

Cummins Diesel Engines

Middle Manager Programme

**Incorporating the Institute of Leadership and Management
Level 5 Award in Leadership**

Programme aims

As an American owned large manufacturing company, Cummins Diesel Engines play on a world stage. The plant based in Darlington, in north east England, has to compete internally for capital investment, projects and customer orders against other Cummins manufacturing and testing facilities across the world.

The requirement for this programme was to develop the leadership capacity of the middle manager group, to ensure the Darlington plant could capitalise on the opportunities available to it. Increased leadership skills and disciplines were seen as the key to unlocking the full potential of this facility.

This intervention would also need to close the gap between the executive team (senior managers) and the middle managers, to ensure that the executive team had the capacity to focus on strategic initiatives through forging closer links with the American-based head office where high level decision making on capital investment and work placement is made.

What we did

Our start point was to work with the Executive responsible for the site to understand clearly his requirements and expectations. Our research then expanded through spending time around the facility with a number of the target group (middle management) in their workplace, shadowing them in their day-to-day activities and getting some thoughts from them as to what the leadership development needs might be for them and their peer group.

This research and exposure to the needs of the business provided a basic understanding of what the development intervention would need to deliver. To validate this research and add breadth and depth to it, we invited all the middle manager group to a half-day workshop to present the expectations of the programme and then facilitated a process to encourage all of the group to contribute to the design and shape of the programme content and outcomes, and so ensuring they had ownership for the programme at the delivery stage.

The outcome of these processes enabled us to propose a programme design to the organisation that we presented back to the executive team for final approval. This identified the following steps in the programme:

- DiSC profiling for all individuals
- Guided discussion with each participant and their line manager utilising the DiSC profile reports, to agree their individual focus for the programme
- Three 2-day modules spread over 4 months (see below)
- The establishment of cross-functional peer coaching groups
- Post-programme measurement processes – including presentations and assignments for participants to complete

The three modules were designed to meet the identified needs of the participants, and each had unique design challenges.

Module 1 focused on team development and the leadership role. This residential programme included illustrating the entire team's DiSC profile outcomes to illuminate the behavioural tendencies of the individuals. This was explored further using carefully designed and facilitated outdoor activities to provide real-time experience of the team's behaviours and dynamics.

Module 2 majored on effective communication skills, and relationship building. To enable powerful exploration of these skill areas forum theatre techniques were utilised, with scripted scenes, real-play scenarios and talking heads. This proved a very successful medium to deliver the theory and concepts being explored and subsequent practice for the participants in a safe and inclusive environment without the need for participants to adopt role-play requirements.

Module 3 was designed to pull everything together and focused on leadership disciplines – including performance management and coaching. Forum theatre techniques were used again with great effect, to provide real insight for the participants and opportunities for real practice of the techniques being offered.

Initial feedback from the programme indicated great success at delivering the programme objectives and behavioural change across the middle manager group. With these outcomes readily evident to the executive team, developing their own ability to support the continued

development of their middle managers became a priority. To facilitate this, a two-day coaching skills programme was designed and delivered specifically for this group.

Accredited qualification

The programme was mapped to an Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) qualification, the Level 5 Award in Leadership. All managers participating on the programme were invited to complete the required assessments to gain this ILM qualification.

Delegate feedback

- “Thought provoking and inspirational.”
- “Very useful course giving real insight and self-discovery on how to deal with issues.”
- “Formation of the coaching groups is clearly good and everyone is energised and enthused by this.”
- “All subjects were both interesting and relevant.”
- “Role play practice was invaluable.”
- “Very pleased with content and involvement of group tasks, enjoyable, good learning atmosphere.”
- “Clear and concise with clear linkages between the tools.”
- “Good use of actors to illustrate and practice techniques.”
- “Format is very good with combination of theory and practical application at right level.”
- “Good pace of programme with dynamic presentation style.”
- “I found that using the theatre to demonstrate the course content is really beneficial and illustrates the points really well.”
- “Better than other leadership courses I have attended at other companies. Initially I thought this course would be a waste of my time however it proved to be interesting and worthwhile.”

Return on Investment

The middle manager group have continued to grow and deliver against the requirements of the business. Completion of workplace projects (in line with ILM assessment requirements) strengthen this position and embed the changes in behaviour.

At this time the initiative is continuing with a variety of interventions and consultancy support for the executive team, the Organisational Development manager and some of the middle manager group.