Case Study: Mobile Telecom Company
The Extraordinary Leader™

Multinational mobile telecommunications company focuses on strengths to develop leaders

THE CHALLENGE

While transitioning from the government sector to the public sector, the organization was also facilitating the acquisition of a competitor with nearly double the workforce. Such dramatic changes would require a strong leadership base to ensure organizational stability. The Group Chief Human Resources Officer was tasked with implementing a leadership engine to identify employees with high leadership potential to prepare them for leadership roles.

Being multinational presented some challenges. Business was conducted in three languages across 24 countries. Another obstacle was immediate leadership being undermined as they were circumvented by requests sent directly to top leadership. These challenges made it difficult to identify and retain the most promising leaders, so HR needed a way to identify promotable leaders to be groomed for future roles within the company.

THE SOLUTION

In order to be assessed, there was a nomination process. Managers could nominate their direct reports, or prospective leaders could nominate themselves. The survey was offered in the two most-common languages, and preliminary meetings were held in three countries to educate employees on the details of the program. A list of 1100 leaders was created, nearly all of which ultimately participated.

The Extraordinary Leader 360-degree Assessment was implemented, along with an internal tool. Then coaching was used as the primary debriefing process (up to six sessions), so a custom coaching guide was created. Participants were encouraged to share their results with a supervisor.

THE RESULTS

The program was a big success, with the company able to identify numerous notable leaders. Of these, many were identified by coaches and direct supervisors who pointed out that without *The Extraordinary Leader* they would not otherwise have recognized those leaders.

The HR team selected the most promising to receive specialized training—investing to send about 75 leaders to highly-respected schools (Harvard and London Business School) for advanced training. The program tremendously impacted retention, with a significant reduction in employee turnover. Employees became significantly more engaged than direct competitors' workforce, as validated through retesting and use of the employee engagement index in the survey report.

About the Organization

- This company pioneered mobile telecommunications in the Middle East in the early 1980's. Today the company's footprint covers eight countries in the Middle East and North Africa.
- The organization employs more than 6500 people, providing mobile telephone services to more than 45 million customers.

What the Organization is saying about Zenger Folkman

- "The project had a tremendous impact on our retention and on employee engagement. When we measured engagement against global norms, our employees were far more engaged than the best companies included in the norm. We showed an impressive increase in engagement scores across the organization."

- "*The Extraordinary Leader* process and the resulting action plans got our leaders engaged—and those leaders still report the process as the highlight of their careers."

- "The beauty of the program lies in its simplicity and layout around the 7 insights. Each of them is an 'aha' for the participating leaders."

Zenger Folkman helps organizations flourish by increasing the effectiveness of leaders at all levels. Our unique, strengths-based development methodology enables leaders to move faster and higher. Each offering is solidly grounded in research, utilizing our extensive empirical database. The end results are statistically significant improvements in how leaders lead, how their employees engage, and how their companies profit; allowing both leaders and organizations to soar to new heights.