



A Case Study: Establishing a High-Performance Culture

The Challenge – A Newly Acquired Company

In 2015 this nationally recognized Pharmaceutical company was acquired by a global healthcare company.

The company, which focuses on the research, development and commercialization of novel therapeutic products was experiencing lackluster financial performance and the business was stagnant.

A new CEO was hired by the parent company to refocus and reenergize the company, both financially and culturally.

In his initial meetings with the Executive Leadership Team (“ELT”) the new CEO quickly discerned that the organization had issues with trust, alignment and accountability. If the company was to improve its situation and be a viable, high performing organization for its clients, employees, and new ownership, it would require a collective effort by management and the employees to reestablish a trust-based culture.

The Approach – Reset the Culture and the Business

Previously, the new CEO had experienced considerable success in his career in senior leadership roles at other firms – a common denominator to his success was creating trust through implementation of Values-Based Leadership (VBL). He realized bringing the team together would be a challenge and while the management team considered attempting the project with internal resources, they made a strategic decision to partner with an outside firm, engaging resources that were both independent and expert in building and aligning teams to establish a values-based culture. The CEO reached out to [TAI Incorporated \(TAI\)](#), a firm with 20+ years of demonstrated success. TAI equips leaders for maximum performance through Values-Based Leadership programs, executive coaching, team alignment and strategic planning initiatives. TAI has a disciplined and proven approach to aligning executive teams, creating an environment of trust, enabling high performance and instituting accountability at companies of all sizes, in a myriad of industries, both in the U.S. and abroad.

“The use of a third party – independent – facilitator validated the issues and ensured there was no bias in tackling the issues. Further, the personal coaching that we received from TAI was an incredible resource as they don’t “tell us what to do / or try to solve our problems.” Instead, they offer insight and awareness into “who” we are individually and collectively as leaders; they emphasize the importance of transparency and communication among executive team members; and through their programs they helped us build confidence to trust each other and to establish a trusting culture among our employees.” - Chief People Officer

The Solution – Build Trust - Awareness, Alignment, Accountability

New Leader Assimilation Phase

To address initial circumstances TAI facilitated a New Leader Assimilation (“NLA”) that provided a means by which the new CEO could more quickly familiarize himself with the team and give them opportunity to get to know him better. The NLA format also provided a forum to raise key issues and identify “sacred cows” in the company. TAI’s role as independent facilitator allowed the group to break down barriers and successfully understand the scope of issues and motivations across the organization.

Team Alignment Phase

Next TAI engaged with values-based executive consulting and coaching practices which enabled executive team members to fully understand exactly how disconnected the organization was and to highlight the fact the leaders were not on the same page. Further, this initial effort offered the leadership team a baseline of collective leadership strengths to build upon.

To enable transformation, the executive team needed to establish alignment around the company’s direction and goals, as well as the behaviors required to create the desired culture. Through a process of in-depth individual coaching and comprehensive, interactive team workshops, the executive team worked to: a) clarify purpose, articulated through a worthy mission; b) craft a compelling vision to provide direction; and c) identify common values and behaviors required to establish a high-performance culture.

Astutely, the executive leadership team recognized the foundation for creating an agreed upon culture requires participation and buy-in from the broader leadership team – no small task as the trust and sharing across the executive leadership team was still in its infancy. TAI was engaged to help expand the effort by soliciting input from second and third level management team members. This group’s input would be coalesced with that of the executive leadership team. Collectively the entire leadership group established and would take ownership of the newly created Mission, Vision and Values for the organization and a new company culture would emerge.

“We wanted to make sure that these were not just top-down approaches, but rather this was a collective point of view of all of the Leadership Team – both existing and new members. We would all have to ‘walk the talk.’ The TAI approach – leading team workshops, providing 1 on 1 coaching, facilitating employee focus groups and conducting broad-based fact-finding interviews – all were effective to ensure everyone was involved and engaged in the culture building process.”

- Chief Executive Officer

Trust Building Phase

TAI also dove deep into the issues and challenges and was a critical resource in understanding and coaching ELT members to address issues and to facilitate management in moving to targeted outcomes. The engagement included comprehensive 360 interviews for the CEO and all direct reports. Upon completion of the interviews, each Executive was assigned a TAI Coach and an action plan was initiated to accentuate positive behaviors and address areas for development. In addition to the TAI coaching, executive team members partnered with each other to hold each other accountable for their actions and for further growth and development.

The Results – Transformational Turnaround – Culture, Financials, Reputation

As the leadership team embraced Values-Based Leadership and installed a VBL culture, transformation occurred at the company. Values-based behaviors were instilled; strategic alignment was achieved; accountability for performance was established; trust up, down and across the organization grew. From that foundation substantially higher performance was achieved and the organization experienced a dramatic and comprehensive business turnaround.

As of December 2020:

- Employee Engagement scores dramatically improved, showing double digit growth in almost every category and positioned the company near the top of Industry comparisons.
- The company was publicly recognized by the media as a “Great Place to Work.”

According to the CEO, “there is no doubt Values-Based Leadership has a positive impact on our business results.”

“Our achievements in the last two years, despite challenges faced due to Covid, are on positive trajectory and we are meeting financial goals. Performance is there. We’ve seen positive outcomes, financially and non-financially, as a result of working with TAI.”

– Chief Executive Officer

“As a CFO and a finance person, I recognize soft programs are not easy to evaluate from a ROI perspective; however, because the executive team now has a common language and is aligned on our mission, along with real trust to execute, it is clear we measurably accelerated our performance and improved business results.”

– Chief Financial Officer