



DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGERIAL SKILLS

Retaining, developing, mobilizing and engaging talent

Developing the managerial skills of high-potential young executives in a company undergoing extensive change. Creating a common culture and creating the resources needed for a successful post-merger process.

► Context

FUTURE MANAGERS TRAINED IN A COMPANY UNDERGOING EXTENSIVE CHANGE

This Polish financial firm, ranked Nr3 in its own field with a headcount of 10,000 employees and backed by an international network, asked BPI to devise a Management Development program intended for 25 of its young high-potential executives. The goal was to groom them for future managerial roles.

At the international level, the company's parent network was in the process of merging with another system which also had a Polish member, the sector Nr2 with 18,000 employees. As a result of this international union, a merger between the two Polish companies looked inevitable despite initial misgivings from monopoly authorities.

During the engagement, the impending merger between the two companies took place. In this new changing environment, the company now wanted to engage a change management program designed for high-potential executives from both entities. Consequently, the number of participants for the program doubled (to 50).

High stakes

Building a custom-designed program helps to tailor a response to corporate realities. We had to begin when a merger looked very much on the cards; once the merger was cleared, the program had to be adjusted.

► Task

MOVING BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE, IN-HOUSE AND OUTSIDE THE COMPANY

Two initial sessions were organized; they each involved 25 employees and took the shape of 5 two-day modules.

The sessions involved three phases:

- training-action for future managerial teams;
- building an individual project from real-life situations - each participant had the benefit of a mentoring session from an executive operative and had to defend his or her project at an oral presentation to a jury composed of management board members;
- experience feedback exchange sessions with outside personalities – players, politicians, sports personalities, business executives.

The third session, which took place after the merger, involved 50 managers, split equally between the two companies.

As the previous two sessions, it was aimed at training future managers, but also at promoting exchanges between the two groups – it was the first time they had met – and at getting them ready to pilot the change together.

The three stages were basically the same, but the projects they had to build were the product of team-work. The oral presentation took place in front of a jury also composed of professors from the faculty of economics at the University of Warsaw, BPI's academic partner.

► Perspectives

A MORE UNITED COMPANY AND GREATER VISIBILITY FOR HR

- The three sessions enabled the “future managers” to build their internal network, to speak the same language and to share the same notions of management.
- One third of them were promoted at the end of these training schemes.
- After the merger, the program was assessed as a good practice and became the company's key project.
- The internal mentors - levels n-2 or n-3 – remained involved in the process; this should be emphasized as in Poland it is rare to get operative management interested in skill development activities.
- The HR rationale spread to the whole company thanks to the involvement of operative managers.

Focus

Employees were invited to put forward **an innovative project** designed to improve a given situation, to create a new department or service, or to implement new procedures. They each defended their project in front of management board members at a final oral presentation. As an illustration, the projects from each of the first two sessions would, if implemented, deliver potential savings of €120 million over the next 5 years.