

CMI accredited leadership training boosts management performance

Summary

20|20 Business Insight created a global leadership development programme (MDP) for Expro to ensure the company's management team were aware of the effect leadership behaviours have on business performance. Eighteen months later, results showed a clear improvement to line management understanding of their role in supporting employee personal development and fostering good organisational communication, two of Expro's key cultural goals.

Background

Expro's mission is well flow management. The company provide services and products that measure, improve, control and process flow from high-value oil and gas wells, from exploration and appraisal through to mature field production optimisation and enhancement. To achieve this they use the industry's best people, to deliver the highest standards of safety, quality and personalised customer service. With over 5,000 employees over 50 countries, Expro offers a truly global service solution.

In-situ management lacked formal leadership skills

To remain ahead of competitors, Expro has always prioritised employee development, running ongoing training programmes for technical skills advancement and project management. After experiencing rapid growth, it became apparent the company needed to provide ongoing management learning and development. As is often the case with companies in the engineering and scientific industries, many existing managers were 'in-situ' and originally employed in operational or field based positions. Although highly technically competent, they usually had to learn about management 'on the job'. This inevitably gave them a disadvantage and meant they could not achieve the same results from teams as if they had completed formal leadership skills development.

Expro wanted to eliminate this problem and ensure

managers had studied the theoretical foundations recommended by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). Specifically, they wanted them to understand the effects of their behaviour in relation to employee morale, performance and the wider success of the business. To achieve the company's vision, it was important that their workforce was getting the right levels of support from management and that all staff were highly motivated and working collectively in accordance with company values.

"We turned our training focus to management development and considered how to create a programme that went beyond having a couple of courses to teach managers basic skills," says Carole Paley, Group Learning and Development Manager. **"We wanted a comprehensive training programme to support the matrix of management competencies identified as being important to Expro."**



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The importance of third party accreditation

At the time, the company had two options for creating a leadership development programme. One was to use internal resources to create very Expro specific content and maintain an internal assessment system. This had the drawback of lacking the extra credibility that a qualification awarded through an independent body, such as the CMI (Chartered Management Institute) would have. The alternative was to appoint a CMI accredited third party specialist to create course content and deliver the programme. The latter option would ensure it was of a high enough standard to allow the CMI to oversee the accreditation process and approve the standard reached by delegates.

After evaluating a number of options and training providers, Expro appointed 20|20 Business Insight, an international organisation with an enviable track record of systems and staff development as its Leadership Training partner to deliver the MDP programme in all 6 operational regions. 20|20's Project Management capability and its significant experience in the oil and gas sector was a deciding factor.

Since the project began in 2012, 20|20 has delivered leadership foundation training for in excess of 200 Expro managers, giving them building blocks to become more effective leaders. Their MDP consists of classroom-based training operated at two levels. In the entry-level stage, 'management foundation 1', delegates work towards CMI Level 3 as a 3 day intensive course. In 'management foundation 2', delegates study the syllabus of the CMI Level 5 management qualification during a 4 day programme.

Both programmes are augmented with workplace designed written assignments of 3000 plus words aimed at Expro specific learning outcomes which when successfully completed provide the CMI Certification in Leadership and Management.



Global training delivered by local facilitators

As a supplier, a key benefit offered by 20|20 to Expro was the ability to offer a single, globally consistent training programme, delivered by the company's own local facilitators to classes of up to 16 delegates at a time. During 2012, 20|20's leadership development specialists travelled to deliver their MDP in all 6 of the company's operating regions – Europe, Asia, Africa plus the Middle East and Americas.

Carole Paley explained; "We had used 20|20 in the past and were confident they could deliver the leadership development training because they are CMI accredited and the project management training they offer underpins the knowledge and assessments required for Level 3 and Level 5 CMI qualifications. Their proposal contained exactly what we wanted from management training and focused on the 8 modules we identified were necessary to support Expro's processes."



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Bespoke course developed with research insights

Before launching the MDP, 20|20 worked closely with Expro to design course content in accordance with core company values and culture. At that time, Expro was undergoing significant internal change and had recently completed a company-wide survey to reflect on the values and behaviours it wanted to encourage from employees in the future.

During this phase of programme development, interviews were completed with key regional managers and directors to understand their own challenges and objectives, which was also incorporated into course materials. For example, one key objective was to eliminate any perceptions of a 'them and us' management

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Bespoke course developed ... Continued ...

culture and to instil a 'can do' attitude across the whole workforce. Subsequently, 20|20 worked closely with different functional departments within Expro to tailor the programme further to suit operational requirements.

Measuring the effectiveness of Expro's MDP Expro's MDP is externally accredited by the CMI, so delegates attending the course are assured of the overall value they derive after completing the programme and gaining a globally recognised management qualification. In addition, the training intervention's effectiveness as a whole is measured in a number of other ways.

As is the case with any training intervention, the real benefits are seen when a business can identify clear attitudinal and behavioural changes, with classroom learning being applied. Expro measures this by requiring delegates to complete a set number of assessments, depending on the level of qualification they are studying for. These formal assignments are completed using evidence gathered from real workplace scenarios, clearly showing how successful the delegate has been in applying methods learned in the classroom back into their workplace. The results achieved by each delegate, based on the marking criteria applied by the CMI's external examiners, clearly illustrates the effectiveness of the training delivered.

Results – Increased involvement and engagement in employee development.

Although Expro's learning and development programme was only launched 18 months ago, the company has already seen clear improvements to the managerial capabilities and behaviours of delegates who have attended a training intervention. For example, one area where significant improvements have already been seen is in the level of understanding amongst line managers of their important role in employee development.

"Prior to including a segment on this topic in the course syllabus, some managers were not always engaged in their employee's development and tended to rely on the company's learning and development team to take this responsibility" says Carole Paley. "This is no longer the case and one of the most apparent improvements is the way managers now appreciate the importance of being directly involved with the personal development of team members. Communication between managers and employees has also improved."



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Looking ahead to continued programme development

Expro is now entering the second phase of the management development process and will be cross-referencing the results of manager's training interventions to their existing internal employee appraisal programme. "The goal is to ask senior management – those responsible for managing our managers – to assess their own teams based on the outcomes of the foundation leadership training they received from 20|20; and so far results are very pleasing," says Carole Paley.

Looking ahead, Expro continues to work with 20|20 to develop new training interventions to improve employee effectiveness. In the pipeline, is the extension of the CMI Level 5 Certificate to CMI Level 5 Diploma and a number of the delegates from the 2012 programme will complete further workshops and self study to enhance their learning to the benefit of the Expro business. In addition to this, 20|20 is helping Expro to develop a bespoke project management training programme designed for the company's global intake of graduate trainees.

Commenting on working with 20|20 as a whole, Carole Paley said, "20|20 really stepped up to the challenge of working with Expro to deliver a demanding programme across so many territories. We are delighted with the outcomes to date, they really have done exceptionally well."