



Case Study - Team Development

A few years ago when many manufacturing organizations were feeling the need to pull back and move cautiously world class office furniture maker Herman Miller, located in Southwest Michigan, was looking ahead at the development of a key resource vital to the company's future success. "Development Days" was a development program designed for recognized high potential leaders in the company.

The intent was to use a real executive project experience to develop high potential leaders. It was essential that projects were similar to those faced by company executives so they needed to be real, broad and nebulous and of significance to the future of the business. In order to provide real value, added insight or solutions the participants would need to tap into the thinking of experts across the company and many times outside of the company. Additionally the project would have to be balanced with participants' ongoing workload. Insuring the challenge of managing real life complexity each project team would consist of five high potentials from differing functions across the company and across time zones which required much of the work to be accomplished virtually. Each team was given their assignment and an aggressive timeline to present their findings to Herman Miller's CEO and Executive Leadership Team.

The Challenges:

- provide a targeted leadership development opportunity that will help participants focus on key attributes of a high performance team and focus on the influence that leaders have in the creation and maintenance of such an environment
- provide a project team launch that helps participants to consciously develop a culture that remains focused on both the delivery of their work and their shared goal of leadership development
- provide a powerful opportunity for high potentials to develop healthy long lasting peer relationships

The Solution:

Crux Move was engaged to provide a pilot process that included:

- an intensive three day kick off for the project teams focusing on compressing and accelerating the team development process
- a facilitated "mid-point check in" meeting to help teams explore and evaluate their current level of functioning, their relationships and the outcomes they were generating. This meeting allowed for identifying key learnings and making last minute adjustments and re-alignments.
- a post project meeting to enhance development and ensure that key development feedback is captured. Each team member completes an in-depth 360 emotional intelligence self-assessment and provides feedback for each of their project teammates. The final team meeting provides opportunity to debrief the results of the 360's and the developmental feedback and discuss the application to their current position.

The Results: Projects delivered have been top notch, deep long lasting relationships were established and participants rated the program as extremely valuable. The pilot was deemed successful and the program has been continued for three years to date.

Here's what one participant said: What was most valuable were the insights on how to deal effectively with other group members and leaders, the power of language when used with "front loading" and the importance of understanding the different personalities in a group before taking on a major project. I am going to recommend that all new product development core teams take advantage of this training prior to any major product launch.

Our Clients Say

I have become convinced that Crux Move's team development process truly makes a difference to the ultimate success of our projects. Quite simply, it allows us to get to a better place in a much shorter time. I don't think we would have been as likely to tap into all the gifts and strengths that each member brings, nor to engage in the much-needed healthy conflict, without having made this investment. Crux Move does a wonderful job of creating the proper environment for the team and trust building process to occur.

Tom Smith, Ph.D.
(Fmr.) Project Manager,
Herman Miller Inc.
Zeeland, Michigan



HermanMiller