CLIENT SUCCESS STORY
FLIGHT CENTRE

SITUATION
Whilst Victorian and Tasmanian teams at Flight Centre typically performed well, their new leader recognised that there were some areas for improvement and that performance could be bettered if the team reconnected with what had helped them succeed in the past.

SOLUTION
Identifying their collective goals and focusing on their behaviour brought the team closer together and helped break down the silos and increase collaboration. Interactions between team members became concentrated on a desire to see each other succeed.

RESULT
Achieving significant sales and profit growth, the team won most profitable and most improved businesses within the Flight Centre group. The leadership team learned to work together to achieve the best possible outcome.
SITUATION

Nation Leader for Flight Centre Victoria and Tasmania (Vicmania), Brent Novak, joined the team in March 2015 after returning to his native Australia from three years working for Flight Centre in Canada.

During his 14 years with the company, Novak always believed in the company’s philosophies and was inspired by its strong culture. Upon his return to Australia, Novak wanted to reinvigorate and reinforce these philosophies within his local staff, encouraging ownership of culture and actions, and helping them lift their performance to become a high-performing team.

While Vicmania teams traditionally did very well and achieved strong sales growth, it was important they reconnected to what had helped them achieve that success as a business over the previous 20+ years. This included a sense of pride in the experiences they delivered to their customers; an unmatched corporate culture; and a sense that what they did within their local communities really mattered.

When the work they were doing mattered, the team were able to attach real value to it.

There were also some specific areas for development that Novak knew needed addressing, including an environment where senior leaders preferred to work alone and attempted to achieve sales targets without seeking peer support.

Novak was first exposed to Leading Teams through its reported success in the sporting sector in 2009. Knowing that Leading Teams would be able to help him realise his vision for the team and reinvigorate his area leaders, he signed up for the Performance Improvement Program (PiP). Kraig Grime, director of Leading Teams, was brought in to lead the program in Vicmania.

“It became clear quickly that the team was headed toward success: in their first session, the leadership group realised they were in complete control of what happened moving forward. They came prepared; they’d all been given and had read both of Roy McLean’s books on our philosophy towards creating high-performance teams. The group was ready to create the same impactful change in their own organisation,” said Grime.

The team developed their trademark; values that they wanted to be remembered for, and mapped these out to a framework of desirable behaviours. This brought the leadership team closer, broke down communication silos and shifted interaction among the group towards being more collaborative and helpful, with a genuine sense of care and intention to see their peers succeed.

SOLUTION

The leadership group of 16, which manages a total of 157 stores across Vicmania, came together to identify their common purpose and collective goal.
Members of the team became invested in self-improvement, and demonstrated this by spending time engaging with others individually to share their personal commitment to change. This was recognised and applauded by everyone, which led to others following their example by stepping up and modelling good behaviour.

“Values and behaviours are ultimately the most important aspects of the business. The Vicmania team did everything they possibly could to help not just themselves, but each other, achieve their common values and goals for the success of the collective whole,” added Grime.

RESULT

Under the guidance of Leading Teams, Vicmania teams developed their desired trademark. The Performance Improvement Program also ensured that the leadership team maintained a safe environment which facilitated improvement, and ultimately business growth. Novak oversaw a significant cultural shift within his business and the most recent achievements of the team clearly demonstrated how the focus on developing strong culture led to positive bottom line business impacts.

Achieving significant sales, people and profit growth, Vicmania won both Global Area Awards for the Most Profitable and Most Improved Leisure businesses in Flight Centre Travel Group for 2014/15 at the Global Gathering in Singapore as a result.

In fact, they held three of the Top 10 Most Profitable Areas Globally and they took out seven of the Top 10 Most Improved Areas Globally including the top six places, beating out the 100 other areas.

With the support of Leading Teams, the leadership team learnt to work together to deliver greater results and ensured they were in the best position to achieve the greatest possible outcome. Area Leaders became more accountable to themselves and the leadership team, which led to higher levels of motivation. Cross pollination of ideas and sharing resources became the new norm.

Vicmania became a standout area within the Flight Centre community due to the achievements it attained. Novak has a goal to make Vicmania the incubator to develop the next generation of senior leaders, with the aim of spreading the same positive workplace culture in new areas so that ultimately every Flight Centre team is geared towards similar expectations and motivations for high performance.

Kraig Grime, said, “Vicmania has worked hard to achieve these results, and this came from working collaboratively and sustaining a positive environment. More importantly, the team has shown humility in relation to their successes, and consistently strives towards improvement. Brent was extremely passionate about the program, and was the driving force behind their outstanding achievements.”

ABOUT FLIGHT CENTRE TRAVEL GROUP (ASX: FLT)

FLT is one of the world’s largest travel agency groups. Headquartered in Brisbane, Australia, the company has more than 30 brands in its portfolio, some 3,000 businesses worldwide and employs more than 19,000 people.

After starting as a leisure travel agency, the company is now also one of the world’s largest corporate travel managers through a network of specialist brands that includes FCm, Corporate Traveller, cievents, Campus Travel, 4th Dimension and Stage & Screen.