



Developing Leadership Performance and Capability at Zibrant

Summary

- Zibrant asked us to help it deepen its leadership capability. Its young team leaders had little formal management development and were working in a rapidly growing, fluid and highly entrepreneurial culture. We assessed individual and team effectiveness and designed a workshop for four functional leadership teams, to align them with the organisation's strategy and with each other. The outcome was a leap forward in leadership capability, helping each group work more effectively as a team and with the other functions, and creating excitement about the company's growth and change agenda.

Leadership team development programme

Zibrant provides total event solutions for corporate buyers, ranging from accommodation to event management. With a blue-chip global client base serviced from UK and European offices, Zibrant is part of the AIM listed Motivcom group but operates as an independent brand.

The company wanted to deepen its leadership capability. Having grown rapidly, many functions were led by teams of young and inexperienced people with little formal management development. Having worked previously with the Board, we were asked to work with four functional leadership teams: Operations, Events, Sales and Support Functions.

Our approach

The leadership development workshops followed a core design, which we tailored to the specific needs of each functional leadership team. Key elements included:

Pre-workshop scoping with the functional lead and Managing Director. This ensured each event tied back to the overall corporate aims, was flexed for local needs and engaged the functional lead in how they would need to behave to make the intervention a success.

Individual and team diagnostics, to gauge their effectiveness prior to the workshops. We used a mix of tools, including 360-degree feedback, qualitative surveys and, in some cases, style-based psychometric

tools. For the support functions team, this included a survey of customer requirements and feedback.

A one day leadership workshop, encompassing:

- Discussion and planning around the new five-year strategy, as an anchor for the day and subsequent action planning
- Review, discussion and action planning around a high-performing team model, to enhance team effectiveness
- Individual feedback (and in some cases 'real play' exercises) and action planning, to enhance individual personal effectiveness
- Discussion and action planning around the people implications of the strategy, to give the leadership a clear view of the skills and behaviours their teams needed to develop, culminating in a talent map and career path for each function
- Use of 'blueprint tools' throughout the workshops, to input skills and knowledge transfer to participants and the building of a personal toolbox of tools, to take away and use in day-to-day practice

Following the workshop, each leadership team continued to work on its functional plan, before presenting it to the MD. The plans used a common RACI template, which enabled them to be shared across functions and aggregated into an organisational-wide plan, which was cascaded to all staff.

The outcome

The intervention provided a leap forward in individual leadership effectiveness, as well as helping each group work more effectively as a leadership team and with other functional teams. In a rapidly growing, fluid and highly entrepreneurial culture, the functional plans enabled a high degree of alignment, so all knew what the other teams were doing and where they needed to manage the interfaces. All the teams were engaged with and aligned to the organisational strategy.

At the all-staff conference to communicate the strategy, functional leads were able to follow up with detailed plans, which demonstrated a depth of thinking and commitment to achieving ambitious goals, making the whole change and growth agenda seem real, thought through and exciting.

As a by-product, participants mentioned the intervention so frequently as helping align strategy with people and execution, that the organisation was awarded the new Gold liP standard when its accreditation was renewed a few months later.

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