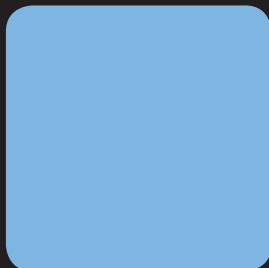


Sasfin Holdings Limited

Business Xperience



**LRMG • Performance Agency**

dream it ... believe it ... do it!

# Case Study:

## Sasfin Bank Group Business Xperience

LRMG, December 2012

*"I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it." - Pablo Picasso*

### The Stats

Sasfin Holdings Limited (Sasfin), in collaboration with LRMG Performance Agency, implemented a Mentorship Programme for high performance employees in 2009. At the end of 2011 LRMG, in consultation with Sasfin, proposed an enhanced Business Xperience solution. The purpose of the revised Xperience was to expose high-performing employees to the strategic business drivers, to create a culture of talent succession and to acquaint employees with the unique dynamics of several business units within the organisation. The revised solution implemented in 2012 comprised the following:

- The identification and pairing of Sasfin Bank talented employees and managers who could engage as mentees and mentors.
- Structured mentor/mentee meetings at the start of each of the three blocks.
- Facilitation of diary room sessions (individual coaching sessions).
- Facilitated workshops on key topics such as presentation skills, time mastery, self-management and emotional intelligence as well as the facilitation of three real-time business case presentations to the pre-selected panel of Sasfin HR, mentors, mentees, line managers of the mentees as well as the LRMG coach and LR Skills ETD team.

■ LRMG's Dream Team involved:

Elizabeth Louw: **Operations Manager**

Linda Koopman: **Design and Development Manager**

Tammy-Lee Campher: **ETD Practitioner (Design and Development)**

Kerisa Naicker: **ETD Practitioner (Implementation)**

■ Period of implementation: **2 February 2012 - 5 November 2012**

■ Region: **Gauteng**



# Client Introduction

Sasfin was founded on the classic dilemma of the entrepreneur – lack of adequate cash flow to fund the ongoing existence and growth of an intrinsically sound, but undercapitalised enterprise, and the frustrations of seeking a ready solution within the realms of conventional banking practice.

Sasfin was founded in Johannesburg in 1951 by Sydney Sassoon – father of the current CEO, Roland Sassoon – as the South African offshoot of a family textile business that dates back to the Ottoman Empire. After operating successfully for more than a decade, the business ground to a halt in the mid-1960s, in the wake of government-imposed textile import protection.

This prompted the Sassoon family to pursue the trade financing opportunities which they had identified and needed as importers. Debtor and equipment finance were later added to the offering of the (by then) fledgling financial services company which, at the start, was staffed and managed by four family members housed in a single office in Norwood, Johannesburg.

One of the biggest testimonials to Sasfin's status, positioning and success in the South African banking and financial services arena is its strategic partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) – a member of the World Bank.

# The Challenge

## Building sustainable leadership

Sasfin required the design of a programme that would support the business in creating an environment which encourages talented people across the various business units to be given the opportunity to further their personal development and to strategically grow the intellectual capital of the business. The long-term objectives include building sustainable leadership within Sasfin and creating a talent pipeline to support succession planning.



# LRMG's Xperience

It all begins with being different. Our 'performance' element comes from our management consulting and learning capability, which ensures that we empower organisations with the essential tools to reach their performance dreams. Our 'agency' aspect relates to the creativity, 'blow-up-the-box' thinking and unique flair we thread through everything we do. And quite simply – that's what we are. The Xperiences we offer are:

- Facilitator-led learning solutions:
  - SETA accredited or non-accredited.
  - Customised to suit unique requirements.
  - Contextualised to suit organisational context.
  
- Strategic consulting solutions:
  - Quality management system development.
  - Assessment moderation best practices.
  - Assistance in becoming SETA-accredited provider.
  - Onboarding of L&D professionals.
  - Facilitation of instructional design programme for ETD professionals



# Our Approach

Once the scope and intent of the Xperience were identified, LR Skills' solution crafter engaged with Sasfin's HR Manager to explore the immediate instructional design requirements. The challenge with workplace-based mentoring programmes often lies in the lack of structure and to this end, a detailed Xperience framework depicting the interaction between the various stakeholders in the learning process, was designed. Specific tools, templates and guides were identified and designed to facilitate the onboarding of Sasfin Bank mentors to their roles, to provide structure to the required research and to provide a platform for presentation of business cases while ensuring that mentees were fully aware of the criteria against which they would be assessed. Key to the solution design was LRMG's approach for monitoring mentor and mentee engagement, including mechanisms for group and individual reporting.

# Elements of the Business Xperience

The Business Xperience was structured around the following key elements:

- The identification and **pairing of suitable mentors** (subject matter experts in selected business areas) and mentees (**high-performance, talented employees** representing different business units) who would engage in a mentoring relationship over three blocks while the mentee researched three real-life business problems, agreed upfront by the Sasfin Group HR Manager, the mentors and the relevant business stakeholders.
- The **launch** of the Business Xperience as well as the stakeholder **orientation** session took place in February 2012. Mentees, mentors and line managers were given an overview of the Xperience and roles/responsibilities were clarified to ensure a deep understanding of the elements and unique requirements of the Xperience.
- **Mentee/Mentor meetings** were formalised one-on-one discussions scheduled between the mentee and mentor. These meetings provided mentees with opportunities to obtain feedback from the mentor regarding their progress in researching their business cases and areas of improvement. Mentees and mentors were required to attend these meetings at the start of each block and before the diary room sessions.
- Mentees participated in two individual 90-minute **diary room sessions** (individual coaching sessions) per block (three blocks in total). These sessions were facilitated by LRMG's business coach and focused on the mentees' business acumen, business case research and readiness for presentation to the panel, challenges they incurred in the workplace as well as specific areas for personal development. **Following each round of coaching/diary room sessions**, LRMG's coach compiled a RAG status report which classified individual mentee progress throughout the Xperience.





- Mentees were required to attend and participate in **four-, one- or two-day facilitated workshops** for the duration of the Xperience.
- At the end of each block, mentees **presented their business cases** to a **panel of Sasfin Bank Group business stakeholders**, LRMG and their fellow mentees. While mentees were scored in light of the predetermined criteria, the business case presentations also created the opportunity for talented mentees to showcase the extent to which they have deepened their knowledge of the business and allowed the Bank's HRD function to further identify the top talent from the group.
- LRMG's coach facilitated a **close-out session at** the end of the Xperience which was aimed at assisting mentors, mentees and line managers alike to reflect on and consolidate their entire learning Xperience. At the same time, LRMG's project team were able to produce a **comprehensive report** outlining the findings from the current Xperience and discuss with the Sasfin HRD team, recommendations for the future implementation of the Business Xperience.
- A **graduation ceremony** took place at the end of the Xperience upon mentees' successful completion of the programme. The top mentor and mentee of the year were announced at the ceremony.



# Successes

## Results:

### Reach –

- Six mentors.
- Four mentees.
- Four line managers.
- Networking with employees across various business units as required when investigating each business case.
- Additional learners who attended the various workshops with the mentees who were on the Xperience.

### Reaction and recommendation –

Mentees were required to complete detailed evaluation forms at the end of each workshop facilitated by LRMG. See overall average scores below:

- Management and administration of the Xperience by LRMG – 92.5%.
- The quality and usefulness of the learning material and Xperience templates provided – 87.5%.
- The business acumen, experience and expertise of the LRMG facilitator/business coach – 92.5%.
- The relevance of the knowledge gained and the application of skills in the workplace – 92.2%.

One-on-one interviews were also held with the learners to gain their holistic view of the entire Xperience. All the mentees were positive about the influence of the Xperience on their development and stated that they would recommend this Xperience to the rest of their colleagues.



### **Behaviour change/application –**

Individual interviews were held with the mentees and Sasfin Group HR Manager at the end of the Business Xperience and the following areas of improved performance were identified as a direct result of this intervention:

- Research capability.
- Networking skills.
- Improving cross-functional understanding.
- Verbal and written communication skills.
- Self-confidence.
- The ability to interpret and work with feedback and see it in a developmental and constructive way.

### **Business impact –**

- Seven of the eleven business cases were successfully implemented in the Sasfin Bank Group environment.

### **The successful business case titles are listed below:**

- Research CRM system for Sasfin Bank.
- Review the three different HR policies that currently exist in the three companies, namely Iquad, Premier Freight and Sasfin Group and make recommendations to successfully align these policies into one Group HR policy.
- Investigate and design an internal fraud awareness campaign for the purpose of educating all Sasfin staff on internal fraud-related issues and so eradicate all fraud incidents within the Group.
- Investigate the process of interest rate application to deposits, lease agreements and loans to identify how we can mitigate and manage interest rate fluctuations more effectively.
- Investigate the audit process and criteria in order to conduct a mock audit on all employee files. The purpose is to identify the current staff movement status according to terminations, appointments, transfers, promotions and demotions. Recommendations are to be based on the outcome of the mock audit to adequately prepare the HR department for its annual audit.
- Investigate alternatives to streamline all client and acquisition data in order to provide accurate management reports on a monthly basis.
- Investigate the alternatives open to Sunlyn Rentals to restore the previous service levels where we process and pay out supplier deals within a six-hour time frame.



## In Closing

The Business Xperience 2012 achieved specific goals set at the start of the programme and has had a **direct impact on the company**. This is evident since all the projects were actual business challenges, and a large amount of the projects have been used by the business to address specific challenges in the environment.

The indirect impact the programme has had on the business is that it **enhanced its standing as an employer of choice**, it is used as an attraction tool to potential employees; and has contributed to the commitment made in terms of the annual skills development plan. This Xperience has helped **raise the individual profile of the mentees** on the programme. By virtue of the interaction with business, more managers are willing to provide business challenges to be addressed by the mentees. Future actions resulting from the Business Xperience programme would be to look at a **more firm career development plan** for those mentees who have been identified as having **high potential** on the programme. This will tie in to the overall succession plan in a given division. This experience has impacted succession planning, leadership pipeline and exposure of young talent to various departments within the business. It has also facilitated **cross-pollination of ideas** and the building of relationships outside of a single division.