

Getting unstuck from routines and gaining real insights

WIAL Brazil used Action Learning as a blended solution (Action Learning plus individual coaching meetings) to develop leadership skills for an executive director and his team of six direct reports in the automotive industry, listed in Fortune 500. The team is in charge of the Logistics Department, responsible for strategies in Supply Chain and economic results for the plant.

The logistics team was facing some challenges:

- Other departments were complaining about the logistics department's isolation and lack of communication about key decisions
- The director was not a role model; he had a deep technical knowledge and background but had a leadership style that was more authoritarian than participative

The program consisted of a number of individual coaching sessions but it was clear that there were some issues that needed to be addressed collectively. The team ran different Action Learning sessions on different challenges. One of these illustrates the power of Action Learning very well ...

Problem presented: " There is a gap between the output from Production and what the Sales division can sell".

At first, the team started to ask the very operational questions typically asked of challenges like this, about adjusting and balancing the goals of both production and sales departments. But through the power of questions, the team came to an insight at a very different level. They realized that the real problem was: "What is our role and contribution to the company for better results?"

This led to more in-depth actions that just adjusting the production planning or sales forecasts. Instead, the logistics department started conversations with both the commercial and production areas, and made sure to keep all other stakeholders involved as they moved forward.



The overall program had benefits both at the individual level (for the executive director)

an for the logistics department as a whole in the organization: increasing in the 360 degree evaluation of Director and his team, establishing goals with the sales department, costs reductions, benchmark to other departments, and increased interaction between different areas involved in the supply chain process.

Two senior managers shared their impressions of the Action Learning process:

“It’s incredible how thanks to this Action Learning process we could talk about important problems that we were not used to discuss because the routine engulfed us.”

“Listening to different perspectives through questions shed light onto the problem and therefore the solution became clear.”

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