

Leading From a Distance



Enabling more effective leadership in geographically dispersed teams

Synopsis

Teams dispersed across multiple locations amplify the management challenge. When AutoTrader, the leading pre-owned vehicle sales publisher, restructured from print to digital, its field-based trade sales teams were, for the first time, led 'from a distance'. They sought a solution to improve the way these teams were managed.

Key Issues

- > Senior sales management recognised that the dispersed nature of leadership revealed weaknesses in the team's way of working.
- > Restructuring of teams during the change programme disrupted trust and confidence requiring a new emphasis on communication, performance management, workflow processes and effective use of technology.
- > Opportunities for face-to-face meetings were more limited, yet the pressure to drive commercial success had increased.

The Solution

- > Leading Change was invited to deliver an experiential programme to support managers to become significantly more competent in the skills and behaviours required to lead dispersed teams.
- > We implemented a flexible, modular programme based on several one-day workshops at 1-2 months intervals. Managers attended the workshop, then returned to work to try out new knowledge and skills.
- > Programme content enabled managers to review their remote leadership challenges and take part in practical business simulations requiring them to lead a remote team.
- > Managers received feedback and coaching from experienced facilitators and their peers. This increased self-awareness and helped them adopt personal strategies to increase effectiveness.
- > To increase ROI from the whole programme, managers returned to review performance, share experiences, review best practice with peers and revisit learning outcomes.

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The Results

A practical and action-focused learning programme helped managers translate what they had learned back into the workplace. Commitment to positive development outcomes provided a means of tracking the LFAD programme impact. Managers shared their commitments, enabling them to provide peer support and collaborate in developing performance across product, channel and organisational boundaries.

Of participants, 100% strongly agreed that they would recommend the LFAD programme to others.

The aspects of the programme most valued by participants were:

- > The group discussions about the challenges of remote leadership
- > Experiential exercises to reinforce remote leadership techniques
- > The pragmatic tools and techniques that support effective remote leadership
- > Supported peer to peer coaching

Client Quotes

"All our managers should go on this programme. This will definitely make us more effective in the use of my time, my team's time and their effectiveness."

"I believe it will immediately improve my performance and improve my motivation of my team and therefore their performance."

"As with other programmes I have attended run by Leading Change, I find the practical tips and guidance that accrues to be very relevant and helpful in terms of the work environment."

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