



FINANCIAL
INDUSTRY

24000+

EMPLOYEES



NATIONAL
ROLLOUT



Financial Industry

a Situational Leadership® Success Story

At a Glance

In today's evolving and unpredictable economic climate, attaining financial security is a common goal for consumers. Financial service organizations must be prepared to meet their customers' unique financial needs and goals with agility and purpose.

Our client, a US-based financial services company, is guided by a common purpose — to help each client achieve their financial goals. This organization, with assets exceeding 175 billion, provides products and services to consumers, small businesses and corporate and institutional clients.

Challenge

- Enhancing leadership and coaching skills of front-line and mid-level managers
- Identifying a flexible and sustainable leadership model that would seamlessly align with existing business practices, workflow and established coaching cadence
- Enabling managers to effectively engage in productive in-the-moment and planned coaching conversations
- Reinforcing the organization's purpose-driven culture

Results

- Implemented and adopted Situational Leadership® solutions into the talent development curriculum for people managers across the entire enterprise
- Established a common language of performance across the organization
- Enriched the culture of purpose-driven leadership
- Increased the quality and effectiveness of coaching discussions

Solution

- Combination of six Situational Leadership® ready-to-deliver and custom offerings
- Internal trainer certification
- Customized performance support resources that are anchored in consumer retail daily business practices and coaching cadence
- Program-specific sustainment resources to reinforce training transfer and continued skill development for new managers across the enterprise

Products

- *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* for consumer retail front-line, mid-level and individual contributors in a team lead role
- *Coaching to Build Capacity** for Branch Managers
- *Coaching to Build Capacity* for Area Managers
- *Coaching to Build Capacity* tailored for client-facing individual contributors in a team lead role in the consumer retail environment
- *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* for new Line of Business (LOB) Managers
- *Situational Coaching®* for new LOB Managers

* The Center for Leadership Studies recently updated the *Coaching to Build Capacity* course to *Situational Coaching®*. References to either course throughout this document refer to the same course offering.

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The Challenge

To enable client-facing employees to achieve their purpose, the client's customer engagement sales practices are well-defined and customized to support a comprehensive offering of products and services. The consumer retail LOB recognized that to influence client-facing employee performance and enhance the customer experience, the front-line branch leaders needed a flexible coaching framework that was aligned with the customer engagement sales practices and performance expectations. They were seeking a leadership model that could seamlessly integrate into the Branch Managers' daily business practices and support their ability to engage in productive in-the-moment and planned coaching conversations with those they lead.

To establish cultural alignment and sustainment, the leadership model would also need to support the leadership practices and coaching cadence the mid-level Regional Managers employ to lead and coach their branch leaders.

The client initiated a rigorous and comprehensive RFP process with multiple vendors to identify a single leadership model that was adaptable, relevant and sustainable — one that would fit seamlessly into the managers' day-to-day tasks without feeling like a separate or added process. During the selection process, a fundamental expectation was to demonstrate how the solution would enhance, rather than complicate, the Branch Managers' role as coach within the context of the daily activities and routines associated with servicing clients in the retail banking environment.

The simplicity and applicability of Situational Leadership® resonated with the client, and we were honored that The Center for Leadership Studies' (CLS) Situational Leadership® Model was selected to be a cornerstone of the leadership training initiative.

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The Solution

Our client partnership began in 2015 with the roll out of three Situational Leadership® programs to 1,200 leaders across the consumer retail LOB. The solution was a combination of ready-to-deliver and custom programs:

- *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* (ready-to-deliver)
- *Coaching to Build Capacity®* for Branch Managers (custom)
- *Coaching to Build Capacity* for Area Managers (custom)

The CLS Product Development team collaborated with LOB key stakeholders and subject matter experts (SMEs) to customize the *Coaching to Build Capacity* program for two different consumer retail leader audiences: Branch and Area Managers. Both programs are grounded in relevant and compelling video-based case study application set within the context of the business practices and coaching routines these leaders engage in on a daily basis.

To reinforce ongoing skill development and sustainment after training, Branch and Area Managers also received performance support resources that were specific to their roles as leaders and coaches. The resources were designed to augment their coaching preparation, execution and follow-up activities. They included coaching plan templates, Quick Reference Guides (QRG) and strategies and action plans for impacting employee performance in a targeted skill area.

Shortly after the launch of *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* and *Coaching to Build Capacity*, the LOB stakeholders requested a tailored version of both programs to extend the offerings to individual contributors in a client-facing leadership role:

- *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* for individual contributors (tailored)
- *Coaching to Build Capacity* for individual contributors (tailored)

CLS engaged with the client's Talent Development team to train and certify the facilitators who would support the launch effort and then assume all program delivery to their internal teams. The certification of the client's internal trainers facilitated content mastery and cultural alignment that resonated and inspired both participants and facilitators.

- Certified 23 internal facilitators in *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders*
- Certified 15 internal facilitators in *Coaching to Build Capacity* and *Situational Coaching®*

The most significant indicator of the success of the consumer retail solution was the enterprise-wide implementation of Situational Leadership® in 2017. Learning and Development (L&D) leaders in the corporate function recognized the applicability of the model across multiple LOBs and integrated two, ready-to-deliver programs into their leadership curriculum for new people managers. Program-specific coaching resources and e-learning modules provided opportunities for reinforcement and skill building after training:

- *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders*
- *Situational Coaching®*

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The Results

- Over 2,000 Branch Managers and Area Managers have completed either *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* or *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders and Coaching to Build Capacity*
- Over 1,600 managers have completed either *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* or *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders and Situational Coaching®*
- Enterprise senior leaders participated in a tailored *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* executive leader program to foster cultural alignment with the Situational Leadership® Model across the organization
- Programs and client facilitators continue to receive highly favorable ratings in participant evaluations

According to survey results, 98 percent of the 1,275 participants of *Situational Leadership®: Building Leaders* agreed that the content was relevant to them and enhanced their leadership skills. All of the *Situational Coaching®* participants agreed that what they learned would help them perform their jobs more effectively. When asked to describe the training programs, participants respond consistently with words and phrases such as, “valuable,” “practical and useful,” “easy to understand and digest,” “interactive,” “insightful” and “engaging.”

Managers continue to apply what they learned to accurately assess an individual's Performance Readiness® for a task and use the appropriate leadership style during in-the-moment and planned coaching conversations. L&D leaders describe the adoption of Situational Leadership® as “growing organically” as managers use the language of the model to communicate their confidence and ability for assigned tasks with their own leaders.

The experiences and feedback from program facilitators are just as positive and enthusiastic as the participants' feedback. The insights we recently received from a facilitator can be described as their collective observations about the impact of the training:

“As a facilitator, I believe *Situational Leadership®*, both *Building Leaders* and *(Situational) Coaching®*, has provided tremendous positive impact on our business as well as the individuals. Specifically, having a framework that offers flexibility while providing guidance on how to engage another teammate seems to be paying dividends. When teammates leave the session, you can feel a renewed sense of energy and engagement, like they just got a present and it wasn't their birthday.”

CLS has been privileged to partner with our client since 2015 and we are proud to share their commitment to building the leaders that are instrumental to achieving their organizational purpose.



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