



HIGH PERFORMANCE CASE STUDY

MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE

ABOUT THE CLIENT

Microsoft has a management workforce of over 16,000 people with the great majority having been promoted from within. For approximately half of this population, management is an additional responsibility along with their technical duties. They manage former peers (architects, coders, testers, salespeople) while continuing to contribute toward the organization's technical work. The result of this has led to high management turnover, with many managers choosing to return to technical roles, due to the lack of clarity around the management component of their work.

CHALLENGE

Microsoft did not have clarity or alignment on the definition of high performance in management roles and they lacked transparent and scalable approaches to attract, grow and retain high performers across the enterprise. Management selection was based on technical success more than managerial competence and the variance across manager performance was excessive, resulting in a negative impact on organizational performance.

APPROACH

We conducted a study of the global management workforce across all functional areas, revealing key barriers to performance which adversely impacted their ability to consistently meet and exceed company expectations. We created a Management Excellence Profile which identified critical accomplishments produced by top performers, along with excellence indicators and tasks that could be leveraged across all managers. The outcome of the study enabled us to identify and address barriers to high performance which included misalignment between goals, compensation, and expectations; difficulty in training people in a timely fashion; too many custom processes; lack of standardization; and the inability to balance the management and technical components of the work.

SOLUTIONS

Based on the study, we designed and implemented a comprehensive approach to optimize effectiveness of the management workforce with multiple change levers being simultaneously pulled. The solution included:

- Redesign of management roles to provide greater clarity and to align with business goals and strategies.
- Refine recruiting, hiring, and onboarding practices to help attract, hire, and retain top performers.
- Build training and performance support to help managers produce greater results through high performing teams.
- Create tools to support higher levels of performance and achievement of the company's goals and strategies.
- Clarify organizational structure and compensation programs that align with the new company strategy.

IMPACT

- Overall time-to-competence was shortened by implementing new tools that encourage higher levels of performance and understanding for newly assigned managers.
- Manager turnover was reduced by 20% following the management redesign and refocus of business goals and strategies.
- Managers' overall confidence increased as they obtained clarity on how to successfully carry out their role.

READY TO ACHIEVE HIGH PERFORMANCE?

Work one-on-one with a SHIFT expert to discover strategies, techniques, and tools to drive high performance in your organization.

Schedule a 30-minute call with a SHIFT Consultant.

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