

Major Automotive Manufacturer Leverages a Two Phased Learning Campaign to Drive Culture Change

CUSTOMER:
Major US Automotive Manufacturer

INDUSTRY:
Automotive

ORGANIZATION SIZE:
250,000 employees

THE CHALLENGE:
Drive a more adaptive and
innovative culture

The IT Story

THE OBJECTIVES:

- Develop IT employees as strategic business partners for the organization
- Equip employees with the skills to employ a consultative approach to discovering underlying systems and causes
- Implement a behavior change initiative designed to shift the culture to support data-driven decision-making

THE RESULTS

As reported by participants in the *Forging Breakthroughs* blended learning program:

- 47% experienced a significant improvement in related knowledge and skills
- 63% experienced a significant improvement in productivity
- 67% experienced a significant improvement in employee satisfaction

THE SOLUTION SUMMARY

In 2004, a major US automotive manufacturing company recognized that its culture needed to be more adaptive and innovative in order to compete in the cut-throat automotive industry. The IT organization had become very good at technical problem solving, but needed to build a skill base as consultative, strategic partners to the business. The Chief Information Officer decided to drive rapid improvement within IT and, therefore, serve as a catalyst for the larger organization.

It was imperative that IT employees transition from being “IT repairmen” to engaging as consultative, data-driven decision makers adept at discovering the underlying systems and causes for a customer breakdown or problem. To address this challenge, the VP of IT Strategy and Talent Development partnered with Ninth House and together determined that the Systems Thinking work of Peter Senge would best address this challenge. A blended learning strategy was developed that included the following:

- Ninth House hosted a 1:1 lunch between the automotive company’s CIO and Peter Senge to ensure executive management support and alignment.
- The Ninth House online course, *Forging Breakthroughs*, was

delivered in a blended format to IT employees. Live launch events, followed by Ninth House online courseware, taught the basics of systems thinking and consultative decision-making.

- A custom one-day workshop was co-designed to provide employees the opportunity to discuss and practice applying their new concepts and skills.
- Ten video-based online vignettes, developed by Ninth House to address the unique needs of the organization, were implemented to provide on-going learning support and reinforcement to help achieve the desired behavior change.

The blended learning program was implemented across 1200 IT managers and employees over the next two years. The impact of the solution was measured using a third party analytics tool. Based on a study of approximately 200 participants, the majority of those completing the blended program reported significant improvement in related knowledge and skills (47%), productivity (63%) and employee satisfaction (67%). The success of the initiative was further evidenced by the on-going CIO commitment to the program even amidst significant cost-cutting pressure.



The Diversity and Work Life Planning Story

THE OBJECTIVES:

- Determine the organizational behaviors driving resistance to change across the organization
- Drive behaviors that promote change through innovation and adaptability
- Equip managers with tools to positively influence change in their respective teams

THE RESULTS

As reported by participants in the Building Community learning program:

- An average rating of 4.2 on a 5-point scale believe that the *Eight Habits of the Heart* can create a culture of respect and inclusion
- When asked if the *Eight Habits of the Heart* truly defined the company's culture, how much would innovation increase?" 54.6% responded positively

THE SOLUTION SUMMARY

In the Fall of 2004, the company's Diversity and Work Life Planning Office was focused on "Building a Winning Culture" of innovation and adaptability. Previously, this office had encountered significant resistance and low morale among both managers and employees. As the planning began for the 2004 Diversity and Work Life Summit, they wanted to understand the underlying cause for the cultural resistance to change, and then design a targeted learning solution that would address the issues and create a culture of innovation and adaptability.

The Diversity Team and Ninth House first fielded some research which revealed that courage is the most lacking value within the company's culture. This unusually high fear of failure was attributed to a large number of multi-generational employees, a culture committed to tradition, and punishment of failure by termination. As a result, Ninth House designed a tailored learning solution centered on the work of Clifton Taulbert, author of the Pulitzer-nominated book the *Eight Habits of the Heart*.

The blended learning and development strategy was piloted among multiple levels of managers and employees and included the following components:

- A keynote address by Clifton Taulbert at the 2004 Diversity and Work Life Planning Summit kicked off the inspiration and change initiative among the attending three hundred managers and employees.
- A Ninth House online course, *Building Community* by Clifton Taulbert, was rolled-out following the Summit. The course teaches the *Eight Habits of the Heart* as values that positively impact an organizational community. Habits taught, such as Responsibility, High Expectations and Courage, foster a culture that is safe for employees to take innovative risks and recognize their own role in positively impacting the success of the business by adapting to change.
- After completing the *Building Community* online course, Ninth House custom-designed workshops were attended by managers and employees, providing the opportunity to discuss and apply the *Eight Habits of the Heart* material.

Employee feedback and evaluation indicated that the "Building a Winning Culture" initiative was valuable and it was beneficial in driving cultural change across the organization.