



ENABLING INTRAPRENEURSHIP AND CRITICAL DATA CONSUMPTION

A blended learning journey to enable
business success after a merger and
in times of Corona

Application for the Excellence
in Practice awards

March, 2021

TRATON
GROUP

 mindset



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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When the MAN Truck & Bus, Scania and Volkswagen Caminhões e Ônibus brands merged into the TRATON GROUP, one key priority was to enable cooperation and business success, especially after the public listing. Targeted at high potential middle managers, the aim of the Management Excellence program was to foster an intrapreneurial mindset and critical data consumption in times of rapid and often unpredictable change.

At the same time the Management Excellence program is designed to drive collaboration and improved decision making, it is also a role model example of the same. When evaluating the pitches of the suppliers, TRATON arrived at the conclusion that a combination would provide the best solution.

The Swedish training company, Mindset with the German business school ESMT would work together leveraging each other's strengths and areas of expertise to achieve synergies in just the same way that is required of the TRATON brands.

The uniqueness and strength of the Management Excellence Program lies in a series of combined factors:

- The alignment of the diverse team based on a detailed impact map
- The 3-layer program design that puts focus on targeted performance improvement and behavioral change
- Judicious use of technology to support social learning and drive impact
- Seamless integration of world-class faculty content

The original idea to link content and on-line learning with specific application challenges in order to change behavior was enhanced by Corona allowing for even more interventions and more regular check-ins.

The program team has recently started the next cycle of Management Excellence and is employing the lessons learned from the first cycle. The journey design is even more aligned to the design thinking diamond with converging elements for class preparation, interactive class sessions to foster diverging thinking followed by converging assignments to translate the learnings into behavioral change.



THE CHALLENGE



THE CHALLENGE

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Introduction to the TRATON GROUP

TRATON GROUP (formerly Volkswagen Truck & Bus), is a subsidiary of the Volkswagen Group and one of the world's largest commercial vehicle manufacturers, with its MAN, Scania and Volkswagen Caminhões e Ônibus brands. The company also has digital services branded as RIO. In 2019, the group sold around 242,000 vehicles. The range of products includes light-, medium-, and heavy-duty trucks, as well as buses. As of December 31, 2019, TRATON employed around 83,000 people in its commercial vehicle brands.

On June 20, 2018, it was announced that Volkswagen Truck & Bus was to be renamed TRATON, effective from the

third quarter of 2018. On June 28, 2019, TRATON was listed at the Frankfurt and Stockholm stock exchange.

The TRATON GROUP brings together four of the world's leading truck brands united in the mission to restructure the very concept of transportation and become the global champion of the transportation services industry. Fulfilling the value proposition of the group rests upon these brands being able to successfully discover and leverage synergies. Collaborating across geographies and across brands to reach organizational efficiencies and innovate tomorrow's solutions is the work of every member of the constituent organizations and this work will need to be guided, supported and driven by the leaders of these organizations.



1

[Click to enlarge](#)



Using Talent Development To Drive The Global Champion Strategy

The TRATON Talent Development Strategy [Fig II] was established to drive the Global Champion strategy [Fig III].

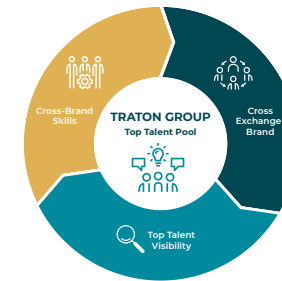
The focus is on enabling the development of cross-brand skillsets, to foster cooperation and a global mindset. The key objectives of the Group Talent Development Strategy are:

- Create cross-brand top talent exchange
- Ensure talent visibility on group Level
- Impart critical skills for global championship

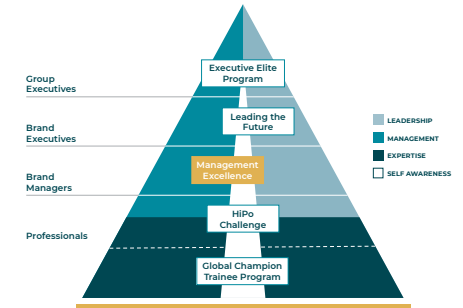
A Modern Program For A Mission Critical Target Group

For the high potentials of the first line management the new Management Excellence program was developed to transform these brand managers to be able to drive business success by:

- Applying key management skills and tools in a cross-brand environment
- Having an intrapreneurial and disruptive mindset
- Being critical consumers of information and able to apply business analytics in a VUCA world



II

[Click to enlarge](#)

III

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THE COMMITMENT



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Four things were clear for the TRATON Cross-Brand program team from the outset.

TRATON needed **cutting-edge content** that equipped the TRATON brand managers with the latest thinking, skills, tools and approaches for enabling cross-brand intrapreneurship and critical data consumption. After all, the whole value proposition of the TRATON GROUP is based on the idea that several brands collaborating closely together will make them more competitive than operating independently.

If that collaboration does not yield better decisions, more innovation and organizational efficiencies, the organization will likely fail over time. Equipping this target group with the necessary competency

to drive the Global Champion Strategy is mission critical.

However, the program team, made up of seasoned L&D professionals, were under no illusion that good learning automatically leads to behavioral change and business results. They knew that in addition to cutting-edge content they would need a **cutting-edge learning design**. They would need to treat this program, not as a series of events, but as a journey that would support and guide learners to apply what they had learned in impactful ways. The journey would need to have well thought-through **feedback dynamics**, it would need to include opportunities for the participants to share challenges and successes so that this journey would not just be a means for TRATON GROUP to execute its strategy

but to accelerate **guided application** of its strategy execution!

The Cross-Brand program team found their winning combination of content and design in two partner organizations that offered the best of both worlds. ESMT Berlin brought to the table world class faculty many of whom were actually the men and women that were shaping opinion through their work in fields such as innovation, collaboration and critical data consumption.

The Swedish training company, Mindset has over 20 years' experience in helping their client organization's drive application from learning and demonstrating results. While not without its challenges, the beauty of this partnership was that each player was brought into the match



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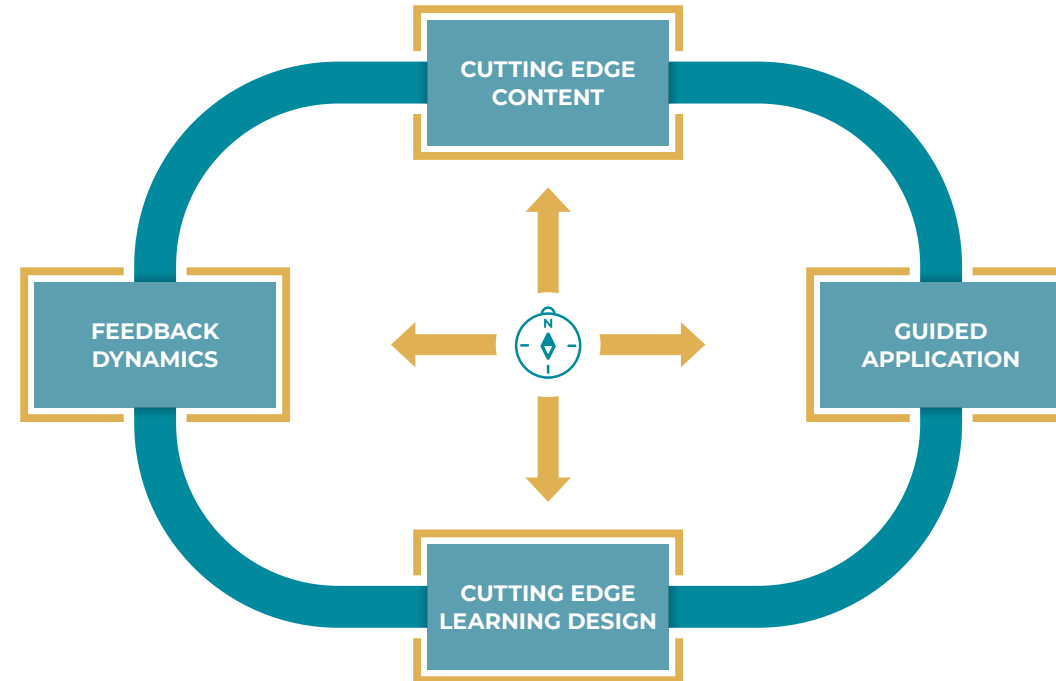
05. THE IMPACT

on the merits of their unique but different strengths. In hindsight, this was perhaps less apparent at the outset but the partnership that has emerged between ESMT and Mindset is one of the collateral successes of the Management Excellence Program.

One of the interesting aspects of the three-way partnership between the cross-brand program team, ESMT and Mindset was that we were also 'on display' as role models to the program participants and needed to set a good example of the synergies that successful collaboration could bring. The collaboration process started with a series of full day workshops – there were meetings at TRATON in Munich, at ESMT in Berlin and Mindset in Stockholm. Taking the time and making the effort to host these full-day in-person events was key to building a foundation of trust. Much of the discussion at these

first workshops was concerned with developing a shared vision of the program; the objectives it should achieve and how those would benefit TRATON. It was also during these first workshops that a subtle but critical program design principle emerged. The original brief had been for

a 10-month program with two so-called 'labs' six months apart. The labs would serve as a safe practice environment for participants to experiment with new tools which would then be applied in the real world.





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During these first workshops the team realized that a six-month hiatus between labs was a risky strategy. Experience shows that without touchpoints and support frameworks, many participants will likely not apply what they have learned and 'drop out' of the program. To mitigate this risk the program team decided to add monthly check-in webinars; online sessions that would be a forum for participants to share the successes and challenges from using their new skills.

This mechanism was conceived before the corona pandemic as a cost-effective way of maintaining participant engagement and accountability. As it later turned out when the pandemic did arrive, these check-in webinars that were already in the participants calendars were re-purposed to 'virtual classes' making the pivot to virtual considerably less painful.

With the foundation of trust built between the three parties the rest of the development work could take place largely at a distance and in a smooth and structured way. The program lead at ESMT (Christoph Burger) set up interviews between the program lead at Mindset (Edward Boon) and the ESMT faculty.

Through these interviews, Edward Boon coached the faculty to develop relevant preparation assignments and 'Application Challenges' that were aligned with the content that they would deliver. Through this process a seamless journey began to manifest itself where each party was able to contribute with their particular strength.



THE **L&D**
INITIATIVE



THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

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Designing for impact

As the program team approached the design brief one of the first documents to be produced was the 'Impact Map' [Fig IV]. This four-column document was a vital dialog tool to help the team articulate and agree the logic of the program; how what was learned would be used on-the-job in order to bring about desired results. This document would serve as an important cornerstone for the rest of the program:

- It was a dialog tool for agreeing the program logic within the team
- It was the basis for the program design

- It was a communication tool for describing the program ambition to the participants
- It was the basis for impact evaluation efforts during and at the end of the program

Importantly for the program design, the Impact Map was constructed from right to left, that is, the program team started with Organizational Ambitions and Performance Outcomes and worked 'backwards' through Behavioral Applications and finally Learning Outcomes. Working in this way ensured the program content was kept as lean and relevant as possible and that the program design was primed from the beginning to set participants on a successful trajectory towards impact.

LEARNING OUTCOMES	BEHAVIOURAL APPLICATIONS	PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES	ORGANIZATIONAL AMBITIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Understands key characteristics of an intrapreneurial and disruptive mindset■ Ability to lead cross-brand (function) collaboration and innovation■ Understands financial management principles■ Applies business analytics in a VUCA world to create financial value■ Ability to make fact-based decisions under stressful conditions■ Ability to facilitate group decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Applies an intrapreneurial mindset and toolkit to drive financial value creation■ Explores all perspectives in cross-brand (function) scenarios to identify optimal solutions■ Identifies cross-brand (function) synergies and takes responsibility for driving the broader TRATON agenda■ Employs a range of decision making tools to include and involve the team in the decision making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Increased identification of cross-brand (function) synergies■ Increased cross-brand (function) collaboration■ Increase in business-driven decisions■ Improved business-driven decisions■ Increase in team involvement in decision making process■ Increased initiative taking in the team■ Improved open error culture in the team■ Increased innovation■ Increased operational efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Restructure the very concept of transportation and become the global champion of the transportation services industry.■ Be a leading global manufacturer of commercial vehicles and best in class in terms of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Profitability■ Customer innovation■ Global presence■ Employee satisfaction

IV

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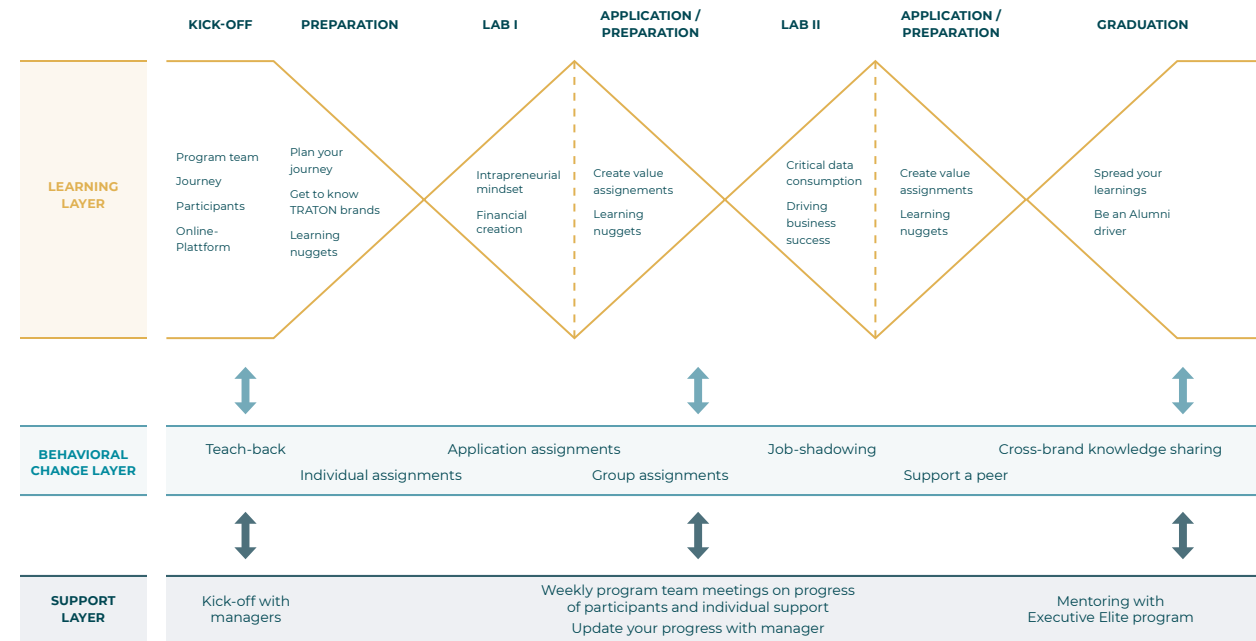
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A High Performance Learning Journey Approach

One of the uniting beliefs held by the program team from the outset was that learning is ‘process’ rather than an ‘event’; that sustainable learning that leads to behavioral change and valuable outcomes must be treated as a journey. In addition, there was a shared understanding that simply stretching the learning over time would not guarantee results. Decades of research has shown that without robust guidance and support only approximately 15% of training participants will use what they have learned in impactful ways (Brikerhoff & Apking, 2001).

With this as the common vision, the program team set out to design a 10-month journey stretched over time that would provide participants with necessary



V

[Click to enlarge](#)

knowledge and skills, safe practice opportunities and guidance to use these skills in their work to bring about desired outcomes. It has been said many times that all good writing is re-writing. The same can be said of learning journey

design – it is an iterative process. As the program team continued to refine and develop the learning journey a three-layer approach emerged [Fig V].



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The **learning layer** was modeled on the design thinking principle of converging and diverging thinking. Before each of the synchronous interventions ('labs'), participants were provided with a series of assignments designed to build a common knowledge foundation (converging). The 'labs' then introduced multiple concepts and provided a safe environment for participants to come together, share perspectives, try new skills, gain new insights under the watchful guidance of the ESMT Berlin faculty (diverging). The learning cycle then continued with application assignments to create value in real business life and more 'learning nuggets' to prepare for the next lab.

The **behavioral change layer** was the link between learning and impact. The centerpiece of this layer was the 'Application Challenges'. After every 'lab',

participants were presented with a series of concrete, practical ways in which to use the skills and knowledge they had practiced during the 'lab'. Each one of these challenges, if performed well, would result in outcomes identified on the Impact Map. Each participant was required to identify, in agreement with their manager, the 3 most relevant and valuable challenges for them in their role that would be accomplished between labs.

These application challenges could be seen as micro-projects and were the key drivers of impact from the program. Importantly, this meant that Management Excellence was designed on a principle of *guided* and *targeted* application of skills that would not leave impact to chance! Another unique design feature of the Management Excellence program that was built into the behavioral change

layer was the job-shadowing component which required participants from different brands and geographies to attend each other's virtual meetings. This particular component had a multi-value effect; it was an opportunity to observe first hand cross-brand and cross-cultural differences, it was an opportunity for cross-brand learning and collaboration, and it was an opportunity to get honest feedback on application of the knowledge and skills from the program from a trusted peer. In addition to these central two pieces, the behavioral change layer also included group assignments to encourage and foster cross-brand knowledge sharing and tech-backs which were a powerful mechanism to reinforce learning and at the same time extend the effects of the program to the participants' teams.



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The third and final layer was the **support layer**. Another, fundamental belief of the program team was that the transition from learning to sustained application is seldom smooth or painless. If we wanted our participants to really make that transition, they would need feedback, encouragement and support to keep them committed to this journey. Perhaps the most important relationship in the support layer was the one between the participant and their direct manager. The participant managers' engagement and support would be vital for the success of the program and this was communicated at the outset via a dedicated kick-off session specifically for the participant managers. This session set clear expectations on these vital stakeholders and the fact that they were part of the process from the outset meant that the program team could rely on their support as the program unfolded.

Throughout the program, the participants were directed to check in with their manager to discuss progress and manage barriers to applying their learning. Another component in the support layer was the check-in webinars. These were short (1hr) online sessions between the labs that were a forum dedicated to sharing participant successes and challenges.

These sessions had a dual function of offering support and keeping participants accountable and committed to the journey. The third component of the support layer was the cross-brand mentoring tandems. The Executive Elite Program [Fig II, Page 7]. is the highest level of the TRATON Talent Development Pyramid; the target audience are the group executives. On completion of the Management Excellence Program the participants were paired with

a mentor from from the Executive Elite Program - from another brand within the TRATON GROUP Executive Elite Program; a powerful way for them to continue and deepen their development journey. On the same theme the final piece of the support layer was the establishment of an Alumni Network driven by the program participants in order to continue the cross-brand collaboration.



Leveraging Technology to Promote Success

The three-layer design paradigm migrated from a series of joined-up learning events to a seamless and cohesive 10-month journey that was woven into the very fabric of each participant's job role. Supporting this journey through more traditional means of communication (e.g. email) would simply not be enough. The program team found the tool they needed in the Promote® platform. Promote® provided the vehicle to:

- Distribute learning nuggets (case studies, videos, knowledge packs etc)
- Support social learning through team tasks and peer reviews
- Create participant accountability through report backs on 'Application Challenges'

- Get real-time information on program success through completion rate data
- Encourage and inform participants through program announcements
- Pivot to a virtual and digital delivery mode when the corona pandemic arrived

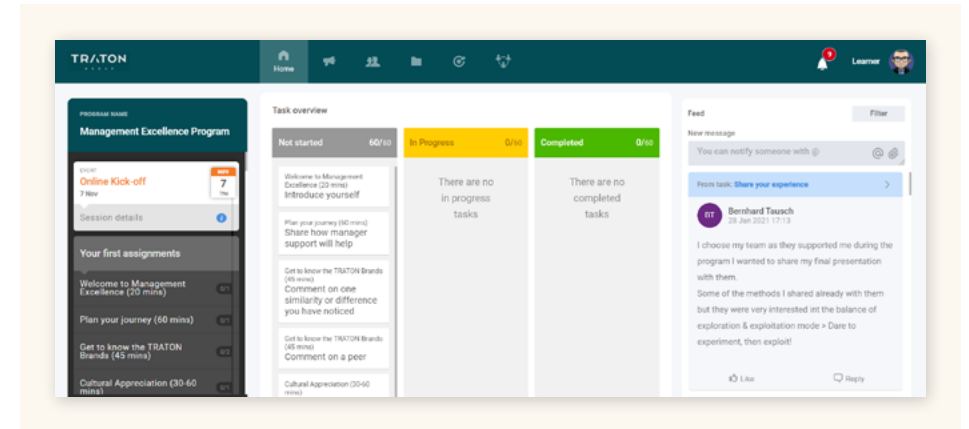
4
BRANDS



19
PARTICIPANTS



93 %
COMPLETION RATE



435
SOCIAL
MESSAGES



835
ASSIGNMENT
REPORTS



1055
ASSIGNMENTS
COMPLETED



The Pivot to Virtual

No report of any L&D initiative carried out during the year of 2020 would be complete without a comment on the effects of the corona pandemic. It is interesting already to reflect on how rooted in the physical classroom the very concept of training and education was until March 2020 when many L&D professionals were forced to reappraise their delivery methods and delivery channels. For many organizations the answer was to put L&D on hold; to wait and see. For TRATON and the Management Excellence program, that notion was briefly entertained but quickly abandoned – the show would go on!

As we examined our pre-requisites, we discovered we had a good head-start for making the transition to a virtual

learning journey. The Promote® platform provided a perfect means for distributing program content (films, articles, case studies) digitally as well as a two-way communication channel to broadcast program updates as the pandemic developed. In addition, as mentioned earlier, online check-in sessions had already been built-in as part of the original program design.

These sessions were painlessly re-purposed as virtual classes. The virtual classes themselves took everyone (participants and faculty alike) on a steep learning curve. It became quickly apparent that it required more than lifting classroom training design into virtual environments and soon break-out rooms, chat pods and Mentimeter polls became standard tools for delivering engaging virtual sessions.

It must be acknowledged that this process was able to proceed in a successful and relatively smooth fashion due to the trust established between the program team and the participants in the first part of the program. The participants appreciated the value the Management Excellence program was bringing them and were keen for the program to succeed. This was evidenced by the open and constructive feedback and continued engagement and commitment of participants during this turbulent period. One of the important lessons learned from this experience was that short, virtual classes have an advantage in that they can be organized at short notice and deliver short impulses of knowledge just at the moment of need – a characteristic that classroom training is unlikely to ever be able to imitate.

A Newton's cradle with five silver spheres is shown in motion against a dark teal background. The spheres are blurred to indicate movement. Two thick, curved orange lines arc across the scene, framing the central text. The text 'THE IMPACT' is centered in the lower half of the image.

THE IMPACT



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The impact of the Management Excellence program ultimately meant delivering on the Performance Outcomes detailed in the Impact Map [Fig IV, Page 13]. These were the outcomes that the key stakeholders agreed at the outset that would make an important contribution to the Organizational Ambitions of the TRATON GROUP and be the markers of success.


However, simply providing evidence for the Performance Outcomes being achieved was not sufficient. In order to truly demonstrate the value of the Management Excellence program it would be important to understand and demonstrate the connection between the learning, the behavioral change and the subsequent results.



**USE THE DARE-TO-TRY MINDSET
IN MY DAILY BUSINESS AND
LEADERSHIP. THE RESULT IS
A MORE CREATIVE CULTURE IN
A SHORT TIME.**

Further impact stories 



Video 



Video 



Video 


MANAGER

PARTICIPANTS




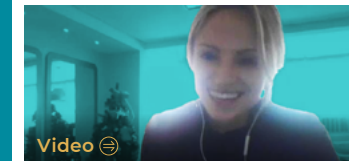
Video 




Video 



Video 



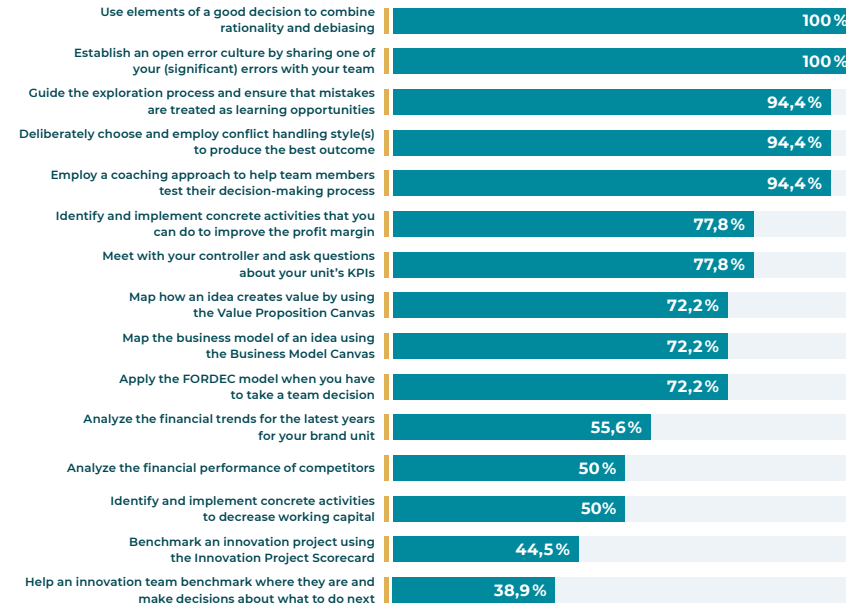
Video 



Management Excellence Drives Behavioral Change

As previously noted, the 'Application Challenges' were the principal vehicle for driving the use of the knowledge and skills being taught in the program. The 'Application Challenges' were monitored throughout the program and we discovered numerous success stories on Promote® along the way. Participant data gathered at the end of the program identified extremely high levels of training transfer in the targeted behaviors; and not just single application try-outs but multiple application attempts. In particular, the behaviors of 'Establishing an open error culture' and 'Using elements of a good decision to combine rationality and debiasing' saw high degrees of transfer by every single participant [Fig VI].

% PARTICIPANTS
reporting either several
successful applications of
targeted behaviors
OR
single successful
applications of targeted
behaviors and intentions
to continue



**HIGH APPLICATION
RATES OF TARGETED
BEHAVIORS**

VI

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Management Excellence is a strong Contributor to Personal Development

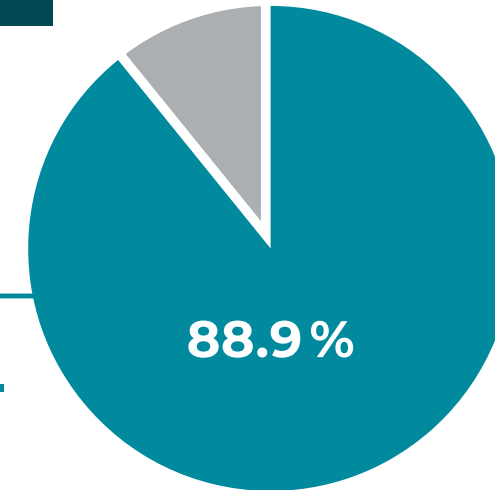
When asked at the end of the program to what degree the Management Excellence program had contributed to their personal development nearly 90% of the participants agreed that although they may have been practicing some of these behaviors before attending Management Excellence, they had not been doing so in such a conscious, deliberate or proficient way as after attending the program. This indicates that Management Excellence has been a strong contributor to personal development [Fig VII].

The program's effectiveness was also corroborated by the extremely high levels of engagement. At the end of

MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE IS A STRONG CONTRIBUTOR TO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

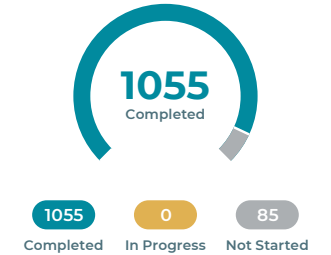
I was performing some of these behaviors before attending Management Excellence but not in such a conscious, deliberate or proficient way as now, after attending the program

VII

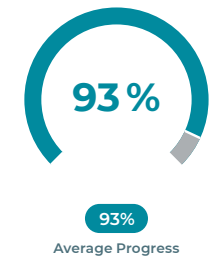


the program the Promote® completion rates stood at an average of 93%, with 1055 assignments completed in total.

TASK STATUS



AVERAGE PROGRESS

[Click to enlarge](#)



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Management Excellence Drives Better Business Driven Decisions and An Open Error Culture

From the outset, through Promote® we noted not only many stories of skills application but also the valuable outcomes that occur as a result. The impact survey that we conducted at the end of the program asked participants to indicate what outcomes they have noticed as a result of applying the knowledge and skills from Management Excellence in their professional practice. Some of the key results acknowledged by the majority of the participants were improved business-driven decisions, improved open error culture, increased team involvement in decision-making process, increased cross-brand collaboration and Increased initiative taking in the team [Fig VIII].

All of these results, were identified as markers of success at the program outset. It is worth noting that for those Performance Outcomes that scored less highly (Increase in Business-Driven

Decisions, Increased Innovation, Increased Operational Efficiency) the program team have made adjustments to the 2021 program content to include more tools to drive these outcomes.

% PARTICIPANTS
reporting noticeable
outcomes as a result of
applying the knowledge and
skills from Management
Excellence in their
professional practice

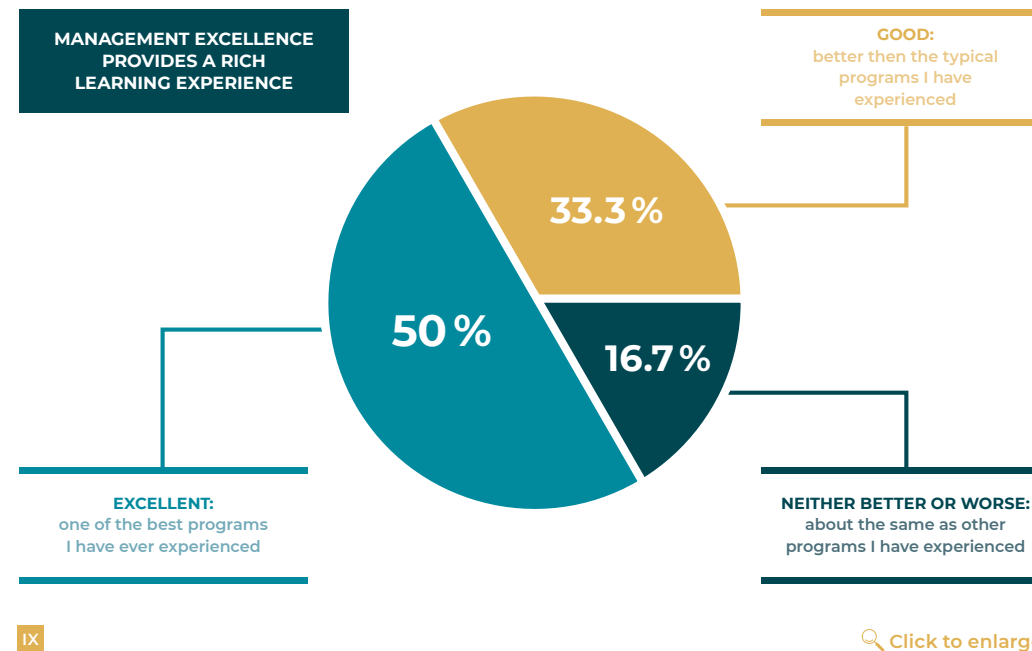


MANAGEMENT
EXCELLENCE DRIVES
BETTER BUSINESS
DRIVEN DECISIONS
AND AN OPEN
ERROR CULTURE



A Rich Learning Experience

Management Excellence provided a rich learning experience that equipped the participants with the knowledge and skills to carry out the necessary behavioral applications. When asked at the end of the program to rate the overall effectiveness of Management Excellence 50% of the participants rated it as 'One of the most effective development programs they have ever experienced'. A further 30% rated the program 'better than the typical programs they have experienced' [Fig XI].





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Reflections and Learnings for Future Cohorts

While the program team, the participants and other key stakeholders are extremely proud of their involvement and accomplishments from Management Excellence we also enter the next cycle with a series of lessons learned that will help fine-tune the program.

Virtual classes work when used strategically: The original program design included virtual components in the form of a program kick-off and planned check-in webinars. As the corona pandemic ensued, we were forced to rapidly translate much of the lab content to virtual classes. A lesson learned is that virtual classes can be a useful way of breaking content down into smaller bite-size chunks delivered on a just-in-time basis – an advantage for the busy managers that make

up the target audience of this program. There is still an ambition to have some in-person elements to the 2021 cycle but leveraging virtual components is something we will do more strategically going forwards.

Establish clear roles and shared responsibility: Another of the key lessons learned was the importance of establishing clear roles... but not overly clear. When the program began there was a clear division of responsibility but not clear roles; ESMT Berlin were in charge of content, Mindset were in charge of the 'the journey'. Relatively quickly it became apparent that hard lines in that division would not result in success. In hindsight, the initial full day in-person workshops were critical for building trust and understanding of the various party's competence strengths. Once this trust and understanding was established, it led

to a shared attitude of 'support beyond roles'. One might say that roles became clearer but divisions of reasonability became more shared.

Weekly pulse meetings are an investment in time but are vital to build a strong culture and keep the program on track: Early in the program execution we decided to implement weekly 'pulse' meetings. At first, the primary function of these meetings was to keep track on participant progress and take remedial decisions when deviations were discovered. However, as the program progressed these meetings became important opportunities for maintaining a 'sense of team'. In terms of factors for success these pulse meetings were perhaps one of the most important elements of program management.



OUR JOURNEY
TOGETHER ENDS HERE,
BUT YOU MOVE ON.

Visualization of graduation speeches

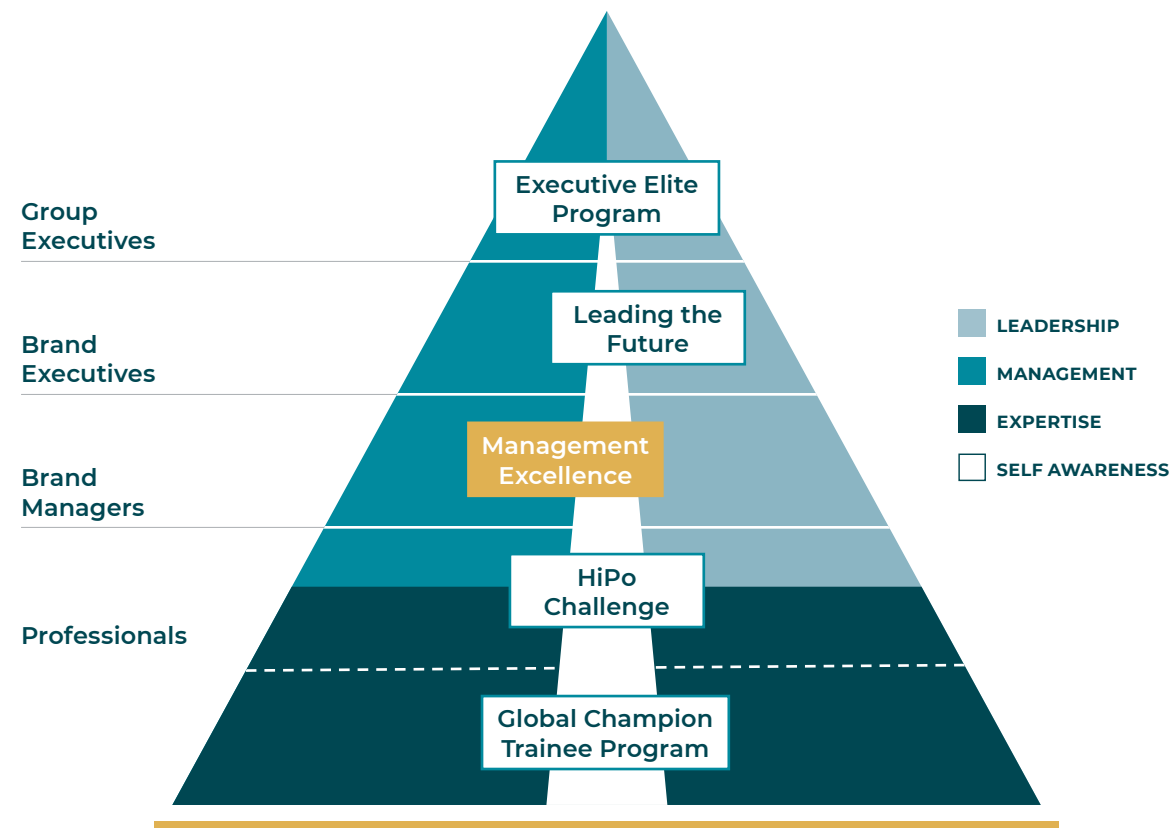
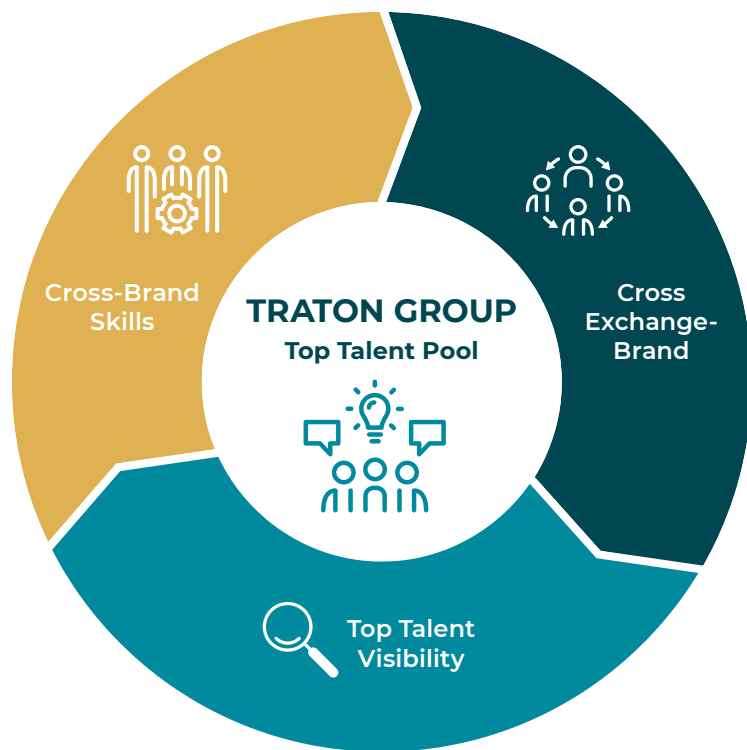


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- V — THREE LAYER CONCEPT

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- VII — PARTICIPANT PERFORMANCE
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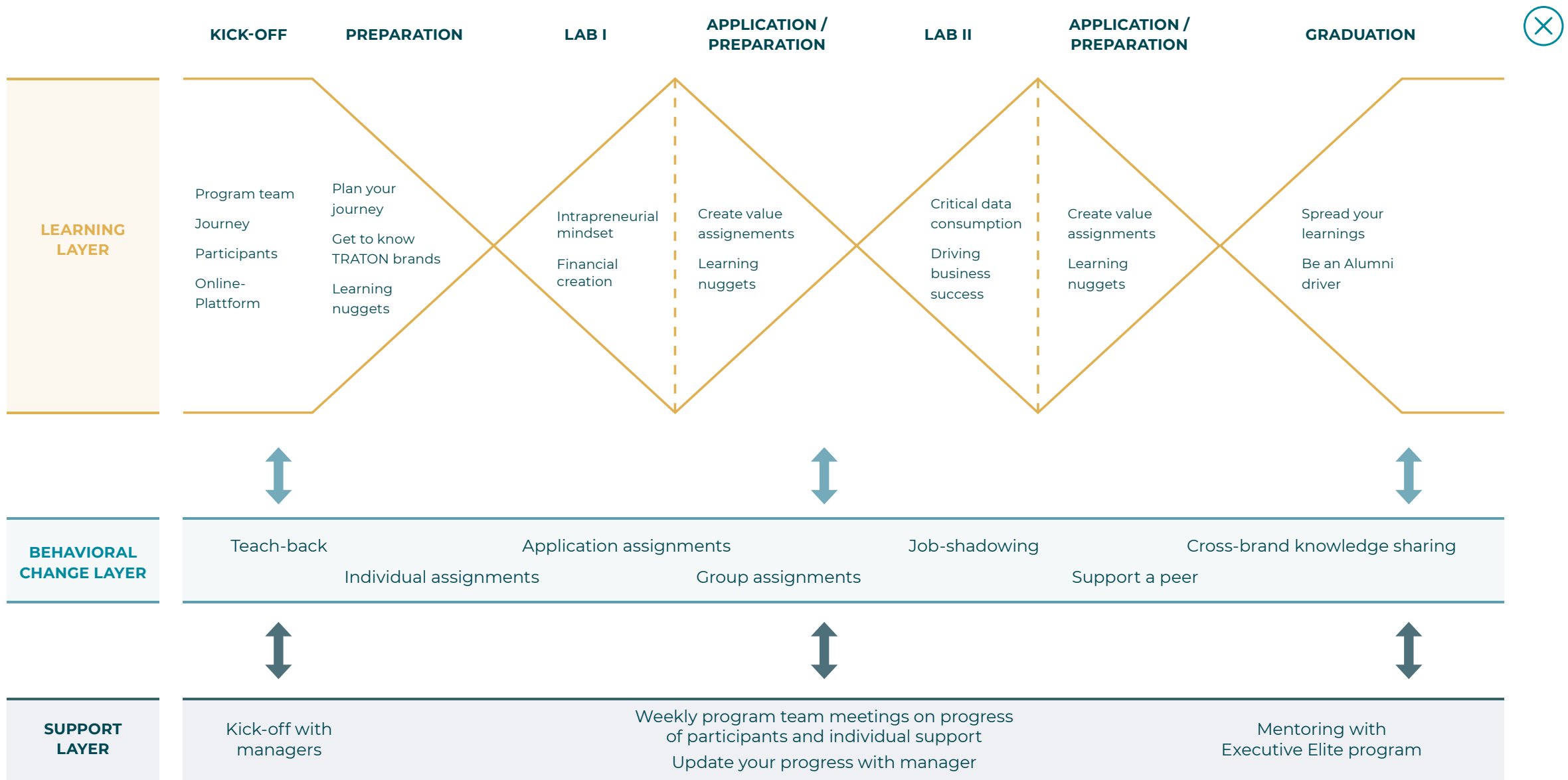






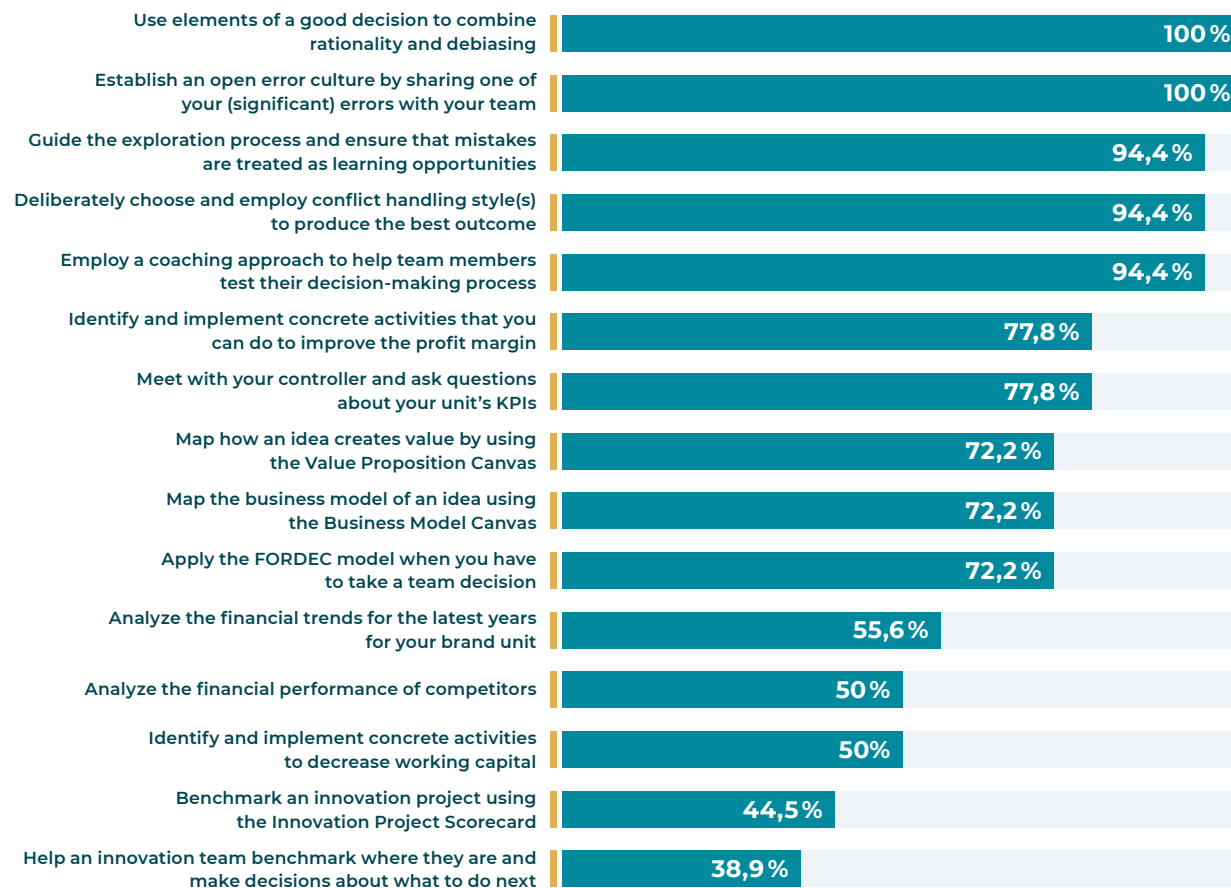


LEARNING OUTCOMES	BEHAVIOURAL APPLICATIONS	PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES	ORGANIZATIONAL AMBITIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Understands key characteristics of an intrapreneurial and disruptive mindset■ Ability to lead cross-brand (function) collaboration and innovation■ Understands financial management principles■ Applies business analytics in a VUCA world to create financial value■ Ability to make fact-based decisions under stressful conditions■ Ability to facilitate group decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Applies an intrapreneurial mindset and toolkit to drive financial value creation■ Explores all perspectives in cross-brand (function) scenarios to identify optimal solutions■ Identifies cross-brand (function) synergies and takes responsibility for driving the broader TRATON agenda■ Employs a range of decision making tools to include and involve the team in the decision making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Increased identification of cross-brand (function) synergies■ Increased cross-brand (function) collaboration■ Increase in business-driven decisions■ Improved business-driven decisions■ Increase in team involvement in decision making process■ Increased initiative taking in the team■ Improved open error culture in the team■ Increased innovation■ Increased operational efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Restructure the very concept of transportation and become the global champion of the transportation services industry.■ Be a leading global manufacturer of commercial vehicles and best in class in terms of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Profitability■ Customer innovation■ Global presence■ Employee satisfaction





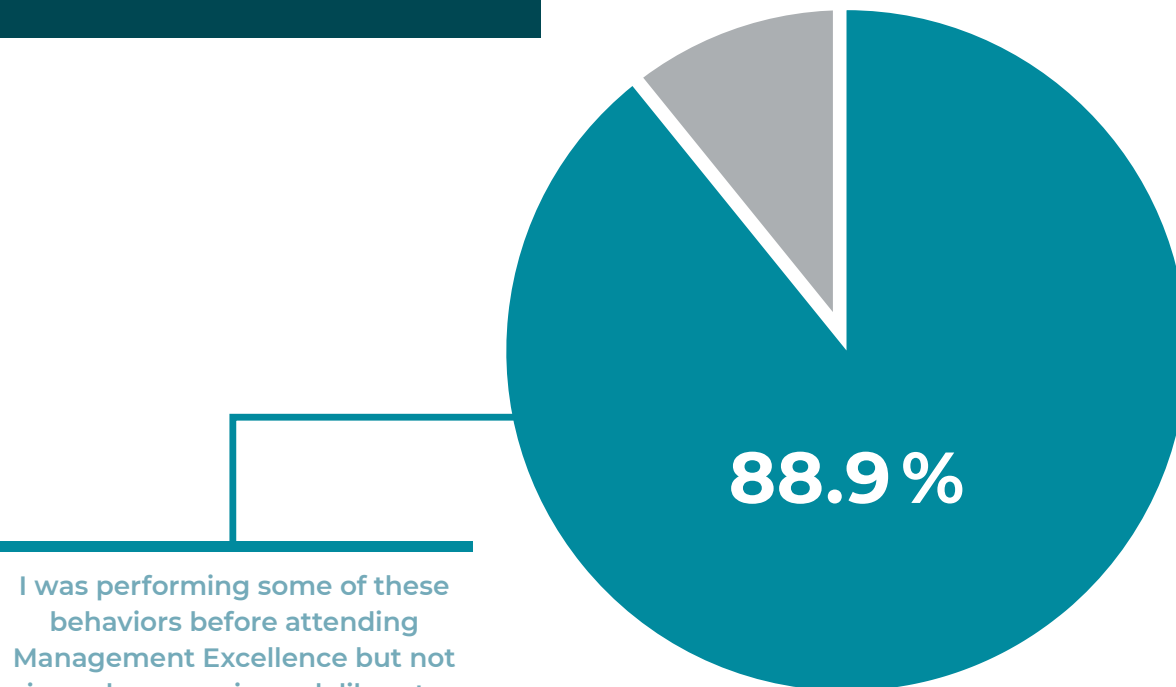
% PARTICIPANTS
reporting either several
successful applications of
targeted behaviors
OR
single successful
applications of targeted
behaviors and intentions
to continue



**HIGH APPLICATION
RATES OF TARGETED
BEHAVIORS**

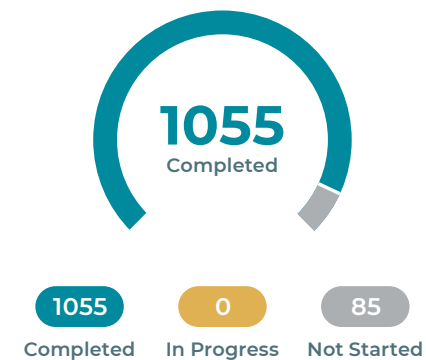


**MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE
IS A STRONG CONTRIBUTOR TO
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

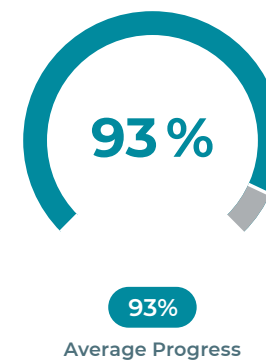


I was performing some of these behaviors before attending Management Excellence but not in such a conscious, deliberate or proficient way as now, after attending the program

TASK STATUS



AVERAGE PROGRESS





% PARTICIPANTS
reporting noticeable
outcomes as a result of
applying the knowledge and
skills from Management
Excellence in their
professional practice



**MANAGEMENT
EXCELLENCE DRIVES
BETTER BUSINESS
DRIVEN DECISIONS
AND AN OPEN
ERROR CULTURE**

