

Sappi South Africa

Impact study

Achievement of objective ranged between 70 -100%

The project

To change the current culture of people management and secondly the speed of innovation in regards to new product development and 'go to market' strategy.

This new strategic imperative challenged HR to bring about a culture that nurtured innovation and improved engagement of all employees within a High Performance ethos, whilst maintaining the integrity of corporate governance required in both SA and the USA.

Our goal in this program was to increase each leader's capacity to bring others to insight. This report is a summary of our findings.

Key findings

The divisions that took up coaching have seen a remarkable increase in performance and employees are also more engaged and resilient to the ever changing environment.

About the intervention

A High Performance people strategy was developed using systems theory and the key drivers of change were identified -

- to grow inspirational leadership at every level of the business
- to engage all people in the business
- to grow talent
- to enable the workforce to optimize performance as a whole by removing barriers and releasing people's potential and
- to draw the entire employee fraternity together through an employee value proposition

Using competency measurement and development within a leadership pipeline, the development and training of managers and leaders is being entrenched. The process of change was launched through shifting the role of HR practitioners to that of HR business partners. At the same time, a drive focussing on leadership and management engagement was launched. In an Engagement Survey run in 2007 and 2009, it was found that dialogue between managers and employees needed improvement.

In 2009, Sappi embarked on an internal coach training programme which focussed on creating a culture of engagement through effective dialogue. Sappi also realized that a change in culture cannot only come from HR. Line managers needed to become more accountable for their engagement within the organization. 150 managers completed the Mastering Feedback one-day intervention, which focused on empowering managers to have connecting conversations in the performance management process.

Participant feedback

"This process has taught me how to set challenging goals and how to achieve them simply by putting together a comprehensive plan."

"The method of dividing my goals into strategies and then further into actions for the week made the tasks manageable and the goals much easier to achieve"

"The joy of seeing a person grow through very difficult personal time constraints was very gratifying. I have the ability to help and am growing the visual empathy skills I need."

"It forced me to prioritize my work load and ultimately enabled me to become more efficient with my time, which enabled me to succeed."

The success indicator being used to date is based on individual objectives set and achievement of objectives ranged between 70 - 100%.



NeuroLeadership Group

Transform thinking & performance

Sappi South Africa

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About the intervention

Through training 24 internal coaches in Sappi they created an internal resource and a centre of excellence in the change process.

The 24 internal coaches were selected through a voluntary process where an advert was placed internally and nominations were forwarded. The strategy of inspirational leadership and talent development was a key driver for the selection process. Sappi looked for possible coaches who were passionate and willing to engage in the process. Credibility in roles were considered and line managers that were strong mentors and who had a strong people focus were selected.

During the 3 years of internal coaching the following 3 levels of goals were identified:

Level 1 – Personal goal

All of the coaches selected a personal goal where 90% of the goals were around work life balance.

Level 2 – Workplace goal

Most of these goals were focused on increased performance around key deliverables.

Level 3 – Personal development in the workplace

A few of the goals were focused on individual development – how do I drive my own career and development within the Sappi environment

Each coach contracted to coach at least 1 coachee during the year and to date the coaches have coached 50 employees. The coaching is a voluntary process and Sappi relies on line managers to nominate talent for coaching. In addition to that the current leadership academy delegates are all being coached as part of their development.

The internal coaches are supported through ongoing education and motivation and they are upskilled as often as possible. An internal supporting system within the Talent management division has been set up to manage and track the coaching.