

Abeo Develops Training for both Leaders and New Employees at Lube-Tech



Lube-Tech is a company that formulates, blends, packages, ships, and distributes lubricant for engines, machinery, and equipment all around the world. With just under 800 employees throughout the country, their headquarters are in Golden Valley, MN.

CHALLENGE: LACK OF FORMAL TRAINING & ONBOARDING

What does a company do when it lacks both leadership development and a formal onboarding program for new employees?

The senior leadership team recognized Lube-Tech's need to create good training for frontline leadership, which are managers and team leads. Access to a development program was necessary for the 100 frontline leaders.

It was also becoming clear that Lube-Tech needed a formal onboarding program for new employees in operations roles. This included production operators, the warehouse teams, and shipping and receiving. Previously, training was left up to each area, resulting in inconsistency across the board and high turnover within the first six months of employment. Operation employees were leaving quickly because there wasn't a cohesive training program to help new hires feel like they could be successful at their jobs.

"We had frontline leaders who weren't receiving any development. We needed to invest in them and develop them into good leaders. But we didn't have anyone internally with the time or capacity to put leadership training together."

SOLUTION: HIRE A CONSULTING FIRM THAT 'GETS IT'



Suzanne's such a great partner. I appreciate that she's willing to talk through my HR challenges and isn't afraid to ask tough questions to keep me accountable. She holds herself and her team accountable too. She helps me think more creatively and bigger.

Suzette Taylor
VP, People & Culture, Lube-Tech

Suzette Taylor, VP of People & Culture for Lube-Tech, went to her network to find Suzanne Murphy the owner of Abeo Consulting. Suzette says, "So often when I'm trying to engage a consultant, whether it's an individual or large consultancies, they don't really get it. But they sound like they get it. So, they promise the world and end up doing mediocre work. But Suzanne was different. I could tell she immediately understood and knew exactly what I was talking about. Then she created the exact content and deliverables I would've produced if I had the time."

The first program Abeo developed was a leadership training called LEAD: Leadership, Exploration, And Development. The program teaches Lube-Tech's frontline leaders about the company's values, their servant leadership mindset, and how to treat people under their supervision.

Similarly, the company had never created formal onboarding for new operations employees. Once again, Lube-Tech sought the expert service of Abeo. Suzette says, "We needed concrete training to build a roadmap for new employee success." Suzanne and her team assessed the needs, designed the process, and gathered all documentation, such as safety, quality, and process documents, and mapped out the right sequence for training topics, how in-depth the training should be, and how much time should be spent on each topic.

RESULTS

Abeo, using a learning cohort model, facilitated the pilot for LEAD. Suzette says, "The cohort learning experience was extremely well received. Our frontline leaders were so grateful for the development. The content and design of the courses were well done—they covered the right topics and addressed them correctly." With the onboarding program, improvements came across the board. An increase in new employee retention, a decline in safety incidents, and improved quality all stemmed from the new program.

Suzette adds, "These two programs have been successful because of Abeo's great work. Suzanne is not only professional and knowledgeable, she's an outstanding communicator. She stuck to our schedule and bent over backward when she ran into any roadblocks, to ensure she stayed on track."



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Millerbernd Manufacturing Collaborates with Abeo for Training, Mentorship, and Guidance



Millerbernd Manufacturing, a renowned 90-year-old company based in Winsted, MN, stands as a testament to innovation and longevity in the manufacturing industry. They manufacture traffic signal poles, light poles, and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) parts for clients like Caterpillar, John Deere, and GE. Guided by President Eric Stack, the company prides itself on its strong team, robust processes, and a commitment to fostering a safe and secure work environment for its 500 employees. Yet, it's Senior Leadership Team was coming together as a new team and the Human Resources function was in its infancy stage.

CHALLENGE: GROWTH OF NEW LEADERS

Eric met Suzanne Murphy, owner of Abeo when they were both members of Millerbernd's advisory board. Owner Trevor Millerbernd implemented the non-fiduciary board. Eric says, "At the time, the company was having some financial and operational difficulty and Trevor needed a fresh outlook on the company." The advisory board helped guide Millerbernd's newly forming leadership team to reach their targets through expert advice and mentorship.

Eventually, the company hired Eric as the president of Millerbernd, and Suzanne took on the role of the board's facilitator. When Eric wanted to help his Senior Leadership Team (SLT) grow and develop, he knew Abeo was the answer. Millerbernd needed an expert consultant to navigate the complexities of leading at that level, address internal challenges, and foster team unity.

SOLUTION: TEAM DEVELOPMENT

While the Advisory Board continues to serve as a set of industry-specific mentors for Millerbernd's SLT, Suzanne has played a pivotal role outside of her board facilitation role as well. She has conducted customized and comprehensive training sessions, leaning on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), aimed at enhancing the leadership team's cohesion and understanding of each other.

These sessions proved transformative for the SLT, deepening the connection among the team. This heightened cohesion, Eric believes, directly translated into enhanced company performance.

RESULTS: A STRONGER TEAM

For the past five years, Abeo has played a pivotal role in Millerbernd's journey to success. The company's performance demonstrates that a unified leadership team, thanks to the work of Abeo, positively correlates with overall company success.



Suzanne is very experienced. She has a wealth of knowledge in HR and she isn't bashful about challenging a position I have, and I need that at times. In my role as president, most people are afraid to challenge my viewpoints. She's very good at what she does.



Eric Stack
President, Millerbernd Manufacturing



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How Abeo Transformed AEP with a Global Performance Management System



A growing business is a good thing, but growth always presents some challenges. Arrowhead Engineered Products (AEP), based in Blaine, MN, is a supplier of non-discretionary parts for powersports, automotive and heavy-duty trucks, and outdoor power equipment. As the company expanded, Chief Human Resources Officer, Regina Kroeck, had some obstacles to overcome.

CHALLENGE: CREATING A COHESIVE COMPANY

In a few short years, Arrowhead grew from \$400 million in revenue and 600 employees globally to \$1.5 billion in revenue and 3,300 employees. All of that growth happened both organically and through acquisitions of other companies. Arrowhead's top leadership recognized the need to unify the company and establish shared values and performance standards. They tasked Regina with finding a way to clearly define the company culture and values, as well as a way to measure employee performance.

SOLUTION: A FRACTIONAL TALENT MANAGEMENT LEADER

Through a previous work relationship, Regina was aware of Abeo Consulting founder Suzanne Murphy's skills and capabilities when she needed an expert in creating a global performance management system. By hiring Abeo, an incomplete talent lifecycle was repaired with the creation of a global performance management system. Suzanne guided Regina through the creation of a system that included setting goals and objectives, mid-year reviews, year-end reviews, coaching conversations, talent planning, and guided succession planning.

Suzanne also helped Arrowhead create a Leader Success Profile for the leadership team. Abeo and Arrowhead worked together to define a good leader, created a leader assessment, and established what outstanding performance at Arrowhead should look like. Suzanne not only helped build this much-needed framework, but she also created all the training to support the system. This culminated in training sessions and assessments for VPs and above. Suzanne's efforts resulted in the global leadership organization reaching a higher level of excellence.



As AEP grew, the CEO, the executive committee, and the board wanted HR to define a common performance management language and common structure. That's when I knew I needed Abeo Consulting to help me create it.

Suzanne's capability, personality, creativity, and skill set is a beneficial asset to any organization needing culture, leadership, or training defined.

Regina Kroeck
Chief Human Resources Officer, AEP

RESULTS: STRONGER LEADERSHIP

Suzanne's efforts resulted in the global leadership organization reaching a higher level of excellence. After the executive committee conducted the first talent review, the understanding of what good leadership is and how to tap into recognizing potential, performance and promotions were more accurate and effective.

"Suzanne quickly understood our company language. She's a great business partner to get into a company and understand what makes it tick. She developed such solid relationships with our executive committee that they were tapping her on the shoulder to coach some of their high-potential employees," Regina shared. The new system impacted all areas of employee performance.



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Abeo Builds Critical Development Experience for First-Time Leaders

Ryan Companies is a national leader in commercial real estate, offering a full suite of services including development, architecture and engineering, construction, and property management. Known for creating places for people to thrive, Ryan's success stems from a deeply rooted commitment to their people-first culture.



CHALLENGE: A GAP IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

With rapid growth in the past five to seven years, it was apparent that Ryan Companies had an increasing need for consistent, high-quality leadership training. New managers needed guidance on best practices, especially in people leadership. Existing programs lacked depth and cohesion. Ryan didn't yet have a scalable or strategic system to meet the growing needs of developing new leaders.

The company recognized that to continue delivering top-tier projects and keep top-tier talent, they needed to invest in a more intentional approach to the internal development of managers. When they tasked Erin O'Hara Meyer, Vice President of Learning & Development, with creating the necessary development opportunities to accomplish this, she didn't have the resources to build the program from scratch and knew she would need to hire someone external to help.

"We didn't have the resources to build the program from scratch. We needed to hire an external consultant to help. I thought of Suzanne because she has the experience and knowledge to know which direction we needed to take to build out this much-needed manager training."

SOLUTION: CREATE A CUSTOM LEADER TRAINING PROGRAM

To meet their need, Ryan Companies brought in Abeo Consulting's founder, Suzanne Murphy, as Erin knew she excels at building strong, people-centered training programs. Suzanne partnered closely with Erin and her team to design a custom training program tailored to Ryan's culture and needs. She built an interactive five-module, 2 ½ day in-person training program, focused on core topics like coaching, delegation, and performance management. The course also includes three 90-minute virtual cohorts to take place over the following three months after the initial in-person training, all created by Suzanne. The final result included all the necessary training materials and guides for the L&D Team to deliver it themselves. Together, they facilitated a pilot training to ensure the program was just right.

From the start, Suzanne approached the work with curiosity and collaboration, learning about Ryan's values, goals, and internal dynamics. She began the entire process of developing the training through focus groups. She listened to what people wanted, what they needed, and where they thought the missing pieces in information and training were.



What I appreciate about Suzanne is her honesty. She can always put things in perspective. I also value her L&D background and her experience previously working at a manufacturing company. There are similarities to the construction industry that I knew would give her an understanding we wouldn't find with other consultants. She has been incredibly helpful through the whole process of developing this program.

Erin O'Hara Meyer
VP, Learning & Development, Ryan Companies

RESULTS: 'OFF THE CHARTS' POSITIVE FEEDBACK

The response to *Manager Essentials* has been overwhelmingly positive. Leaders appreciate the relevance and clarity of the content, the practical tools they can immediately apply, and the interactive facilitation style Suzanne created.

With this successful launch Erin and her team asked Suzanne to tackle the next challenge – a development experience for their talent pool of emerging leaders.



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