

# Driving strategy execution virtually



A highly successful multinational packaging and processing company, with many long-tenured leaders, recognized that the mindsets enabling past success would not necessarily sustain it. Thus, the organization's leadership set a goal: to become a packaging company of the future. To do so, they implemented a new business strategy that would increase its focus on sustainability, quality, innovation, and customer centricity.

To bring this vision to life, the organization identified the leadership behaviors necessary to drive new directives, then partnered with BTS to develop its leaders. Together, the organization and BTS designed an initiative that would reach 2,000 mid-level leaders – a diverse group spanning all functions – just below the company's top 150 executives. Due to their far-reaching influence over the organization's more junior employees, these mid-level leaders were crucial to implementing a new future-focused strategy.

## Driving the strategy with mid-level leaders

Despite being fundamental to the organization's future, the critical behavior changes would not be easy to implement. The organization's leaders needed to shift from focusing on past successes to anticipating the needs of the future.

To accelerate the mid-level leaders' mindset shifts, BTS and the organization co-created an immersive six-month journey with three key phases. As a result of COVID-19, the program would be delivered in a fully virtual environment.

## A six-month journey to drive behavior change

In the first phase, leaders used BTS's Leadership Signature solution to explore **personal leadership motivations**, imagining the company's collapse and formulating reasons for its failure. This activity helped build the case for change. After developing this understanding, participants identified their own personal strengths and leadership motivations, focusing specifically on how they could support the organization's new purpose and strategy.

The second phase of the journey focused on leading others. Participants worked to develop a "Multipliers" mindset, or the ability to get the most out of one's team by amplifying individual intelligence – a concept developed by Liz Wiseman in her book of the same title.

**"COVID required us to work closely with the client to reassess and redirect early on in the development"**

The final phase of the journey was devoted to leading the business. Leaders experienced a customized business simulation which allowed them to practice the new behaviors in a risk-free, dynamic, and challenging team environment. During the simulation, leaders formed teams and assumed the most senior leadership roles in the company, competing to deliver the best results over multiple rounds. This forced leaders to weigh the tradeoffs inherent to the strategy and make consequential decisions, overall improving their understanding of what it takes to turn strategy into action.

Due to COVID-19, the program was delivered in an entirely virtual environment, featuring LinkedIn Learning courses and Go-Do activities hosted on the organization's internal platform. Go-Do's are predesigned actions or experiments that would enable participants to act on their learnings, incorporating them from the journey into their workflow.

## The impact

The Evolve Program has catalyzed substantial change throughout the organization. Exposing 2,000 influential leaders to the same experience disrupted old mindsets, allowing them to explore new capabilities and ways of working. All this has created momentum, and the organization's culture has clearly started to shift:

- **98%** of participants have applied their learnings back on the job
- **60%** of leaders have seen tangible business impact following their participation

## Client feedback

- "The amount of **honesty**... in sharing with each other was amazing. [I] learned things about myself and others that I will reflect on now and in the future."
- "Shaping my [my own leadership style] was a great journey, sharpening my views of myself and [teaching me] how to use my strength best in leading my team."
- "[I gained] a **shared mindset** among leaders that have gone through the program and a new network of colleagues to reach out to and share, encourage, and challenge each other."
- "We can appreciate the challenges faced by [senior leadership], especially during the business simulation session... It is even more important that once you **commit** to a decision, then fully support it at all levels."
- "[I learned] to see things with an **end-to-end perspective** and focus upon cost and efficiency, but mostly importantly, to add customer value."
- "More smiling faces."

