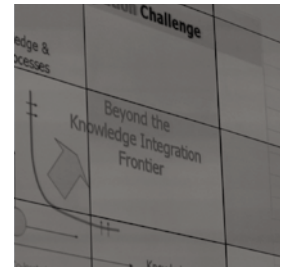




ISVOR FIAT

Mind the Gap

This case study presents the use of ChangeMasters within a corporate university, in this instance Isvor Fiat, and in logical order the challenge they addressed, the previous method(s) they used, the implementation of ChangeMasters Services within the organization and the results and benefits achieved. ChangeMasters Services are innovative, highly engaging experiential-learning edutainment services that improve change and innovation management, at the level of both readiness and competencies, for individuals, teams and organizations.



Business/Organizational Challenge

ORGANIZATION AND THE TEAM THAT FACED THE CHALLENGE

Isvor Fiat is the corporate university and the training service provider of the Fiat Group. It is organized to support business development and to facilitate the building up, innovation and dissemination of automotive knowledge and competencies.

As such it is in charge of discovering, maintaining and deploying knowledge competences and capabilities related to the business of the Fiat Group. With revenues of some 20 millions Euros, Isvor Fiat represents one of the largest companies fully focused on education in Italy. In order to better satisfy business needs of a multinational industrial group, Isvor Fiat operates through local partners in several European countries and through a branch located in Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

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By using ChangeMasters

we have been able to

mind the knowledging

gap in managing change



PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Isvor Fiat is part of an organization marked by rapid and fundamental change. In recent years the number of employees in the FIAT Group has decreased dramatically, from 303,238 in 1991 to around 170,000 in 2007, and the company has led a successful turn-around, involving changes at all levels, including areas like finance, customer relations and corporate culture.

Change and discontinuity are fundamental pillars of the Fiat Group corporate culture. This is why there is a high demand for change management competencies from the Group's leaders, and Isvor Fiat is expected to support with effective training and education the overall change process of the Group.

Isvor Fiat has recently changed its business model. Three years ago it was stronger in terms of internal delivery but weaker on needs analysis and on its capability of innovating methods and contents. Now Isvor Fiat has renewed these areas and must help disseminate its acquired knowledge to the rest of the organization.

The current challenge is to identify, develop and integrate into its comprehensive approach, an original and cutting edge change management learning experience. Such an experience must be consistent with the present Fiat culture and leadership style.

ISVOR FIAT LEARNING APPROACH

Isvor Fiat has had some experience before with the deployment of change management simulations similar to ChangeMasters.

At Isvor situated and experiential learning are an integrated part of most programmes, with the adoption of different methods such as on the job training, coaching, job shadowing, mentoring, face to face teaching, communities, and simulations.

Through its "Inside Change" program, Isvor Fiat has trained managers, via the standard ChangeMasters Simulation, thereby developing in the participants both awareness and skills related to Change Management.

Specifically, the graduate program "Inside Change" was delivered to over 400 people over five years with a relatively short 2 day workshop - using different approaches (company testimonials, group and team work).

Even at this pre-ChangeMasters period the project managers felt that it would surely have been longer (if not more expensive) to use traditional methods (solely classroom, reading, etc.) that the use of a simulation-based workshop.

It was also felt that the "standard package" had some shortcomings. Although innovations and additions were made to it, it was felt that the key issue of tailoring the simulations to the specific environment was not sufficiently addressed.

ISSUES EXPERIENCED

In the evaluation of the program it was felt that the participants had difficulties applying what they had learned at the workshops. In the past project work had been added in some cases, but most times it was seen as having been added by the training department, not inspired by the participants themselves, thus this project work was done in a perfunctory manner.

The challenge remained to "mind the gap" in the knowing-doing gap, thus ensuring that theory and knowledge could easily be put into practice.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

Tailored change management simulations have started to be introduced in several management training programs, workshops and events.

Experimentation has taken place particularly in the context of the "Change - The Others & Myself" program. Participants have been people with significant responsibilities in leading projects for corporate change.

The learning objectives have been:

- To share a common viewpoint on the dynamics of change
- To define change management strategies, verifying the effectiveness of the various instruments available
- To analyze one's own experience in the light of various change management patterns
- To share criteria for drawing up an effective change management action plan

The course, lasting 2 days with one day follow up, adopted a multimedia simulation of change management dynamics, videos, questionnaires and other exercise material.

The ChangeMasters Simulations is expected to be deployed in several other programs, including a change management course for International Managers, Managerial Development for Executives, and the Managerial Development Program.

A new project with E&D (Engineering and Design) at Fiat Group Automobiles started on April 16 & 17 - with four more sessions by summer 2007. The program targets 40 middle managers with real-life projects to implement, like "improve motivation" and "redesign engineering processes". After the first workshop they have 1.5 months to design and start to implement their project followed by careful evaluation. Via storytelling they relate their experiences and produce videos, which will be uploaded to a website to create a knowledge base of projects. Future participants will be able to use this database to get insights and find inspiration.

BENEFITS

The development of tailored solutions, via ChangeMasters, is allowing Isvor Fiat to deliver a focused learning experience that meets the specific needs of their target groups.

Applications like the ChangeMasters do not only provide a unique opportunity to experience the complexity and interactions of a business environment, but significantly enhances the quality and diversity of the ensuing discussions and reflections. It is Isvor's belief that people compare the virtual experiences in terms of learning fallout but, at the same time, are able to understand and value their actual team and leadership dynamics.

Isvor Fiat has found that simulations like ChangeMasters are one of the key components of its intensive and situated learning tracks. In the future Isvor Fiat will invest more in this promising area of innovation because it gives an answer to an emergent need inside the FIAT Group: learning new competencies while acting in a systematic way in a changing environment.



At the end of
this program
I feel I have
developed a
different vision
on how to deal
with and manage
change activities
within Fiat Group
Automobiles...

