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Rod Street,
Managing Director,
Northern Racing



Northern Racing fast-tracks internal talent to develop revenue

employee engagement
case study

The challenge...

After recruiting for attitude, Northern Racing had to find a way of developing its bright young things into fully-fledged leaders, capable of spotting winning business opportunities and running one of its racecourses...



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PLC

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The solution...

“We’re committed to developing people internally,” explains managing director, Rod Street, “The nine individuals we have running our nine racecourses across the country are brilliant at what they do but that isn’t enough. We need outstanding No.2s ready to step into their shoes.”

The sporting leisure business was also keen to develop a new breed of leaders, capable of generating new revenue streams. “For over two hundred years, race tracks have only been used as race tracks. Race days only account for 20 days a year, so for the remaining 340 days, vast areas of land and facilities are left unused. We need to create more ways to make better use of our facilities, be that conferencing, outdoor events, banquets or childcare facilities,” says Street.

“At the same time we have to make our race days themselves more attractive to new audiences.” He continues, “Until quite recently, racing was perceived as a sport attended by flat-caps or toffs. We want to make it an attractive leisure activity, just as relevant to a group of girls or a family planning a fun day out.”

Investing in the future

After attending one of LDL’s Inspirational Leadership seminars, Street decided to appoint the learning and development specialists to create a bespoke year-long development course. The overall aim was to intensively develop individuals earmarked by Northern Racing as having the potential to successfully run one of its racecourses in the future.

“We hire for attitude and train on skill, so LDL’s focus on giving employees the ‘will’ to succeed, as well as the practical tools and ‘skill’ needed to do so is entirely in keeping with our own philosophy,” says Street.

The development programme created by LDL consisted of four key modules: Self-Awareness, Key Management

Skills, Coaching and Feedback, Presentation Skills. Individuals were interviewed about their career aspirations and did Myers Briggs and 360-degree assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses. They were also educated on values, vision and leading through change.

“We were so impressed with the quality of the development provided by LDL that we extended it to our senior management team, providing them with one-on-one mentoring from LDL to help them with particular challenges they faced. The feedback has been great,” says Street.

Learning becomes reality

To ensure learning from the course was being put into practice, and encourage cross-fertilisation of ideas across the disparate racecourses, the future leaders were set a group assignment to investigate a new revenue stream and provide a final recommendation to the board.

Street is delighted by the outcome, “LDL’s emphasis on equipping people with practical tools ensured everyone was able to participate fully in investigating new revenue opportunities and making brave recommendations. Each individual has grown in a different way, from how they manage others, to the way they share knowledge and present themselves to the board.”

Street concludes, “Perhaps most importantly everyone from the programme is still with us, bonding with one another in a way that has already started to benefit the business. Thanks to the ongoing development provided by LDL, we’ve fast-tracked our ability to fill future leadership roles from within. Some individuals have already been moved into more senior roles and everyone has become more rounded, commercially aware and confident as a result of the programme.”

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Want to identify future leaders?

If you want to identify and develop your future leaders, LDL can help. Our ongoing development enables rising stars to think more commercially and generate new revenue, in a way that makes them want to stay with your business.

To talk to one of our consultants about your requirements: email learning@ldl.co.uk or call us on +44 (0)20 7381 6233

**Skill
Will**