

Culture Change Case Study 1:

Culture Change project doubles Business Excellence Score

CCS Electronics Ltd MD George Baker decided that it was time for change and invested in a Bergander culture change programme. 6 months later the company's rating on the Business Excellence Model had risen from 340 to 670 out of 1000.

CCS distributes and assembles electronic connectors and cables. Their components can be found in a wide range of end-products including railway rolling stock, flight simulators, industrial machines and audio mixing desks. Fast turnaround and almost zero defects are the company's key battle grounds in a very competitive market place. Since being established in 1982 the business had grown from a small start-up to almost 80 employees and a turnover of £5.5 million. As the business grew much of the processes, systems and the culture had simply evolved. Now the CCS management team agreed that the company had to change and had to be re-energised with a new culture that would focus on excellent customer service and where staff at all levels would take ownership for their own performance and would be motivated to make performance improvements by themselves.

The Bergander culture change programme involved 3 discrete phases :

- Designing change
- Engendering change
- Implementing change

In the designing change phase the senior management team and Bergander drew up a vision of how CCS should operate. Central to this first phase was the creation of a set of strategic and operational goals and objectives which would move the company forward. These were in turn cascaded down into practical working elements which people at every level in the organisation could identify with and support. A vision statement was also developed to embody the three core beliefs of CCS of customer satisfaction, employee participation and continuous improvement. Vision statements are often seen as simply a bunch of words but at CCS it became a genuine symbol of what the company stands for.

The second phase of the programme concentrated on engendering change by training and mentoring supervisors and junior managers. These members of staff were taught how to measure and monitor performance and solve problems in cross-functional teams. The result was an understanding by staff of the need to change and an ability to effect change.

The third phase concentrated on the 'hands-on' application of best-practice tools and techniques. We used teams of workers (functional and cross-functional) to design and implement projects across the business. These projects were made high-profile and the results they obtained were presented and discussed with the rest of the business.

The Culture Change programme ran over a period of 6-months with 1 day of consultancy support per week. The Business Excellence Model was used to assess the level of practice and performance at the start and at the end of the project.

George Baker, the Managing Director of CCS said '***the Bergander programme has brought about significant performance improvements and a complete attitude change. We have seen individuals realising their potential and this is bringing considerable benefits to the company***'.

Culture Change Case Study 2:

Culture Change project dramatically improves Customer Service and Delivery Performance

Gesipa Blind Riveting Systems Ltd is a German owned company based in Keighley. One of the world's largest manufacturers of rivets and riveting systems, the company employs around 80 staff. Gesipa currently offers over 3000 different rivet types which vary in material, length, width and fastening method. If that's not enough you can also have a custom made 'special' rivet to suit your specific requirements. Their most demanding customers, in addition to a host of UK and foreign-based distributors, include Vauxhall, Peugeot and Jaguar who require high tolerance 'anti-rattle' rivets. In order to secure a competitive edge in an aggressive market place, Gesipa has long promised a next-day delivery service across all its 700 standard range products. Performance until recently though had been poor with an average of less than 40% of all orders delivered on time.

Gesipa needed to radically improve its performance and as a first step the senior management team asked Bergander to conduct a Process Audit. The audit, conducted over a 3-day period, highlighted a range of issues across the business that was symptomatic of something more serious. At the heart of these issues was the prevailing company culture. Gesipa was technically superb but was failing in one crucial area. Gesipa was complacent. Ownership, a real sense of responsibility and accountability were in absence. At its worst, the customer could actually appear more of an inconvenience than the company's life-blood.

The results of the audit were discussed between the Gesipa management team and Bergander and shortly afterwards the Culture Change Programme was launched. The programme would have to achieve significant and lasting performance improvements. Such improvements are only possible where there is a genuine shift in company culture and for a successful programme there are three pre-requisites :

- (1) That the programme be run over enough time for change to become embedded;
- (2) That every single employee be involved and makes a valued contribution;
- (3) That the programme and its objectives receive the complete and united backing of the senior managers.

With these three elements in place and Bergander's highly effective and proven approach to culture change the Culture Change Programme had to be a success.

After the programme launch, a series of change activities were started with the initial focus being to achieve some momentum and some 'quick hits' that when installed would put change into motion.

Focus Groups, each made up of employees from different parts of the company were involved in identifying areas where they could each improve their own performance. In the course of the programme the 12 focus groups made 114 improvement suggestions. Of these, 78 were implemented, with others still being developed.

A Business Process Improvement Team was set-up whose task it was to first analyse and then redefine existing business processes. The cross-functional team was first trained in the improvement methodology and then continued operating with facilitation and support from Bergander. The culmination of the team's work was a presentation to senior managers.

The proposals to install a route-card system and to change admin and paperwork systems was well received was quickly implemented. A vital element to eliminating a 'blame culture' and installing a sense of ownership is cross-functional team problem-solving. To do this a team, consisting of Gesipa Team Leaders and Supervisors, was trained in root-cause analysis and change management. The team met weekly and installed a whole range of improvements. The Culture Change Programme also included a Production Planning Improvement Team and regular Management Review Meetings. All the activities were based upon team working with the injection of best-practice combined with change management techniques. Throughout the programme Bergander operated a 'central actions listing' to ensure a structured approach to all the changes in their various stages.

The key to making the change activities work is to provide each team with a very clear sense of purpose and an empathy with the customer. Employees should see their work as part of a delivery process and at every opportunity people are encouraged to be introspective and not to accept the status-quo. Everyone must understand the consequences of their own actions on the company's goals and must also be prepared to undergo some personal change.

Six months after beginning our programme at Gesipa the company's average weekly on-time-delivery performance had risen to 96%, from just under 40%. Machine set-up times had reduced by 15%. Supplier performance had improved. Team-working had improved between different departments and all staff felt a whole lot closer to the customer!

Simon Gledhill, the Managing Director of Gesipa Blind Riveting Systems Ltd said **“Bergander have been instrumental in reshaping Gesipa”**

We thoroughly enjoyed working on both these projects which each achieved very significant performance improvements.

If you would like to discuss a culture change programme or service improvement programme that will combine the implementation of best-practice with a new operational mindset please give us a call.

Our programmes provide significant change and lasting benefits to business performance.

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