

DEFINING WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE TO DRIVE ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

CLIENT:

A 3,300-employee, integrated midstream services company with assets and employees located throughout Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Louisiana and throughout the northeast region of the United States.

CHALLENGE:

The company embarked on a significant refocus of the core business as they foresaw the price of oil plummeting. They knew they needed to realign operational strategies to meet changing customer demands. Executive-level and other leaders created a new, five-year strategic plan that placed operational excellence at the center of all endeavors.

Understanding that the organization's people are the fuel for operational excellence, the operations division sought a partner to support the organization in answering these questions: "What does 'great' look like at each level of management and leadership within the company?" and "How do we make that definition of great actionable in order to drive new strategies?"

Previous efforts to define competencies had died slow deaths, never having been fully integrated into the culture and performance management practices within the company. Key leaders reported that one of the major challenges in previous efforts was that the language of "competencies" used: terminology that was just not tailored to the company's unique personality and culture. Managers at all levels had since treated any conversation around competencies as flavor-of-the-month discussions. They were not convinced that these efforts would materialize into actionable ideas that would support their success in their individual roles. The organization knew it had to shift this thinking by defining what "great" should look like at each management level – in the company's own words – then making that definition worthy of integrating into all talent practices in order to push the future vision forward.

SOLUTION:

ICC is partnering with organizational sponsors currently and has launched a carefully crafted, three-phase plan to support them in achieving the vision. These efforts have started with ICC's facilitated task-force approach to defining "great." That work began with the supervisor tier, which is the management level with the most employees and direct reports and, therefore, the greatest lever of the vision's success. The task force is made up of supervisors, managers, directors and regional and executive-level leaders with the primary tasks of: identifying and defining, in the company's own terms, the necessary competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes for any supervisor to be considered "great"; taking their ideas to the rest of the organization for discussion and feedback, ensuring buy-in as they collect additional data along the way; and finalizing that list of characteristics and communicating new expectations throughout the organization.

Phases two and three of the endeavor will include assessing current supervisors against the new definition of "great," then shoring up gaps in behaviors, competencies and skills through strategic learning and development plans to be implemented in early 2016. Future phases will include support in integrating "great" into all talent practices including recruiting, performance management, success planning and more.



CASE STUDY

RESULTS:

Phase one work – defining what great looks like – is currently in progress with task force members fully engaged in the process and the group’s success in completing their piece to ensure success. Within the first weeks of launching the task force, internal buy-in among employees at all levels has vastly increased compared to past competency-building efforts. Facilitating a task-force-driven approach has already proven much more effective than previous top-down dictated tactics. This progress paves the way for supporting the critical cultural and behavioral shifts needed in order for the company to achieve its future vision.

