



Client Profile: Green Mountain Coffee Roasters (GMCR)

Serving a Revelation in Every Cup: Supervisory Success Training

The Need:

Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Inc. (GMCR) is recognized as a leader in the specialty coffee industry for its award-winning coffees, innovative brewing technology, such as the Keurig Machine, and socially responsible business practices. The company had delivered double digit sales growth for 27 consecutive quarters. As a result, GMCR experienced rapid growth and tripled its workforce in four years. In the past, the company promoted supervisors from within its workforce of employees already immersed in GMCR culture and values. However, rapid growth through acquisitions and hiring of supervisors posed a challenge for sustaining the corporate culture. They were looking for a solution to support new supervisors working in GMCR plants across North America.

GCC Solution:

Global Corporate College, a network of colleges around the world, was able to provide education partners for each GMCR plant in North America. For Pru Sullivan, Director of Continuous Learning, GCC was a logical selection. “We were trying to develop a new supervisor training program that would be more systemic and scalable as the company continues to grow. That is where GCC helped us to find local partners and faculty who could take our core work and make it consistent across our footprint,” Sullivan explained.

A dedicated team from GCC worked to design the new Supervisory Success curriculum as a blend of GMCR content and GCC Supervision & Management curriculum. The curriculum was based on the active adult learning model where each learning experience is 10% workshop, 70% application and 20% coaching and feedback.

“The idea was for the learning to be designed like mini plan-do-check-act cycles for supervisors as they become reflective leadership practitioners,” Sullivan reported. Training modalities included classroom workshops for initial delivery of content, followed by group and personal coaching sessions, electronic learning reinforcements and manager engagement. In 2010 and 2011, 111 new managers and frontline supervisors went through the program at five GMCR locations across North America. Participant reaction to the learning was both positive and strong. In addition to the appreciation for new skills and knowledge they acquired, participants valued the personal relationships they developed and the sense of camaraderie among cohort members. “People felt like they understood more about the company. The frontline supervisors felt like they were getting support and were cared about. It took the mystery out of what is the magic of GMCR. It made the culture and expectations of performance more clear, explicit, and it was wicked fun,” Sullivan said.

About Supervisory Success Training:

The supervisory success curriculum was designed to be delivered in seven modules that included a pre-assessment, post assessment, classroom instruction, group and personal coaching sessions, and learning activities delivered via email. The seven Supervisory Success modules included:

Module 1: Succeeding as a Supervisor

Module 2: Developing & Engaging the Workforce (part I)

Module 3: Setting a Shared Vision & Direction

Module 4: Social Styles

Module 5: Driving for Results

Module 6: Developing & Engaging the Workforce (part II)

Module 7: Innovation & Improvement

Invista's Role:

Invista supported this training delivery at GMCR plants in Sumner, Washington, Castroville, California and Toronto, Canada. Our team coordinated the training delivery and instructional facilitators at each of these locations.