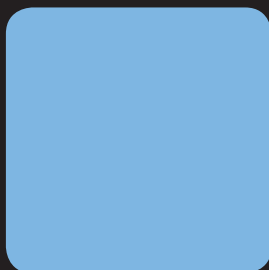
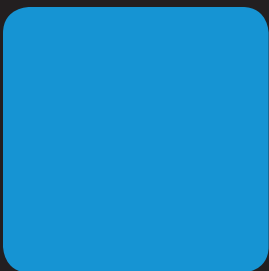


Technology Innovation Agency

Perfecting Performance Management



LRMG • Performance Agency

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

Case Study:

Technology Innovation Agency

Perfecting Performance Management

LRMG, September 2012

*"You can't manage what you don't measure."
- Peter Drucker*

The Stats

- Type of solution: **Facilitator-led customised learning programme – Perfecting Performance Management**
- LRMG Dream Team(s) involved: **LR Skills, LR Visuals**
- Period of implementation: **9 July to 7 August 2012**
- Reach: **176 people**



Client Introduction

The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) was established in terms of the TIA Act, 2008 (Act No. 26 of 2008), with the objective of “Stimulating and intensifying technological innovation in order to improve economic growth and the quality of life of all South Africans by developing and exploiting technological innovations.”

TIA is set up as a public entity with the aim to enhance the country’s capacity to translate a greater proportion of local research and development into commercial technology products and services. TIA is tasked with exploiting the existing body of knowledge at universities and public research institutions and channeling it effectively towards the development of technology-based industries.

The Challenge



Restructuring, reengineering and merging of two companies can be a stressful and challenging experience for any organisation. While the strategic objectives of the new organisation may be difficult to define, streamlining organisational culture, management and leadership philosophies, policies and procedures and people management systems may be even more complex. How much more challenging for TIA, which was born out of the merger of seven government entities?

One can imagine the dilemma faced when TIA raised the question of a suitable approach to performance management having just gone through the merger: Should they use an existing performance management system from one of the previous seven entities or should they design a new system in totality? Simply adopting an existing performance management system from one of the previous entities would carry too many risks and unintended connotations. Instead, a decision was taken to design a new performance management system. This system was approved and implemented for the first time in September 2011. According to Makgopelo Mkhwanazi, the process owner and GM: Human Resources, “the implementation can only be described as a mess.”

During the first mid-year review in September 2011, the Moderation Committee realised that TIA managers did not have sufficient skills to implement the performance management system effectively. By nature of the merger, senior scientists and engineers were placed in senior positions and immediately had to manage performance and other business initiatives, of which many of them had limited or no experience.



According to Makgopelo Mkhwanazi, “Our employees saw performance management as bonuses or incentives. This was very frustrating for us. We needed to change this mindset, which was entrenched not only at employee level, but also at manager level.” Employees were negative about the process and lacked the understanding of TIA’s strategic goals and their impact on Key Performance Areas (KPAs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

The Moderation Committee recommended to the Board that a customised intervention be designed and budget made available to address the challenges faced. The main objective with the intervention was to achieve broader, holistic thinking about performance management in order for TIA to adopt a common performance culture across the business. The secondary focus of the intervention was the development of sound, well-formulated KPAs and KPIs.





LRMG's Xperience

LR Skills, the LRMG business unit that crafted and implemented the solution for TIA, has extensive experience in crafting and facilitating customised solutions supplemented with current best practice content and blended with visual resources to create relevant and memorable learning Xperiences.

"We create learning Xperiences that impact on the performance of individuals and organisations," says Elizabeth Louw, LR Skills Operations Manager.



Our Approach

LR Skills crafted a solution that encompassed the design, development and implementation of two parallel performance management programmes – one directed at managers (the directors of the performance management process), and the other at employees (the recipients of the performance management process). These programmes were facilitated at TIA venues in Gauteng, Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal. In addition, LRMG facilitated a train-the-trainer programme to capacitate TIA HR business partners to ensure the sustainability of the programme in future.

LR Skills followed a process of content gathering, analysis, consultation and validation of content before commencing with the design of the programme guides. A key ingredient to such a customised solution is understanding the client environment and the target audience, as well as the challenges faced by employees and managers when implementing the performance management system. Actual TIA workplace scenarios were woven into the tapestry of the programme, thereby ensuring that the programme was real and relevant.

The solution encompassed:

- Pre-work, which incorporated reading and a self-assessment, which delegates were required to complete in preparation for the workshop.
- A two-day facilitated workshop, blended with selected meaningful DVDs and a Harvard Pocket Mentor on the foundation of benchmarked performance management and feedback practices, inclusive of useful tips, tools and templates.





- A detailed facilitator guide to ensure consistency in the content and concepts conveyed across a variety of facilitators.
- Customised performance management role plays, which delegates were required to participate in to master the process of facilitating performance appraisals.



Successes

Delegate evaluations revealed that the vast majority of employees really understood the purpose of performance management for the first time after participating in the programme. They found great value in reviewing the current performance management policy and made suggestions regarding enhancements to the policy.

Delegates felt more confident in their ability to develop and recognise suitable KPAs and KPIs by using the SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) principles as discussed in the workshops. They indicated that they have a clearer understanding of job profiles, what is expected of individuals during a performance appraisal and that they should actually prepare before participating in a performance appraisal. They also now understood the connection between performance management and strategic business objectives identified by TIA.

There was a realisation that the implementation of a successful performance management process requires a perception change from all employees at TIA. Furthermore, that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of this process by taking ownership of their roles and unique contributions to the process.

Some of the delegates' comments include:

- "This workshop really helped me as I am new at TIA. I now know how to prepare for my performance appraisal and I am actually looking forward to it. This process used to terrify me and I must say I am not anymore. In fact I am looking forward to it and approaching it in a positive manner."



- “This was a great and valuable experience. I can’t wait to put it all into use. I personally also appreciate the fact that the learning materials designed and layout was in line with our CI manual, well done. The facilitator shows so much passion in her work and that rubs off positively on the audience.”
- “The workshop was very informative and empowering. This session should be held once in a year before the beginning of the year to assist employees and managers to develop SMART targets that contribute to organisational objectives. Overall the workshop was GREAT!”
- “It enabled me to view performance management in a different light. I will now be more prepared for my next performance review. I will be applying the skills gained in this workshop in my life.”
- “The facilitator remembered each person’s name, and that made us comfortable and receptive towards her. It’s work well done.”
- “It was an engaging and informative experience. The participation level required was appreciated.”
- “I started with a negative outlook and now I realise that I also have a responsibility for my own career path within TIA and need to be prepared to stand for what I need to move forward and grow. Thank you.”
- “The facilitator was excellent! She was well prepared, understood the organisation and environment that we are operating in and allowed us to use challenges that we are currently facing as examples to explore further and analyse. She had abundant energy and we were never bored. I have learnt and have been equipped with essential tools that I can apply as a manager.”
- “The workshop was worthwhile. I have learnt a lot about performance management which I will apply in my daily dealings with employees. Furthermore, the workshop was valuable in unpacking the vision of TIA and how it relates to performance management.”



In Closing

Makgopelo Mkhwanazi commented on the success of the programme saying, “The learning programme was designed spot on as it addressed the knowledge gap identified during the first round of performance appraisals. There was no room for surprises with the design and implementation of this programme as LR Skills’ attention to detail and adherence to deadlines were excellent throughout project execution. You exceeded our expectations in terms of the way you engaged with us – your analysis and interpretation of our needs were remarkable. LRMG understood our brief very clearly. The level of detail you managed to capture in this programme was a wow factor! It was clear that you had a thorough understanding of our business, the target group, and what you needed to do for us.”

She commented further: “I was blown away by your facilitators – they were well prepared for the workshops, they knew our challenges and understood our environment. They are subject matter experts and fully prepared to face delegates’ concerns and comments with regard to performance management implementation at TIA.”

In terms of reporting, Makgopelo stated that “the reporting delivered was exceptional and the individual feedback on each delegate was very detailed and informative. We need to use the feedback received and create action plans which map the way forward – this will become the starting point for further learning initiatives such as coaching and mentoring.”

In closing, Makgopela indicated, “I have never worked with a provider who is so attentive and in the detail. This must be your competitive advantage.”