



By Henry Mintzberg and Phil LeNir

Social Learning Leads to Increased Communication and Enhanced Management Skills



Organization
Fujitsu Social Science
Laboratory LTD

Industry
System Consulting and
Integration Services

Since its establishment in 1972, Fujitsu Social Science Laboratory Limited (Fujitsu SSL) has developed its ability to create the most advanced solutions and to integrate systems of total reliability through its PoweredSolution. The company employs a workforce of 1,200 and generates revenues of 25M yen annually.

“The question of how to develop our middle managers was elusive; until now we were unable to discover particularly effective measures. In this situation we discovered CoachingOurselves...”

Mr. Ikegami,
CEO of Fujitsu SSL in 2008

Challenge

Back in 2007, Fujitsu SSL performed an external assessment of its workforce and realized that their managers were having trouble finding opportunities for self-improvement and professional development. At the same time, a new headquarters had been set up and concern was rising about how to keep communication flowing effectively throughout the organization. Fujitsu SSL needed to find a program that would help develop their middle managers while also encouraging communication between headquarters and the various offices, all at a low cost.

Mr. Ikegami, then CEO of Fujitsu SSL, recognized that, in order to ensure the further advancement of the company, it would be necessary to aggressively promote employee development. The company found their solution in CoachingOurselves.

Solution

In collaboration with J-Feel, the exclusive CoachingOurselves partner in Japan, a program was designed for Fujitsu SSL. This program not only aims to develop their middle managers but also strengthen business relationships.

An inaugural cohort of middle managers participated in 30 CoachingOurselves sessions where they were given the opportunity to reflect on their own management practice using carefully curated CoachingOurselves discussion topics. They shared experiences, opinions, and insights, and applied these learnings to their daily management practice.



96%

**Satisfaction Rate of
Participants of
CoachingOurselves
Programs**



> 50%

**More than half of all
middle managers use
CoachingOurselves
Programs for their
development**

Following this initial experience, the inaugural participants became facilitators for other groups in the second year of the program.

“They (middle managers) greatly influenced one another. Furthermore, this program enabled them to foster a sense of solidarity among themselves, which reached beyond the borders of the organization. From now on, our company will continue to provide Ba (a space to create knowledge, as originally proposed by Japanese philosopher Kitaro Nishida) where internal and external middle managers can interact with each other. We will continue to address the strengthening of middle managers with CoachingOurselves”, wrote Mr. Ikegami in 2008.

Results

As a result of CoachingOurselves, Fujitsu SSL was able to increase cooperation and communication among headquarters and all federated units, expand their business, give their employees valuable facilitation experience, and increase collaboration with other companies. Due to the success of CoachingOurselves at Fujitsu SSL, other Fujitsu holding companies, such as CWC, FCT, FJM, FMCS, FNETS, FOM, FSAS and Nifty, have also launched CoachingOurselves.

Fujitsu SSL was the first company in Japan to introduce CoachingOurselves to their workplace. It has been a pillar of the company’s development program for middle managers since 2007. Approximately 30-40 high potentials participate in this program every year and there are over 500 graduates, representing more than half of the middle managers at SSL.

View video online at:

<http://www.coachingourselves.com/fujitsu>

About CoachingOurselves

CoachingOurselves is the world leader in peer-group coaching. The company, founded in 2007 by Henry Mintzberg and Phil LeNir, is based on Mintzberg’s reflective learning pedagogy. The CoachingOurselves leadership development method builds community, stimulates the exchange of perspectives, and encourages team cohesion. Managers learn from and coach each other using 90-minute self-directed, reflective discussion modules authored by some of the world’s leading business thinkers. This creates self-developing organizations while building a culture of learning and collaboration. CoachingOurselves has a library of over 80 peer-group coaching modules and is used by over 20,000 managers in 8 languages around the world.

www.coachingourselves.com