

DEVELOPING LEADERS IN THE RAPIDLY CHANGING TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY

INSIGHT EXPERIENCE CASE STUDY

Challenge

Insight Experience has worked for several years developing mid-level managers to executive-band leaders at a Fortune 100, global hardware and services provider. The company has a legacy of strong growth and operational excellence in its core business, and has also incorporated several acquisitions to expand beyond their core to more diversified products and services. Over time, our client has moved from a primarily product-based business to more service-based offerings, and increasingly to a solutions value proposition, driven by maturing product categories and changing customer needs.

The challenges of moving leaders from a product mindset or skill mindset to true solutions capabilities are both organizational and personal, and this was true for our client. Long-successful leadership behaviors and ways of thinking that became imbedded needed to change, and leaders could no longer succeed exclusively on their technical skills without changing how they develop their leadership muscles. As a result, the business suffered.

Solution

To address these challenges, Insight Experience developed a series of programs for our client's managers and executives to help them rapidly develop the skills and behaviors needed to lead in a new environment. The programs each feature a robust business simulation tailored to the organization and the level of leader; integrated content focused on both "hard" and "soft" skill sets (strategic thinking, business acumen, communication, influence and collaboration), and a series of pre- and post-program integration activities. The executive-band program also features a fully-integrated assessment tool and one-on-one coaching support.

During the in-person leadership experiences, groups of participants take on the role of the General Manager of a business unit at a technology company. Operating as the GM, teams leverage company financial data, character-based roleplays and scenarios, live instruction, and Insight Experience's proprietary simulation technology to make a series of strategy, operating and people management decisions for their part of a global business. These decisions are tailored to the technology industry, and include time-to-market and competitive pressures, intellectual property protection (adding complexity downstream to the service side of the business), and challenges in structuring joint venture agreements.

To develop participants' soft/interpersonal skills, scenarios include:

- Presenting difficult news to internal employee groups
- Negotiating with a tough internal customer
- Collaborating across business units to bring a complex new offering to market

Each round of decisions and scenarios is designed to mirror a fiscal quarter and is supported with full financial and operating reports and a facilitated debrief of results.

"I can't thank you enough for an amazing course! I have come away feeling a more capable, efficient, and inspirational leader. I've already had feedback from my team that they see a change!"

– Executive Director
and General Manager



Results

The programs are run globally with cross-functional, cross-business unit participant groups to support the boundaryless networking and collaboration needed to successfully execute the new strategy, and the impact has been significant. Managers and leaders come out of the training more prepared to:

- Make decisions outside of their technical expertise
- Navigate through an increasingly global and matrixed organization
- Effectively communicate with and lead internal teams, as strategies and business conditions change

As a result of this program, our client has given leaders a consequence-free environment to experiment, take risks and learn from their mistakes, all without risk to the bottom line. Finally, the participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and leaders are immediately implementing what they have learned. The program continues to be rolled out globally, across all regions and company business units.