



Design and delivery of a support program for high potentials

UNTERNEHMEN

The SWK group currently consists of ten operating utilities and local transport companies. With its subsidiaries, SWK STADTWERKE KREFELD AG is the most important infrastructure provider for the city of Krefeld and its surroundings.

PROJECT TARGETS

The project was commissioned by the SWK human resources division.

These are the project goals:

- Design a support program for high potentials in the company that is accepted by managers and participants.
- Ensure that the program allows participants to grow at an appropriate pace and challenges them at the same time.
- Deliver a program that is tailored to the participants' individual needs.
- Make sure that participants transfer their newly acquired knowledge and skills into the day-to-day business.
- Motivate participants and strengthen their loyalty to the company.

FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

- Participants come from diverse backgrounds as the support program is open to any employee or manager who has been identified as a high performer by their supervisor. It was deliberately decided that no predefined selection criteria would be applied.
- The program is to be established as an ongoing HR development tool.
- The program is aimed at accurately assessing the participants' individual development needs without using any of the tools that are typically applied in HR selection procedures.
- The program provides participants with an opportunity to build cross-divisional networks.
- Supervisors are to be involved in their direct reports' development.

SOLUTION

The program starts with a two-day orientation workshop aimed at identifying the participants' personal development fields. Central feedback elements are provided by other participants (peer feedback). The group of observers only consists of one representative from HR and two external consultants.

- The seminar modules – as a central element of the program – are designed on the basis of the common development needs in the respective group. The seminar content is adjusted individually every year.
- The individual development needs are discussed and defined using the participants' development plans which were drafted in cooperation with the participant and his supervisor following the orientation days. A special focus is placed on on-the-job activities during the program.
- The seminar modules are complemented with group coaching sessions. With the help of an external facilitator, participants work on specific cases and issues from their day-to-day business.
- The program wants to encourage participants to think and act like entrepreneurs. This is achieved through accompanying measures such as strategic discussions with the Executive Board or visits to other company divisions that the participants organize themselves.
- The program also includes different personality tests and advisory talks with peers. This encourages participants to reflect upon their personal development and to take ownership for it.
- Profil M accompanies the quality assurance measures and follow-up process, including the final review of the development progress with the supervisors, the participants, the HR division and the external project partner. This review is also used to define the follow-up measures.
- Profil M helps to establish networks and continuous learning processes by organizing refresher days for all former program participants.

RESULTS

- Although the program is not primarily aimed at preparing participants for a career in management, many key positions were filled with high potentials who participated in the program.
- Moreover, several program participants are supporting the company's HR development activities by supporting work shadowing initiatives or acting as sponsors in promotion programs for young talents.



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