



A Focus on Competency Development and Training Doubles the Success Rate of New Initiatives

Industry: Consumer Products Manufacturing

Services Provided: Project Management Training, Competency Development, Business Impact Measurement

Company: This consumer products manufacturer has operations in dozens of countries worldwide, and its well-known brands are purchased by billions of consumers.

Challenge: Program managers in the company's innovation function own the commercial, marketing, and technical aspects of initiatives. As former engineering and manufacturing project managers, they had strong technology skills but not business skills. As innovation program managers they were now expected to be able to communicate issues and status directly with business unit general managers. With this increased visibility came the added need for stronger leadership and communication skills. In addition, the innovation function needed to standardize processes in order to be more successful in launching initiatives and improving the percentage of projects and programs meeting milestone targets.

Solution: Leaders within the innovation function realized they could get the new training initiative up to speed faster by bringing in an outside project management partner. PM College was called upon to ramp up this training initiative quickly and to incorporate the firm's internal materials, creating a program tailored to the company. The training program consisted of two main courses:

- :: Initiative Leadership Essentials was targeted toward newly promoted or emerging program managers. ILE was intended to increase their knowledge and skills in the key techniques that will enable them to be effective in leading initiatives in support of innovation.
- :: Program Management Essentials builds on and complements the leadership skills of ILE by giving program managers the tools and techniques to plan, execute, and manage initiatives.

Other courses offered included Project Risk Management, Recovering Troubled Projects, Leadership and Communication in the Project Environment, and Demonstrating Courageous Leadership.

In the last few years, PM College has also began working with the innovation group to help them focus their measurement efforts to understand how training/improved capability impacts project outcomes.



VALUE DELIVERED

A customized training program improved milestone achievement tenfold in just 30 months. A value of training measurement program showed that raising the competency level of a program manager made it twice as likely that an initiative will meet all targets.

results

Over the last five years, nearly 1500 participants have taken one or more of the 150+ course offerings at nine different sites around the world. Most significant is that since that time, the percentage of milestones achieved on schedule has improved steadily. To date, the rate of milestone achievement is ten times higher than it was five years ago.

The new measurement focus has shown that when the highest-priority initiatives in the portfolio are led by advanced program managers, those initiatives are twice as likely to meet business targets once they're launched. This data makes a powerful argument for continuing to raise the competency level of program managers who lead high visibility, multi-billion dollar initiatives for the company.