

CASE STUDY

Senergy enhances core leadership skills with Roffey Park management development programme

Senergy is a global energy services company. It aims to become one of the most respected and admired international brands associated with the affordable and sustainable supply and delivery of energy. Its people are at the heart of its success. They combine technical know-how with entrepreneurial dynamism to overcome the range of challenges they face. Senergy ensures their people have the best available support in terms of training and mentoring to develop their personal and professional skills and maintain a balanced perspective on how they work and how they live.

The challenge

Senergy's employees come largely from a technical background with expertise in disciplines such as drilling, wells and subsurface engineering. As the company grew, it found it needed to complement these skills with management and leadership abilities.

"In my experience, people who are expert at technical subjects can often struggle when it comes to thinking about management skills," explains Sylvia Paton, Head of Learning and Development at Senergy. "When we only had 100 employees this didn't present much of an issue but now that we have over 500 members of staff, it became clear we needed to introduce a clearer focus on management and leadership."

Senergy wanted to encourage its people to reflect constructively on their behaviour and workplace values in order to inculcate better management practices. Having worked with Roffey Park in a previous role, Paton knew its approach to learning would be a good fit.

"We looked at a number of professional development organisations but the quality of Roffey Park's facilitators stood out, as did its overall approach," adds Paton. "A prescriptive teaching model just won't land well with people who are experts in their own fields. You need to have credibility and an ability to engage. Roffey Park demonstrated it could deliver on this."

The solution

Together Paton in collaboration with Roffey Park developed a three day 'Essentials of Management' programme designed to enhance the leadership and management abilities of key personnel. The first day explores what leadership is, encouraging participants to define their own view of effective leadership and analyse their own style. This is followed on the second day by experiential workshops and role-plays focusing on communicating and influencing with impact, while the third day is about raising performance, giving feedback and initiating a development plan. The programme includes a comprehensive self-assessment through a 360 degree survey combined with Myers-Briggs analysis. Their development plan is then reviewed in a final follow-up day which takes place two months after the programme.



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“Taking a traditional whiteboard and presentation approach would be anathema for our people. What’s distinctive about Roffey Park is that it champions an experiential, hands-on approach,” continues Paton. “This way of engaging people is highly effective in getting even the most sceptical participant to really grapple with what it means to lead and manage.”

Since 2009, Senergy has run two programmes per year, each with a cohort of about ten participants, at its offices in Aberdeen and Edinburgh. The programme not only gives a rigorous introduction to leadership, but it also provides an opportunity to network with peers and colleagues and to share good practice and common challenges.

The results

Senergy has noted an improvement in the behaviour of employees who have been on the Essentials of Management programme, with them becoming more focused on their role as manager. There has been an increase in one-to-one mentoring and coaching and much more clarity around individual responsibility.

“The whole business of getting technical experts to see themselves as managers and leaders is a long process but this programme has helped kick-start that journey,” comments Paton. “Managers now have a much better awareness of our expectations and a newly formed ability to meet those expectations. The Essentials of Management programme is helping drive a culture change within the organisation.”

The participants are equally positive about the experience. Everyone who attends must fill out an evaluation form and the feedback is consistently positive. Every participant highlights at least one area that will help them become more effective in business. According to one participant: “the programme identified the need for improvement in my management style and gave me the tools and strategies to do so.”

“Thanks to Roffey Park and its approach, our managers have been given the ability to improve their own skills and, in turn, add more value to the business. The energy business is competitive so anything that gives us an edge can be an advantage,” concludes Paton.



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