



The Kellogg Company was established in the United States in 1902 and opened its first UK factory in Manchester in 1938. Today, Kellogg produces more than 40 different cereals with plants in nineteen countries, on six continents, and markets its products in more than 160 countries. The company employs just over 15,000 worldwide.

### The Business Challenge

Kellogg's went through a process of huge change to develop a clear business strategy, and as part of this process a new set of company values were defined. One of the core elements of the business strategy was the focus on their 'leaders', who live the company values and develop talent for the future. In their definition, leaders are people who buy into the new Kellogg's values and live them every day; who are seen to be credible and consistent by their teams, and cast a 'positive shadow'.

Kellogg's leaders needed to communicate objectives for people with total clarity, and give their people a sense of pride and importance. Leaders give recognition, coaching and feedback, and devote time to creating the conditions for people to be successful. Whilst this emphasis on people was delivering business success, over the years, some of Kellogg's people management tools and processes, were not integrated or too complex to use. Managers also had not consistently executed these processes. To support a global business driven to achieve objectives year-after-year, all Kellogg leaders need to be aligned with the same people processes.

The supply chain and finance functions at Kellogg's, whose remit stretch across the whole European business, were keen to find a way of identifying people who would be able to advance one or two steps on the career ladder. This would enable the business to create the right opportunities within the organisation, and to ensure that when the right opportunities arose, they could place the best people in them. Their staff survey of all employees found topics like career development and relationships between employees and managers being of concern to employees.

People wanted a more structured process, to know how they fitted into the company, and where they were going. They also said they wanted more transparency into some of the people processes. Performance management was already highly transparent, but succession management was not so clearly understood. The Kellogg's management team wanted to identify future talent by determining potential and 'promotability'. They particularly wanted to identify exceptional employees who could demonstrate the capability of moving up two levels within five years.



## The Solution

As part of their commitment to people development, Kellogg's brought in Hunter Roberts to take a new and focused approach to the career development and succession planning process. The Hunter Roberts team created development centres as a robust tool to identify potential within the company, and encourage people to take responsibility for their own development. The development centres were initially implemented to help the supply chain and finance function develop its future leaders, but it also helped Kellogg's to double check that those selected were of high potential and could cope with being fast tracked.

Hunter Roberts helped senior managers select their high potential employees to attend the centres, with around twelve individuals taking part at a time. The two-day programmes started with psychometric tests, followed by icebreaker activities where observer coaches helped participants to feel more comfortable. The next day there was a mixture of group and one-to-one activities and role-play exercises, each of which looked at different competencies.

The centres focussed heavily on the participants, each of whom received at least three hours' one-to-one coaching and feedback over the two-day programme. Additional feedback was available to participants following the centres in the form of a development report, which assessed individuals' key strengths and identified what Kellogg can do to further support their development. This led to clear actions in the personal development plan.

## Measuring Success

The development centres had clear benefits at Kellogg's, through identifying leadership potential rather than just technical competency. In addition, the process has allowed European Finance to align finance succession planning and high potential talent assessment across different finance teams, and clarified the performance and development needs of all finance managers. There has been a significant improvement in performance from those who attended the development centres, as they gained more clarity about their aspirations. Participants themselves reported real benefits, not least of which is a focused personal development plan. Many report that the programme has given them a clear understanding of their current strengths, capabilities and areas requiring future development. Managers have reported a much higher degree of awareness about the impact of their current management style.

As part of the development centre process, a number of directors were trained to be business coaches, and played the role of observer coaches throughout the Development Centre programmes. Training directors as coaches has helped them focus on the individuals within their area of the business, and understand the role that these individuals play in the success of the organisation. As business coaches, directors are now able to give feedback, coach, assess performance and manage talent within the organisation. Developing the directors in this way also reduced Kellogg's reliance on Hunter Roberts' support, so that the benefits of the whole programme could be sustained internally.

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Following the success of the development centres in the Supply Chain and Finance functions, new performance management and career development processes were introduced globally, and Hunter Roberts designed practical workshops for managers and employees that were run across Europe. Succession planning was directly linked to performance management and career development, creating an integrated process of managing Kellogg's talent in all its markets, for the first time.

Attendees at the performance management and career development workshops reported increased motivation to use the processes and understanding to the link to business strategy.