task: implement a leader development program that produced leaders who led 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.
- Defined selection criteria based on performance and organizational success, not tenure.
- Defined values and culture of a new culture in-line 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
 - 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.

Intervention

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

Results

- Staff returned to their units with a greater understanding of themselves and how they could influence the performance of their groups.

Key words: leadership, coaching, succession planning, training, culture change

- 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 over time measurable and sustainable. Even during stressful organizational challenges the organization held on to the training and utilized the tools to overcome various challenges.