

100 first-time Team Leaders. One day of SLII®. 50 Senior Leaders nominated next. Client Story

Turning Technical Experts into People Leaders Across 100 Team Leaders

There was one company that was one of the leaders among manufacturing firms. It was expanding quite rapidly, and so was its staff. Like all firms that were expanding quickly, they promoted their top technical and functional performers to the position of Team Leaders. They knew everything about this job. However, they had never received any formal training on how to manage these people.

The disparity manifested itself in mundane circumstances. Discussions remained confined to updates on tasks, feedback being either evaded or given in such a manner that it did not resonate with the receiver. During this process, every decision was taken on an individual basis, depending upon which team leader was in charge of the team. And without a uniform approach toward managing people, engagement levels varied across teams.

This was clearly an issue for the organization, but it wasn't an issue of poor individual performance; rather, it was a skills gap that the organization created for itself due to its success. The company required a well-structured leadership intervention that would give each and every Team Leader a solid grounding in people management skills.

Building People-Management Capability, Consistently

The organization partnered with Blanchard India to deliver SLII®, Blanchard's flagship situational leadership program, as a one-day, face-to-face learning experience for 100 Team Leaders. The format itself was a conscious decision. With participants having to deal with day-to-day operations, the need for face-to-face contact allowed a break from production and time to have meaningful conversations with other leaders and walk away with an approach that would be helpful the very next shift. Since all the participants were exposed to the same approach, the organization had received something it had not had before - a common language of dealing with development issues of their teams.

What Made the Intervention Work

The suggestions made by the client led to four key learnings. The Facilitator had excellent knowledge and a compelling way of communicating that ensured even a technical audience stayed interested all through the day. The presentation was smooth and seamless without any hitches whatsoever. Also, the material covered was directly relevant to the situation faced by Team Leaders with their teams on a weekly basis.

Looking at the Impact

Following the program, the organization observed:

- **Stronger accountability and ownership,** with Team Leaders taking greater responsibility for team performance, decision-making, and the development of their people
- **Improved team effectiveness**, as leaders became better equipped to encourage collaboration, communicate clearly, and build high-performing teams
- **Higher employee engagement,** driven by more meaningful one-on-one conversations, constructive feedback, and a working environment built on trust and growth
- **Gains in productivity**, with leaders aligning team efforts to organizational objectives and driving more consistent performance in support of sustainable business growth

From First Cohort to Long-Term Partnership

The impact of the program was evident right after its conclusion. Based on their experience with 100 Team Leaders, they selected about 50 Senior Leaders to be enrolled in upcoming leadership development programs with Blanchard India.

A simple idea for new leaders has now developed into something much larger – a strategic relationship that will go on to help the organization's leadership development process at all levels, from bottom to top.

SLII®: What It Brought to This Manufacturing Organization

SLII® teaches leaders to diagnose where each team member is on a specific task and to give them the right amount of direction and support to succeed. For first-time Team Leaders moving from doing the work to leading others, that shift is the whole job. The one-day, face-to-face format gave 100 leaders a shared model and a common language for development conversations, so the way people are led no longer depends on which Team Leader they happen to report to.

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Every Promotion Without Leadership Training Is a Team Left to Figure It Out Alone.

100 Team Leaders. One day. A client confident enough to send 50 Senior Leaders next.
Your best technical people deserve more than trial and error. Give them the framework before the gaps show up in your engagement scores.

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