

Case study

Driving up the Bottom Line

SIEMENS

Karen Meaden, Organisational Development Manager, recalls how the An Even Better Place to Work programme was used to drive up the bottom line.

The Situation

The decision to introduce and cascade the An Even Better Place to Work solution at Siemens, was as Karen Meaden recalls driven by “the need to increase our profit by 10% over 2 years. *“It was a simple business imperative. We saw that in order to do this we needed to improve the way people were managed and interacted with other departments - this would improve our efficiencies and in turn contribute to improved profit.”*”

Results

Karen says, “As a result of the on-going programme, Siemens now has an organisational culture that is open and questioning. Feedback occurs more than it did and managers generally have a better understanding of those who work for them.”

Mechanism

The programme was initially run with a small team of Directors who enjoyed the process and results so much that they recommended it be rolled out across the company. The approach was then quite different from other “initiatives”.

“Rather than launching An Even Better Place to Work”, remembers Karen, “We decided to just introduce it team by team. Quite quickly teams who weren’t yet involved were asking when they could take part – this was unprecedented.” The approach worked well, with no over the top launch there was nothing to be undermined. Karen’s role was key to the programme’s success. She acted as the programme owner and ensured that it all kept rolling on time. “There are 3 main areas to the owner’s role”

she explains, “Managing the process, enabling a change of mindset and being the team leaders ally. I facilitated sessions, took notes, recorded outcomes of workshops and arranged follow-ups, generally making certain that people were doing what they said they would.” explains Karen.

“For some team leaders this is their first trip into the waters of openness and it’s important that they feel this is a positive experience for them. I coached a number of individuals and small groups as a result of the outcomes from sessions.”

The Results

Encouraged by increases in productivity and improvements in morale, Siemens also made a number of structural changes in response to the programme. She observes *“We have changed roles so that people are being asked to do what is more in line with who they are, or their motivational types. Siemens discovered a number of people in roles which were quite opposed to their natural styles - some have been moved into different roles and some have left. By running the sessions we were able to demonstrate quite clearly the kind of organisation and behaviours that we expected in the organisation.”* Collaborative working has been given a boost through using the programme’s feedback and the open communication approaches. She comments, “Better understanding of each other’s needs and drivers, coupled with feedback techniques and identification of needs, have enable us to resolve issues quickly and in a less confrontational way. Openness, trust and increased feelings of self-worth have led to less conflict, and more shared problem solving.”

Review

“Siemens continuously reviews and monitors the effectiveness and impact of the programme, which the company has running for over 4 years. It has delivered time savings, operational efficiencies, reduction in absenteeism, and contractual improvements.”

With such tangible results, it is little wonder than Karen Meaden urges any organisation considering An Even Better Place to Work solution, *“Just do it!”*