

## *Developing Leadership Excellence* Prince William County Service Authority

Background: The Prince William County Service Authority (Service Authority) is chartered by the State Corporation Commission and is an independent public body responsible for providing a comprehensive county-wide drinking water and water reclamation system in the state's second-largest county and one of the top 10 fastest-growing counties in the country.



The Service Authority is a well-managed, forward-thinking organization and a valued member of the business community.

Challenge: The Service Authority had identified a need for a management development program aimed at building leadership and management skills of supervisors and managers across the Service Authority. Many of the supervisors and managers at the Service Authority had been promoted through the ranks. Up until now, there had been no formalized management or leadership training. With aggressive strategic goals, the Service Authority executive team determined that developing their leaders needed to be top priority!

Solution: Entelechy partnered with the Service Authority to create an impactful five-course leadership development program titled, *Pipeline to Leadership Excellence*. The goal was to be more than just a training program, but instead a cultural shift aligning with their strategic goals.

The solution, implemented by Entelechy, included three specific phases:

### ***Phase 1: Performance Assessment***

Conducting a thorough performance assessment spells the difference between a successful initiative and one that fails. A well-conducted performance assessment yields more than a reaffirmation of what the client already knows. It can generate buy-in, uncover hidden obstacles, and identify paths to success.

Working with the Service Authority management team, Entelechy conducted a comprehensive performance assessment which included a number of meetings, interviews, and focus groups with key personnel from the Service Authority. Activities included:

1. A stakeholder meeting with key Service Authority executives.

2. Focus group meetings with managers and supervisors representing various departments and management levels within the Service Authority.

Throughout the performance assessment, our objective was not to just deliver a training program, but to help the Service Authority accomplish business goals by providing a comprehensive set of recommendations beyond what may be deployed in the original scope of the project.

The result of the performance assessment was a *Training Recommendations and Design Document*. This document laid out both training and non-training recommendations along with a design plan of the customized management development program.

### ***Phase 2: Customized Training Design and Development***

One of the most critical goals of this phase was to intertwine the technical elements of the job with the skill-related elements of the job, AND embed the Service Authority's culture, goals, policies, procedures, actions and customers, into a training program that would result in significant and lasting change – strong leaders to lead the Service Authority in accomplishing its strategic goals.

The Service Authority program, *Pipeline to Leadership Excellence*, included the following customized modules:

#### **Module #1: Managing Performance**

*Managing Performance* is a two-day course that serves as the cornerstone for the management training curriculum. Participants learned management and leadership techniques to help them excel in their roles as managers and leaders. A simple and effective coaching model and problem solving model are explored in depth.



#### **Module #2: Communication Skills for Leaders**

*Communication Skills for Leaders* is a one-day course that focuses on communication skills to ensure consistent and effective communication skills. Included in this course are modules on decision making, communication techniques, social styles and multi-cultural and multi-generational differences.

### **Module #3: Leadership and Management in Action**

*Leadership and Management in Action* is a one-day course that focuses on leadership and management skills necessary to effectively lead and inspire teams. Included in this course are explorations into SMART goals, encouragement of employee initiative, management of change, and working effectively in cross-functional teams.

### **Module #4: Management Essentials at the Service Authority**

*Management Essentials at the Service Authority* is a one-day course that focuses on management fundamentals to ensure that all supervisors and managers at the Service Authority are following policies and procedures consistently and effectively.

### **Module #5: Superior Selection and Interviewing**

*Superior Selection and Interviewing* is a half-day course that focuses on specific skills needed when interviewing and hiring. The key focus areas are on the importance of employment law compliance and behavioral interviewing techniques.

### ***Phase 3: Implementation***

#### **Train-the-Trainer**

As part of the training transition, Entelechy conducted a Train-the-Trainer to provide the Service Authority with the ability to conduct future trainings as employees are promoted and new employees join the team.

Results: Feedback from participants of the *Pipeline to Leadership Excellence* program has been extremely positive. They found the power of the program to be in the customization to their specific environment and the ease of use of the models:

- *"I'm not good with these training courses but I must say, it was the most interesting four days I've spent."*
- *"Very, very interesting and motivating. Can't wait to try to make change."*
- *"Great program! I am excited to use it and for other employees to attend!"*