

Running the Leader Lab, a dynamic business simulation



Client need

As part of their talent development strategy, an American dairy organization's needed to equip its high-potential employees to reach the next level of leadership. Thus, the organization partnered with BTS to design and deliver a customized, interactive, and experiential learning solution: the Leader Lab.

By combining assessments, a business simulation, and role-plays, the Leader Lab develops the critical business and leadership skills required to execute an organization's specific strategy. Pre- and post-program assessments helped the organization pinpoint critical knowledge gaps and benchmark progress; the simulation challenged teams to respond to realistic, high-pressure business dilemmas with limited resources. All of this increased participants' understanding of their clients' and prospects' most critical profitability drivers, and allowed the high-potentials to observe fundamental leadership behaviors.



The solution...

To develop its high-potential employees, 20 of the organization's leaders went through a two-day, customized Leader Lab experience, which featured:

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Pre-work

- A **personality test** that measured each individual's preferences and style, and identified behavioral watch-outs.
- Reading a **business case** containing key information as well as business and financial context for the simulation.

A virtually-facilitated business simulation

- In groups of four, high-potentials assumed fictional roles representative of the organization's leadership team.
- These teams competed by running a simulated organization over three rounds, each of which represented one fiscal year.
- Facilitators examined, scored, and debriefed the teams after each round in a central virtual classroom. Leaders received reinforcement on the critical moves needed for success.

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Role plays allowing high-potentials to practice anticipating and responding to various obstacles.

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An immersive **assessment** that evaluated high potentials' performance in the face of business challenges.

- Team-specific assessors observed participants in breakout rooms, measuring each participant's behavior against the client's competencies model.
- Participants then presented their decisions and results to a select group of senior leaders.

After the assessment center, BTS facilitators created a written report describing each individual's strengths and areas of development related to the specific competencies needed to perform in their role. Furthermore, the experience concluded with the participants enjoying a one-hour debrief session alongside the assessors to better understand the report and obtain individual development insights.



Results

The program was an overall success. Participants were pushed out of their comfort zones and challenged to understand the business from the leadership perspective. Following completion of the Leader Lab, the majority of participants met the organization's "critical-quality" expectations, preparing them to advance to the next level of leadership.