

Brewing better teams in a competitive liquor landscape

In the fiercely competitive beer business, North America's oldest brewery holds on to a slim lead. To thrive in the midst of these pressures, the company has set aggressive goals. How can they create a culture of "brilliant execution" to succeed in this competitive market?

"It's a tough market," says Diane Larouche, a change manager with the company's IT project management office in Montreal. "There are a lot of players, including microbreweries. Globalization is aggressive. And wine is gaining ground."

"The leadership team wants to work more from the grassroots up, in this area and many others," says Larouche. "They understand that competitive advantage comes from people, not technology. The brilliant execution initiative is about empowering people to 'decide, plan, do, and review.'"

Solution

As part of the initiative, Larouche facilitated a team-building activity in May 2010 with the finance department of Molson Coors Canada. Consulting first with a senior vice president and three VPs, she got an idea of the situation and the challenges facing the department's three work groups. "Making decisions was a problem," she says. "There was a sense that it was a long process. People were second-guessing themselves and each other."

Business Challenges

- Competitive industry landscape made increasingly difficult with globalization and outside-industry competition
- Changing company culture to empower individuals to lead from the bottom up

Company Profile

The Molson Coors Brewing Company is the world's fifth largest brewer, with breweries and distribution centers all over the world. In Canada, Molson has a leading market share and is the largest brewer by volume.

Molson

With that in mind, she reflected on what the team needed to achieve brilliant execution: “How can people contribute? How can they work to the best of their ability? How can they leverage their differences to move forward more positively?”

She then conducted team-building workshops with more than 90 employees, from VPs to administrative assistants, using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) Step II™ assessment. “I wanted to help them work well together and relate well with each other,” she says. “I picked the MBTI tool because it enables people to understand their own styles, how they lead their day-to-day activities, and how that affects the group. It brings out the soft-skills side that you need along with the mechanical process side if you want a group to be very good at delivering exceptional results.”

She also chose the MBTI Step II assessment for its reliability—“It’s a credible tool, it has validity and it’s been well studied,” she explains—and for the more refined picture it offers of each type. “The amount of information in the reports was perfect,” she says. “It was concise and easy for each person to understand, and for synthesizing to get the bigger picture of how the groups were functioning.”

Solution

- Use MBTI tool for team building with more than 90 employees at all levels
- Use MBTI Step II to improve group functioning with a more refined understanding of personality type

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Diane Larouche,
Change Manager,
Molson Coors Brewing Company

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Results

Larouche says the feedback she received from the team was excellent: “There were a lot of thinkers, people who objected when it was decision time,” she says. “This experience showed them the limitations of majority groupthink. They could see how they were not benefiting from others, how their patterns and misperceptions were causing them to ignore or judge some people without considering them. With awareness of self and awareness of others, the whole team will be more able to realize the benefit of diversity and become more efficient and effective.”

Results

- Recognized those with a Thinking preference in the group and those who objected when it was time to make a decision
- Brought to light limitations of majority groupthink
- Team realized benefit of diversity and became more efficient and effective



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