

Case Study

INVEST IN YOUR LEADERS.
INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE.



From Kirsten Watson
Managing Partner



LEAG (Lausitz Energie AG) supplies electricity and heat to millions of households, industry and public spaces.

Legislatory changes in Germany require that LEAG, a mining and power plant operator employing 7.400 people, reimagines their business and their technology to continue to deliver clean and reliable energy to their customers in the future.

Their goal: transform their business to become a versatile company for energy, infrastructure and service that contributes equally to security of supply in Germany and to structural change in the region.

Overview

It's perhaps unsurprising that **shouting 'all change'** at the top of the organisation and expecting it just to happen **isn't the most successful strategy** for a transformation.

It affects everyone in the organisation and so **each individual** needs to be able to **understand the implications** of success or failure for themselves. They need to be able to agree that it makes sense for them and to **engage and commit** to taking an active role in contributing to the future.

That's why LEAG decided to work with us to **try something different** to help them to achieve their goal. Together we conceived a development program to enable their senior managers to **support and engage their people** in the transformation process.

The result is a **12-week program** which conveys the mindset, the skills and the tools to selectively **rise above short-term daily operational needs**. They learn the benefits of changing perspective to focus on the longer-term benefits of coaching those employees who are struggling with the change.

With this bi-focal approach they not only meet the immediate operational needs but also the longer-term strategic vision of the organisation.

“As a company we are undergoing the most significant transformation imaginable; from a very traditional core business to a completely new business model.

We know that the success of our transformation relies entirely on our people being able to understand the need for change and on them buying-in to it.

We have found exactly what we need to support our Managers in our Development Program with 2Leadership. It enables them to identify the barriers to change in their teams and to support them to take simple, small steps to overcome them by applying the pragmatic and practical tools and solutions proposed.”

Katja Müller, Head of Strategic HR Management & Executives

Approach



Validation was essential:

Running 3 pilot programs allowed us to test acceptance levels and remove road blocks for the target population.

Design needs to be adaptive:

We used the pilot feedback to redesign the program format. Delivering it as a blend of self-study videos, webinars and practise days has 2 major benefits. Firstly it helps managers to better integrate the training into their schedules. Secondly it makes putting theory into practise between sessions possible.

Group size matters:

We decided to limit group size to a maximum of 6 participants. This ensures very intensive and personal learning experiences for each manager based on their individual needs.

Making it stick is key:

Training is good. Transferring it into daily business is better. A 12-week knowledge transfer process with 1:1 follow-up has supported the managers to embed the new mindset, skills and tools into their leadership roles.

Result

Managers who attended the program consistently reported an improvement in their **ability to deal with resistance** to change on a 1:1 basis.

More significantly, the program helped the managers to realize that **coaching is a leadership tool** in their toolbox, and that taking a coaching approach does not mean removing their management hat.

Their feedback consistently showed an increased **awareness of their true value as leader** to the organisation. That their role is to **develop their people** for the future, and not just to ensure that operational tasks are done.

After 3 years of working with the senior managers, the program will now be cascaded further into the organisation to the population of future leaders. This will ensure they too are able to play their role in supporting their people through the many changes to come.



Conclusion

Every transformation encounters a natural resistance from people inside the organisation who feel concern for an uncertain future. Managers play a key role in coaching their people through this uncertainty and engaging their hearts and hands for the transformation.

Significant contribution to the transformation is only possible if both the hearts and hands of the people are fully engaged and committed.

People perceive the things that don't work 10 times more strongly than the things that do, which can cause resistance to the transformation. Managers who know how to coach their people to understand this as a perception and not a reality will shift the focus to the progress being made, thereby helping people to move forward again.

Commercial organizations who need to transform, cannot afford to put operations on hold. Managers must simultaneously manage the external reality of operations and the internal reality of the transformation. By maintaining a bi-focal perspective and coaching their people, managers are able to deal more effectively with the tension of simultaneously managing daily business and progress towards the future state.

“As a *what if* thinker I love combining my experience from industry and my expertise in leadership development to open up new paths to explore.

So give me a call and let's explore the *what if's* of your transformation and take it to the next level together.”

You can reach me on +41 78 723 28 54 or at k.watson@2leadership.eu.

