



CASE STUDY

Company: Ørsted (ex-DONG Energy)

Sector: Energy

Leading the energy sector's transformation toward a more sustainable society

CHALLENGE

To support senior managers on a talent development programme as they prepare for director roles in an organisation going through significant change

As a leading energy company in Northern Europe, DONG Energy (now renamed Ørsted) wanted to lead the energy sector's transformation by making energy supply greener, more independent and cost-effective and by promoting a more sustainable society. The com-

pany was going through an 18-month process to float the state owned Danish company on the public stock exchange and so was facing a period of radical organisational development and of culture change.

METHODOLOGY

Programme 1

The first programme involved delivering 2 face to face action learning facilitator training days in Denmark to embed the facility of action learning within the HR Department. We followed on with two half day training sessions delivered virtually over the following two months, to bring all participants together to learn from one another, strengthen their learning and experience, and to complete the programme.

The participants were then competent in the skills of running action learning sets themselves, and able to continue running action learning programmes as part of development initiatives within DONG.

Programme 2

The second programme, for leaders, consisted of a series of action learning sets and was delivered virtually. It formed part of a much wider leadership programme.

At the outset, participants were asked to identify areas where they felt there was room for improvement, and these included:

- How to deal with 'difficult' team members
- How to communicate more effectively
- Dealing with anxiety whilst feeling under pressure
- Maintaining motivation at individual and team level
- Coping with change

As well as working with the classic action learning approach, where individuals presented their specific challenge to the rest of the group, we used an alternative model where the issue was shared by all the set.

During programme one we identified how to implement the 70-20-10 learning philosophy with the intention of moving away from more formalised learning interventions and deriving as much learning as possible from the workplace. It required a shift in mind-set and a move

away from the "going on a training course" approach to development needs.

This was a major driver in appointing professional HR and OD trainers, to ensure the learning structure was built around real workplace challenges and to embed a learning culture in day to day behaviour.

The programme also included many activities covering resilience, energy and the self, communications, 360° feedback, a Hogan profile, coaching sessions, access to a mentor and four-way conversations. Participants were even required to wear heart rate monitors as part of the wider development scheme to examine how stress affected their bodies.

RESULTS

Participants were asked to document the benefits they felt as a result of taking part in action learning sets, and for many, the value of using a questioning technique to probe and encourage others to find solutions to issues was predominant.



ACTION LEARNING ASSOCIATES

Which of our strengths did we draw upon for this programme?

- Our ability to conduct action learning sets, and to train others to continue to do so, allowed DONG to invest in a training programme that has sustainability built in.
- We were able to tailor the programmes so that we could mix our method of delivery, working both face to face and at a distance, to remove the need, time and expense of travel.
- The HR professionals benefitted from a programme that was tailored to their needs whilst working in a company that was going through significant change. It was designed to support the challenges they faced and to give them the tools to support their leaders going forward.

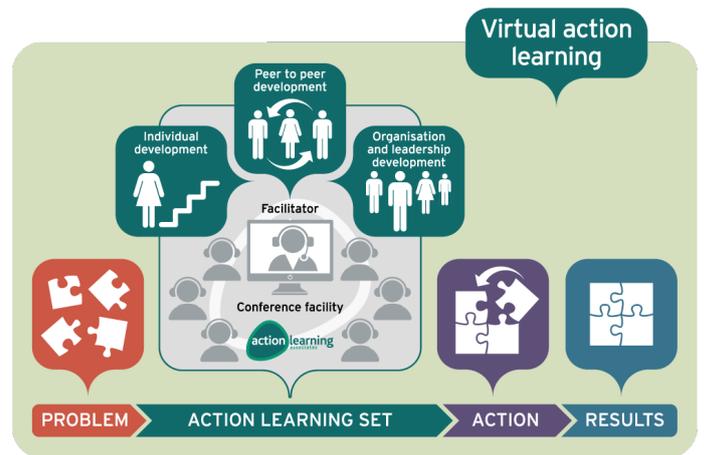
VIRTUAL ACTION LEARNING

Virtual action learning – where distance is no problem

This programme involved a mix of face to face and distance action learning. Our virtual application of action learning allows us to bring together groups to participate in action learning sets, without the need to travel.

The same principles and protocols are in place, to ensure everyone is engaged in the process, and there is a commitment to take part and be fully immersed in proceedings.

Everyone taking part gains from sharpened listening skills, the ability to reflect more deeply and experience greater insight. They also have the opportunity to hone virtual leadership skills which are of growing importance for today's global organisations and businesses.



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