

## **Business case 4: Executive Coaching**

### **The situation**

The US based company emx´ portfolio is among the world's largest with over 100,000 reliable products, including everything from electronic, electrical and fiber optic interconnect solutions to switches and application tooling. Ultimately, emx has today a workforce of over 32,000 worldwide. emx undertakes every second year a global employee survey to check whether the company is still on track regarding its employee´ motivation and work satisfaction. As the headquarter HR department very seriously follows up each country´ s survey results, it becomes obvious that some results in some European countries are not meeting the expectations.

### **The demand**

The HR project leader for the employee´ s survey in one of the European countries contacts synetz-international to support her in improving some suboptimal results. She describes the situation as being complicated, as management felt offended by the results and tried to question the data base as well as the scientific relevance. Nevertheless the headquarter in the US asks for precise steps to improve the result within the next two years. She does not know what to do to convince her management to take action. She asks for help to create an intervention which might find the acceptance of the management, especially HR and Finance, as both managers were the ones who received a critical feed back. We propose the following steps:

### **Consultant´ s proposal and intervention**

- ☆ A personal dialogue between synetz-international and the country´ s CEO to establish good rapport and develop a common argument to convince the two managers.
- ☆ A short personal introduction with both managers (seperately) to establish a trustworthy relationship as personal coach.
- ☆ In each department synetz-international undertakes interviews with the employees to find out what exactly led the employees to answer in this way. All data are be kept strictly confidential.
- ☆ Each manager receives a very personal feed-back from the interviews by the coach. The feed-back is one part of a three hours coaching session per manager. Each session will end with precisely defined actions for each manager.
- ☆ After six months synetz-international checks with very short telephone interviews the results felt on the employee´ s level. The result is given again as a feed-back to the respective manager.

## **synetz-international's analysis**

The HR project leader agreed. The meeting with the CEO made it possible to proceed. Both managers accepted the coach.

- All top leader showed a clear underestimation of the importance of communication with employees. However, the CEO himself shared partly the employee's view, but never gave his own managers a feed-back.
- The interviews showed that both managers did not talk enough face to face with their immediate employees.
- There were not clearly defined goals, few sufficiently clarified structures and no feed-back channels at all.
- Both men were leading a mainly female work force. Both did not pay sufficient attention to the necessity of appreciating the employee's work, despite the fact that both considered the work done as being very positive.
- Both avoided conflicting situations and tried to delegate structural conflicts to the work force.
- Whereas the HR manager was a highly communicative, self centered person, the Finance manager seemed to be more introverted and preferred to close his door in the morning and not open it again the whole day.
- In both departments women were the second line leadership and in both cases they felt undervalued and not taken serious enough.
- In both cases synetz-international formulated from the interview results very carefully assumptions, tailor-made for each manager.
- These assumptions were fed - back to each manager separately in a very valuing and appreciating manner.

## **Duration and results**

The Coaching session was the most crucial intervention. Would the managers take the feed-back and be ready to digest it? They were – obviously synetz-international found the right words and images to convey the message.

Two stories were created in which the managers played a crucial leading role, but somehow did not act out their leadership role seriously enough.

- The action plan developed were simple and clear. A few crucial steps like regular meetings, regular feed-back to employees, regular information and a very clear announcement regarding the crucial role of their second line leaders' role were the main points.
- After six months the HR project leader called. Short telephone interviews were undertaken with the employees. All shared that their managers were trying their best. They appreciated their trials, acknowledging that not everything works perfectly. The communication has improved considerably.