CASE STUDY
Sector: Media and Entertainment

CCL Helps ABS-CBN Address Leadership in An Industry Disrupted

About the Company
ABS-CBN Corporation is a Filipino media and entertainment group of 10,000 employees based in Quezon City. It is the Philippines’ largest entertainment and media conglomerate in revenue, operating income, net income, assets, equity, market capitalization, and number of employees.

The Challenge
Media industries worldwide are being disrupted, as digital communications changes everything. For a broadcaster like ABS-CBN, this means no longer competing just against other traditional domestic players, but with competitors around the globe and in different formats.

At the same time, ABS-CBN needs to develop a new generation of leaders. Many of its current business leaders have been with the company for decades and will soon retire. It is critical for the company to backfill this talent pipeline and equip the next generation of division and department heads.

ABS-CBN Corporate University, the company’s learning and development unit, has emphasized the need for the company’s leaders to be trained and developed to adapt to the changing times. The program head of ABS-CBN University says, “They must be more agile, responsive, and globally minded to lead in this volatile space. Digital transformation is happening so fast—we cannot waste time.”

The Solution
As part of its overall Succession and Talent Development strategic plans and in response to these challenges, ABS-CBN adopted a generic competency framework made up of 6 key competencies and 5 objectives in 2016. This initiative was spearheaded by the University Leadership Academy Dean, Corporate University Head, and Human Resource & Organizational Development (HROD).

6 Program Competencies
- Leading mindfully and courageously
- Championing people and teams
- Demonstrating entrepreneurial judgment
- Navigating through change
- Driving powerful execution
- Showing commitment to service

5 Program Objectives
- Shift mindset from a narrow functional focus to a big-picture, value-creating perspective.
- Strengthen the foundation on the whole suite of disciplines, language, and core of business management. (Marketing, Finance, Strategy, People, etc.) so as to create value.
- Develop a thought process in integrating the different components of business that will be the basis of critical thinking and sound decision making.
- Analyze major challenges of business and create long-term action plans.
- Strengthen the ability to step back and be more reflective, discerning, and mindful as a leader of the business, of teams, and of self.
This program design led ABS-CBN to select CCL, as well as other learning partners, the Asian Institute of Management and INSEAD. The program head says CCL “had everything and anything related to leadership development,” in addition to its strong rankings by the Financial Times, its research focus, caliber of faculty, and 1-stop shop for coaching.

In 2017, ABS-CBN launched the Executive Development Program (EDP) and the Management Development Program (MDP). The audience for EDP is individuals in line to assume senior-level leadership roles, while MDP focuses on grooming functional leaders. As of 2019, 42 ABS-CBN leaders had experienced the 2 programs—24 had gone through EDP and 18 through MDP.

Both programs are a year long. CCL kicks off the training with 2 different 3-day modules, focused on soft skills and leadership development. Five CCL faculty members, led by Chris Dewar, CCL's director of Design, Delivery and Coaching, and a team of coaches conduct the training.

The leadership modules consist of interactive workshops and various self-assessment tools. In between these modules, participants receive 5 sessions of 1-on-1 coaching. The leadership modules tee up the business modules led by the other two learning partners. This module features different sessions and simulations spread over 9 months.

“We worked closely with ABS-CBN to have key leadership frameworks such as DAC (Direction, Alignment and Commitment), feedback, and coaching skills in both programs,” Dewar says. “We balanced that with having enough differentiation so that the two programs met the specifics of each leader level. Both programs included post-program coaching sessions, which were designed to help participants apply what they learned, focusing primarily on coaching skills.”

“The CCL faculty are so effective in being learner-centered,” says the program officer with ABS-CBN University, who co-managed the program. “They are able to make the content very applicable to each participant.”

**The Impact**

In less than 2 years, EDP and MDP are showing tangible results. ABS-CBN senior leaders use the programs as a resource for filling mission-critical roles. Eight MDP and EDP participants have been promoted to vacant leadership positions.

And while collaboration is crucial to leading agilely, many long-time ABS-CBN employees had limited opportunity to interact with one another in the past. The program head says employees now work differently across departments because of bonds established in the training’s leadership development modules. Thus, in another notable outcome, 80% of the innovative and strategic projects that were presented to ABS-CBN’s executive team were approved.

“The authentic relationships the cohort built at the outset fostered the type of collaboration necessary to create game-changing projects in the second phase of the program,” explains the program head. “CCL created a safe haven for participants to open up and be vulnerable. It wasn’t just providing content, but creating an environment for participants to safely analyze themselves as leaders.”

Finally, participants attest that their lives have been positively changed by the training. Here are some of their comments:

- “[The program] gave me a better big-picture perspective of what is happening in the bigger ABS-CBN organization. It prompted a new mindset better enabling me to better embrace change.”
- “The coaching sessions were extremely helpful and provided me with the direction to pursue my goals.”
- “I have a deeper appreciation of my weaknesses and leadership style, which makes me more effective within the business.”

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Develop your talent pipeline and equip your next generation of leaders. We can work with you to create a custom leadership solution for your organization’s needs, just as we did for this media company.