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Client Story

Creating a Culture of Belonging at Luxottica

Luxottica, is a world leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of fashion, luxury and sports eyewear. The new leadership team at Luxottica South East Asia needed to further develop their talented workforce to the next generation of leaders. They wanted employees to have a sense of ownership while equipping them with the right skills.

“When I joined the company, it was growing very fast and had great potential. However, there used to be a strong hierarchical structure which the new management was just starting to address. We needed to operate as collaborative teams. It was clear the culture needed to change,” says Stefano Innocenti, Director of Human Resources for Luxottica SEA. He recognized that employees were working in silos and not feeling empowered. They needed to take ownership of their goals and roles in the organization. “Turnover was high, which negatively impacted the day-to-day operations of the company as well as our ability to attract new talents in a competitive market.”

Without a structured development path for Luxottica employees, Innocenti worked with Blanchard® to build a customized training plan. The goal was to provide employees with the skills they needed to create a culture of belonging that would support the fast-moving organization.

“We understood the importance of investing in our people, especially in challenging times,” says Innocenti. “Providing the skills to respond to future challenges such as economic crisis, market consolidation, and constant changes in consumer markets is our responsibility. We want employees to benefit from leadership training so they can apply these skills and retain the knowledge for their future. We want to develop today’s direct reports into tomorrow’s leaders.”



Stefano Innocenti

Innocenti worked with Luxottica corporate office to align training programs for a common leadership language. Firstly, they partnered with the Blanchard local office to implement SLII® and executive coaching to senior leaders and then trained Self Leadership and Building Trust to direct reports.

SLII® has a practical framework that helps leaders both diagnose an employee's needs then provide the appropriate leadership style to meet those needs. Participants learn the four stages of people development while working on a specific task and how to deliver the right amount of support and direction for each development stage.

Self Leadership uses the common language of SLII® to teach direct reports how to have more effective conversations with their leaders and take responsibility for their own development. Building Trust teaches a simple four-step process to build trust among team members and also how to repair trust when it has been damaged.

When these three programs are used together, it equips employees with the skills and common language to increase engagement, improve relationships, ignite creativity, and build commitment. Training leaders in SLII® is just part of the equation. Direct reports and team members need to be trained in Self Leadership to have the right understanding and skills to communicate effectively and partner with their managers to drive organizational results.

Continuous Learning to Support Growth

In 2019, Luxottica was managing a merger, which brought new challenges for employees as well as leaders. "We wanted to give our managers the competencies they needed to perform effectively in the upcoming merger, so we used the Leading People Through Change® program from Blanchard to help them navigate the change process." This program explains the predictable stages of what concerns employees will experience during times of change. It helps participants to understand these stages, identify the stage a direct report may be in, and address typical questions that arise in each stage. This allows leaders to adjust their leadership style to meet the needs of their employees to embrace the change instead of struggling with it.



"In addition to the training, we also had individual coaching sessions for participants," says Innocenti. "The result was a substantial turnaround in morale as we saw employees take ownership of their situation. Participants reported that the combination of training and coaching empowered them to control and manage their goals better, and also design their own career paths. They began to realize the connection they had in our own region as well as the role they would play in the bigger picture of a merger. They came together as a team and started appreciating the challenges of leadership and the power of communicating clearly and caring for their own teams."

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Assessing the Results

The most significant economic impact of this training was the reduction of the company's attrition rate from 22 percent in 2018 to 4.7 percent in 2019. Hard numbers are always good to report, but Innocenti witnessed other noteworthy results. "Our employees realized working in silos was not effective. They started redefining their leadership goals to focus on progress, and to develop themselves and their teams. They also began to proactively engage senior management. I noticed how the employees enjoyed the training and how they matured as leaders to take ownership of their roles, careers, and development. For the first time, the team felt like belonging to a family—the Luxottica SEA family."

Mindful Tips

Innocenti has recommendations for others implementing training programs in their organizations. "The development of employees is a day-to-day responsibility of all leaders. It needs to be a continuous process, not just an option during emergencies. Empowering employees to share their feedback and take responsibility with the right mindset and skills is critical. Providing follow-up training builds consistency and allows people to continue their learning journey and apply it on the job. Building teams that collaborate is the foundation for reducing attrition and responding to crisis. It also encourages ownership and leaders to make good decisions.

It's easy to lead when things are going well—but if you don't develop employees and care for them every day, you may lose them during crisis and volatile times. Loyalty is not built with monetary compensation, but by caring for the employee's overall well-being. It is the role of the human resources business partner to ensure that all employees including senior leaders have the right leadership mindset and skills to lead effectively."