

Practical examples: Team-Coaching

Intercultural integration and team building in top-tier management

Summary:

By working through the different mentalities and personalities in a group of international top managers, a common direction for the organization rooted in joint values was found.

Starting point:

Following a major restructuring away from a brand-oriented approach to a regional approach, the four national general managers of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland and their two German chairmen decided to make use of international synergies for the multinational corporation.

However, there were considerable differences between the four international managers and the two chairmen in mentality, expectations, and their ideas as to how to approach their common strategy and goals. To make matters even more difficult, there was a significant age gap between the two German chairmen. The older chairman, Dr. Bauer (name changed), clearly favored far more conservative attitudes and processes than the much younger Mr. Müller (name changed).

The four international general managers noticed the effects of these differences, of course. The managers carefully observed at their monthly meetings whose ideas were always accepted and who ran into problems. The meetings were characterized by everybody apportioning blame and issuing commands. Instead of everyone working towards a common goal, each client preferred to concentrate on his respective country. When it came to making critical decisions, the managers remained passive and waited for a decision from management.

Objectives:

1. Promoting of co-operation and team building at the top level of management
2. Agreeing on the fundamentals of a common understanding of the future corporate culture as a basis for defining and implementing strategic goals (Creating a shared understanding of goals and values)
3. Developing an EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) platform
4. Furthering the development of the managers as entrepreneurs; coaching in the field of management

Approach:

Step 1: Performing interviews with each participant to specify detailed goals and establish everyone's assessment of the overall situation by the chairmen and the international managers.

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Step 2: Regular workshops with the chairmen and international national managers after the monthly meeting to present, in the first stage, the results of the interviews and take first steps toward achieving their shared goals and addressing immediate needs.

One-to-one coaching sessions were also conducted.

Results (after 1 year):

- ❖ Establishing a foundation of trust and an increasingly candid discussion of conflicts reduced tension
- ❖ Clear commitment of all participants to corporate cultural and strategic goals moving forward
- ❖ Common understanding of values and goals, clarity on individual management targets and enhanced management skills
- ❖ Agreed on a common approach to EFQM

Personal feedback of the participants: "We all now have a greater understanding of the personal and international differences that were not so obvious to us before. Now we really work as a team in a shared direction and don't waste time with superfluous "games" and conflicts. We're now able trust each other and the meetings are a lot more relaxed and efficient. Even the initially very critical Dr. Bauer believes that this investment is the best one we've made in a long time, as the financial results have also been positive. It had also been crucial to discuss topics outside of business."

Other Reasons for System and Team Coaching:

- ❖ Improving cooperation to better achieve goals
- ❖ Reducing tension, power struggles and deviations from goals and shared interests
- ❖ Dismantling resistance to organizational changes, mergers, and restructuring
- ❖ Supporting the development and implementation of structures, processes, and organization
- ❖ Defining order specifications, planning, and implementing changes, organization and development projects

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