



SOLVING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES We've been asked for years to present examples of how we have used simulations to solve difficult leadership developmental challenges. Finally we have compiled a variety of case studies and a platform to present them.....

These case studies are grouped around 4 subjects: (1) Project Management (2) Business Acumen (Finance) (3) Leadership and (4) Operations Management.

BUSINESS ACUMEN (Finance)

Case Study: A Fortune 500 company providing industrial gases to manufacturers, hospitals, government agencies, steel mills; large and small businesses all across the country. They also operate retail stores in all markets where individuals can purchase gas cylinders, supplies or safety equipment. They are the result of 108 acquisitions over ten years. Each company acquired had their own unique financial reports, accounting and management processes resulting in marked divergences in pricing, service, reporting, control and profitability.

Goals: Top management set an on-going goal to standardize accounting and reporting systems in all acquired companies, in all regions around the country. In addition, there was also an organizational need to have each manager and employee give up allegiance to the old firm and rethink themselves as part of the new one, nationwide company. Finally there was a key group of executives at the upper end of middle management who needed individual development to grow into senior positions to support the goal of building this one new integrated company. The best approach, top management decided, was to focus on developing one standard understanding of Business (Finance) and train those key people, the Area Vice Presidents.

Development Solution: The Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Human Resource Officer of the company came together and decided the key to accomplishing all three goals was to put together a developmental program targeted to the needs of these AREA VICE PRESIDENTS ('AVP's').

Audience: Area Vice Presidents are the top tier of middle management reporting to the COO. They supervise 5-15 branch managers in twelve regions; responsible for sales, distribution, cost controls, staffing and profit in their regions. AVP's are 'hands on' leaders who have no patience with theory and abhor "Death by PowerPoint" presentations.

Why PCI? The company scoured Learning and Development vendors. The Client came to PCI Global Inc. and asked for a business simulation to illustrate pivotal management decisions; customized to their unique business, industry and culture.

They wanted a face to face learning mode tightly integrated with the simulation. After several reviews the Client chose PCI Global Inc. The key was PCI's twenty years of experience tailoring business simulations to replicate the reality of each company's actual environment and PCI's ability to tie the simulation with carefully structured assignments that get participants to immediately apply what they just learned "in class" with what they will need to understand in real life. They also valued PCI's long term and continuing relationships with elite firms for over twenty years.

How This Was Accomplished: Interviewing the Chief Operating Officer, and Chief Learning Officer Human Resources, and even selected AVP's, PCI collected reports and spreadsheet tools actually used in the field. Then we took an existing course called BUSINESS ACUMEN - ADVANCED built around a simulation of a manufacturing business and modified the simulation of the business, the financial reports, the business decisions and the educational program to accurately replicate their distribution business. We even put together an on-line pre-course assessment and post test to measure learning.

Course (Description): In June 2009, the Client piloted the first in a series of initiatives targeted at AVPs. In just 3 days, AVPs are challenged to work in teams through a computer business simulation which models the opening of a new branch office and managing branch operations in a competitive environment over nine simulated months.

The program incorporates key presentations from the Client's most senior management who become "visiting professors" to the faculty. The company's COO and CFO outlined the critical success factors that remain key to their continued success and competitive advantage into the future. The simulation tested AVP participants on their ability to manage for those critical success factors.

Results/Impact: The Client's Chief Learning Officer rated the program result outstanding. "We're testing AVP's business knowledge via an on-line assessment questionnaire before they experience the program and we're seeing marked improvement. After putting over 170 AVPs through the program, it's nice to report that the Time Well Spent metric is hovering above 93%. To me that is far more meaningful than the feedback from our typical smile sheets," said the Chief Learning Officer.

