



Case Study - Culture Transformation with Senior Leadership Team and Middle Manager Group Coaching

Jill Knocke, PCC and Nancy Benthien, PCC

Context

██████████ is North America's leading provider of death-care products and services. With 24,000 dedicated employees, they provide the finest funeral, cremation, and cemetery services to hundreds of thousands of families each year. The people of this company assist families with compassion and guidance at difficult times, helping them celebrate the significance of lives that have been lived and preserving memories that transcend generations, with dignity and honor.

The ██████████ department was experiencing pervasive organizational culture concerns and significant leadership deficiencies. A recent departmental investigation revealed a culture where there is a lack of trust, unhealthy levels of competition, poor leadership and favoritism.

On the back of these findings, they have requested support in developing a deep understanding of the culture, coaching the leaders and most importantly, improvement in leadership, emotional intelligence, and the development of a cohesive, collaborative, and trusted team. Their vision is a culture where employees and leaders are free to speak up in a psychologically safe environment. The culture and leadership assessments, along with individual interviews greatly helped inform our plans for improvement.

Overarching Deliverables

The leadership team sought support in achieving their business strategy. They wanted to work with the managers to create their strategic roadmap and future state organization, and enhance the organizational culture by:

- *Breaking down department silos*
- *Employee empowerment*
- *Improving communication and feedback*
- *Become more customer service focused*
- *Career development: roles, responsibilities and progression paths*
- *Additional education and training*
- *Improve the collaboration and cooperation of [REDACTED] Directors*

How we met the deliverables



Leadership Coaching through One-to-One Coaching is an individualized process to develop skills and competencies required for effective leadership. **One-to-One Coaching** plans were created from the assessment and manager input. Regular check-ins with stakeholders provided feedback on coaching progress.

The Organizational **Culture Assessment** measured the baseline culture and climate. From there, we Identified & prioritized levers for change and key desired outcomes, including leading & lagging measures.

Team Coaching was used to support the development of important skills like leadership, delegation, communication, accountability, and more. **Group coaching** was used with the next level down (Managers) to break down silos and improve cross department communication & collaboration.

Quantitative Engagement Outcomes / Results

Over 70% of the population agree the **overall culture and opportunities for development improved.**

80% indicated they've experienced positive changes relative to **breaking down departmental silos.**

80% indicated they've experienced positive behavior changes in their leadership relative to **increased employee empowerment.**

80% indicated they've experienced positive behavior changes in their leadership relative to **improved communication and feedback.**

70% indicated they've **experienced positive behavior changes in their leadership** relative to improving the collaboration and cooperation between their leadership team member(s).

Qualitative Individual and Leadership Team Coaching Benefits/Outcomes

- ✓ Creation of the organization's 3-year strategic roadmap and the beginning stages of implementation
- ✓ Development of the [REDACTED] Management team charter, norms and expectations
- ✓ Increased self-awareness and development of coach-like skills to improve interactions with staff
- ✓ More consistent and meaningful communication up and down in the organization
- ✓ Increased engagement with middle management to implement strategic roadmap (increased empowerment)
- ✓ New ways of working and communicating as a real team (leaders and managers)
- ✓ Identification of idea culture, along with the enablers and obstacles to achieving their ideal culture

Qualitative Manager Group Coaching – Benefits/Outcomes

- ✓ Collaboration between the middle manager group went up substantially - they're seeing real value in this beyond just it's nice to do. They gave an example where they're reviewing some policies together to come up with their collective suggestions to bring forward for approval. They said that wouldn't have happened if not for the group coaching.
- ✓ Identification of other areas / topics / challenges could they model the group coaching approach to improve.
- ✓ They concluded they would have quarterly meetings and rotate the responsibility for who coordinates the schedule and agenda. This will support sustained momentum.
- ✓ The manager group will pull in at least one Director to their meetings to continue sharing information and asking for help when appropriate. This will further the silo softening between the departments.