



Case Study: Pharmaceuticals

Unlocking Leadership for Experienced Managers

Background

In April 2008 Almac Group, one of Ireland's major employers, approached Stellar Leadership to design and deliver an 'experienced managers programme' for 60 of their leading managers.

Working collaboratively with the in-house human resource team, the Unlocking Leadership Programme was tailored to suit the particular needs of the company and the industry.

Business Need

Almac Group, a locally owned world leader in the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors, engaged Stellar to facilitate leadership development within its experienced managers' group.

Almac's ambition is "to become the leader in the generation of superior solutions for the advancement in human health". In order to achieve this ambition Almac required a leadership programme capable of ensuring that its managers operated at the leading edge of modern leadership and management practice in a consistent way across all departments.

Designed Solution

It was agreed to deliver the programme in three cohorts of 20 managers and in three 2-day sessions for each group spread over three months. This allowed for workplace experimentation and practice between sessions.

The objectives of the programme were to;

- Develop a culture of modern leadership and management within the experienced management group

- Encourage a more collaborative and corporate approach to planning and performance management
- Improve strategic alignment, knowledge sharing and collaboration within teams and across the company
- Further develop the individual leadership and management competencies (knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviours) of the participating managers.

A selection of workshop topics included in the programme is highlighted below:

- ✓ Getting Ready to Learn
- ✓ Knowing and Managing Yourself
- ✓ Social and Emotional Intelligence
- ✓ Strategic Leadership
- ✓ Articulating a Vision
- ✓ Value-based Leadership
- ✓ Leading a Winning Team
- ✓ Influence and Motivation
- ✓ Effective Communication
- ✓ Managing Change
- ✓ Performance Management and Review

As part of the overall solution an 'organisational readiness' component was introduced.

This involved briefing Almac's senior managers on the programme and getting an agreement that they would engage with their managers before, during and after the programme with the aim of supporting the transfer of learning from workshop to workplace.

Stellar also incorporated two facilitated recall sessions (3 and 6 months after the programmed workshops) to re-engage the



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managers and encourage continued focus on applied learning.

Our Learning Approach

We used different learning methods to suit a range of learning styles and delivered the programme in line with our accelerated and blended approach to learning as follows:

- **self-assessment and the option of 360 degree feedback** to help participants to identify their leadership and management strengths and weaknesses and highlight areas for development
- **facilitated workshops** with inputs (handouts, presentations and group discussion) so that participants were exposed to information and ideas for development drawn from best practice and case-in-point analysis
- **on-line learning** support including access to 360 degree feedback and a wide range of other learning resources
- **applied learning** based on a personal Unlocking Leadership Development Plan to encourage participants to try out new leadership practices

A case-in-point methodology was used so that real problems faced by managers were raised, assessed and dealt with to the satisfaction of the participant and the group.

Organisational Impact

Feedback suggests that the programme had an immediate impact on two levels:- personal and team level.

- At a personal level the programme provided a Leadership Development Plan for each participant, including a commitment to change by adopting new practices, with provision for regular feedback and a review of progress
- At a team level Almac participants and their line managers have reported positive change in leadership behaviours and this

has evidently resulted in improved team performance

- At an organisational level the 'readiness' component had a real impact on the managerial commitment to the programme. According to one manager this resulted in a dramatic change in the behaviour of participants in contrast to past learning initiatives.
- The meetings between line manager and participant increased the willingness to experiment and innovate. As a result of this, for the most part, the organisation was ready to accept and accommodate change in leadership behaviour.

Although it will take more time to fully realise the long term value of the programme, Almac are committed to seeing that the Unlocking Leadership methodology is fully implemented and embedded across the organisation.

"What I really like about the Unlocking Leadership approach is the emphasis on personal change. I am trying to change my practice, in small steps and I feel I am definitely getting more from my team and I am now more confident as a team leader."

Team Leader and Programme Participant, Almac, Project Manager at Almac

Making Contact

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