

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

Coaching at Barclays



BACKGROUND

At Barclays, the banking finance function is spread across multiple businesses, often with distinct cultures. Barclays believes that when a finance person joins, they are joining Barclays first, then the finance function and then the specific business (eg Barclaycard). Of course, Barclays supports its people wherever they join across the group, but there are different development programmes for each business.

Because of the complex structure of the organisation, it was agreed that Barclays' finance professionals would benefit from enhanced business partnering skills. The Barclays Finance Academy, the single focus for finance learning at Barclays, would be the key means of delivering the skills and achieving the overall aim. To support the existing programmes, a new component of the academy would be developed – a coaching programme.

DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING THE PROGRAMME

The Academy itself provides a range of programmes for different levels of competency and includes a foundation programme, a technical programme, a professionalism programme, and a programme on business knowledge relating to the commercial world in which Barclays operates, and the business itself.

'By using coaching alongside the Academy, we felt we could better embed the learning', says Jill Robinson, head of finance business management, Barclays.

The Academy offers finance professionals the opportunity to attend development centres and work with real-life scenarios. The coaching programme allowed participants to be aligned with suitable coaches who worked with them to extend and embed the learning.

IMPLEMENTING AND OPERATING THE PROGRAMME

The first programme ran over two and a half days and received good initial feedback. Participants soon 'went quiet', however, and evidence emerged during the programme review that the anticipated changes in behaviour had been short-lived, as individuals returned to their previous way of working.

The programme was then revised to incorporate two extra coaching sessions for each participant, at three and six months after the initial intervention. Progress on behavioural change was tracked by reference to the

performance management system, which clearly demonstrated that the learning was much more deeply embedded and participants had resisted returning to their old ways.

CELEBRATING SUCCESS AND PLANNING THE FUTURE

Barclays is confident that the enhanced business partnering skills of its finance people provide a very tangible benefit to the business. The scheme has proven to be very popular and participants can now expect to be placed on a waiting list.

Jill Robinson says:

'We were already very pleased with the performance of the Finance Academy but with some minor improvements, namely offering additional coaching sessions to embed the learning, we've seen a significant increase in ROI.'

ABOUT BARCLAYS

Barclays is a UK-based financial services group with a large international presence in Europe, the US, Africa and Asia. It is engaged primarily in banking, investment banking and investment management. In terms of market capitalisation, Barclays is one of the largest financial services companies in the world. It has been operating for more than 300 years, and has 25 million customers and 122,600 employees in over 60 countries.

Find out more at
<http://www.newsroom.barclays.co.uk>

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CASE STUDY