

Case Study 5: Manufacturing – Building a Leadership Pipeline

Challenge Statement

A large manufacturing conglomerate faced a looming leadership crisis, with a significant portion of its plant leadership due to retire within 5–7 years. There was no systematic process to identify and groom emerging leaders across its 14 plants, creating a severe risk to operational continuity and safety.

Client Brief

- **Industry:** Manufacturing
- **Employee Strength:** 10,000 employees
- **Geographic Coverage:** 14 plants across India.
- **Business Revenue & Status:** Revenue of ~₹5,000 crores. Stable but facing future risks due to the leadership gap.

Proposed HR & Business Solution

We implemented a comprehensive "**Leadership Pipeline**" program to build a robust bench of future plant leaders.

1. **Succession Planning:** Worked with senior leadership to define critical leadership roles and the competencies required for success in a modern manufacturing environment.
2. **Talent Assessment:** Utilized Assessment & Development Centers (ADCs) featuring simulations, case studies, and psychometric tests to objectively evaluate 120 emerging leaders for potential.
3. **Leadership Development:** Created personalized development plans for each candidate, incorporating targeted training, mentorship from current plant heads, and action learning projects focused on real business problems.
4. **Talent Analytics:** Established a leadership dashboard to track the readiness and progress of the pipeline, providing visibility to the board.
5. **Organization Development:** Aligned the program with the long-term strategic goals of the organization to ensure future leaders were equipped to drive transformation.

Results

The program successfully created a visible and ready pipeline of leaders. Within 18 months, **25% of the identified candidates were promoted** to larger roles or were designated as successors. The organization reported increased confidence in its ability to manage leadership transitions and drive operational excellence in the future.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Success KPIs Demonstrated:

- **Pipeline Strength:** 120 leaders assessed and developed.
- **Internal Promotion:** 25% promotion rate for program participants.
- **Readiness:** 90% of critical plant leadership roles now have at least one identified and groomed successor.

Future Challenges & KPIs to Address:

- **Diversity Gap:** The initial pipeline had **less than 10% female representation**, underscoring a critical need to strengthen diversity in the talent identification process.
- **Application of Learning: Post-program surveys** indicated that 30% of participants struggled to apply new skills in their current roles, pointing to a need for more supportive on-the-job application mechanisms.

Relevant HR Sub-functions Earmarked for this Intervention:

- Succession Planning
- Leadership Development
- Talent Assessment
- Talent Analytics
- Organization Development
- Performance Management