Case Study

Leading the Future: Developing Global Leaders
In November 2010, Marks & Spencer set out a three-year plan with the aim of becoming a truly international, multi-channel retailer. As part of this strategy, an increasing number of UK-based employees are now working with international colleagues, suppliers and, ultimately, customers.

The degree of engagement is varied and includes collaborating on projects, managing international teams and influencing key stakeholders.

Marks & Spencer is one of the world’s leading retail organizations, employing over 85,000 people in the UK and internationally, with over 1,000 stores in the UK and over 454 stores in 50 territories across Europe, the Middle East and Asia.
Helping Marks & Spencer Develop its Future Leaders

In 2011, the Head of Learning, Recruitment and Organizational Development at Marks & Spencer commissioned Learnlight to develop an interactive global leadership workshop aligned to the company’s international strategic vision and aimed at the top 100 leaders across the organization.

These leaders had been identified as instrumental in motivating, influencing and implementing global change. As such, the program’s overarching objectives were to develop the intercultural competence of this key population, cultivate a global mind-set and provide them with the strategies and international communication skills required to become effective global leaders.

Learnlight’s workshop was designed as an integral part of Marks & Spencer’s ongoing Leadership Development program, “Lead to Succeed”, and is just one of a suite of Learnlight intercultural solutions available to employees across the organization.

Training Objectives

The core aims of the program were to:

» Increase employees’ awareness of their own culture and its impact when working with internal and external contacts from other cultures

» Develop practical skills and strategies for improved global leadership in key Marks & Spencer territories

» Motivate global leaders to adapt their leadership and management styles when working internationally

» Develop curiosity to learn more about specific global markets from a cultural perspective
Learnlight worked closely with the Head of Learning, Recruitment and Organizational Development at Marks & Spencer to develop an extensive understanding of the organization’s international strategy and the expectations of their top 100 managers.

Key considerations included the need to create a high-level program that was relevant for senior employees with varying degrees of international experience. The training also needed to integrate practical scenarios and exercises to enable senior leaders to adapt their global mindset and bring about change in the organization from the top down.

Using this knowledge, Learnlight designed a one day program - “Lead to Succeed: Leading the Future in a Global Marketplace”, which forms part of an ongoing suite of development modules for senior level Marks & Spencer employees.

Learnlight’s program was preceded by a session focusing on the importance of international development for the business. This session, delivered by a leading business school, was positioned to ensure maximum relevance and engagement on Learnlight’s “Leading the Future in a Global Marketplace”.

Our Solution

The core one-day program provided global leaders with:

- An understanding of culture and its impact on international business and leadership
- Targeted cultural context for leadership in key overseas territories
- A cultural framework for effective global management and leadership of international teams
- Access to CultureWizard™, an interactive online intercultural learning resource
Results

To date, Learnlight has delivered numerous “Lead to Succeed” training workshops to Marks & Spencer’s top 100 leaders.

The workshops have developed the intercultural competence of this key population, cultivated a global mind-set and provided them with practical tools to lead and influence in the new international environment in which they operate. Participants report that they are able to build a stronger leadership capability with the knowledge and understanding of key cross-cultural values and behaviors they have gained.

“The Lead to Succeed (International) program has proved to be a real eye-opener for our leaders. Understanding how world economic power is shifting and how different cultures operate and behave has been inspirational. It has allowed our leaders to enhance their capability to get the best out of their international relationships and provided them with practical tools to continue our journey of becoming a truly international business.”

Nigel Jeremy, Head of Learning, Recruitment & Organization Development
Marks & Spencer
Learnlight is an award-winning EdTech company that provides language and soft skills training to more than 1,000 clients and over 100,000 learners in 150 countries.

Since our foundation, our dream has been to bridge the gap between the disparate worlds of education and technology by harnessing cutting-edge technology to optimize instructor-led training. Our obsession was, and continues to be, to empower talented trainers to create transformative learning experiences because we think people are the real killer app.

Visit learnlight.com to discover more about Learnlight and our unique range of digital, tutoring, virtual and face-to-face solutions.