



CASE STUDY

SHS Group

October 2018

The Challenge

The SHS Group is a major player in the FMCG sector, employing over 800 people throughout the UK and Ireland and turning over £400 million per-annum.

This provides a strong financial base and central resources for four divisions linked to brand ownership, sales, distribution, marketing and corporate services.

Our Vision:

We are agile and ambitious with the freedom to exploit fresh thinking and realise unique opportunities for growth.

The business has been undergoing a period of growth both organically and through a series of acquisitions for a number of years.

Organic growth allows for evolutionary change, however enveloping new businesses into the fold through acquisition demands an understanding and a readiness to embrace new people, new cultures whilst bringing together the myriad of working practices that exist across these previously separate organisations to develop them into one cohesive working unit.

At the SHS group our people are at the heart of everything we do. Our organisational strategy is based on three foundations - Category Growth, Operational Excellence and People.

One of the objectives of the People Pillar is to create an environment where people at all levels of the business, not just lower and mid-level management, but senior management and emerging senior management are able to grow, develop and actively drive the vision and success of the organisation.

At the start of the learning and development journey, we had one over-arching ambition; to raise the skill-sets and knowledge-base across all management teams to operate at the same level. This has involved over 50 managers at supervisory or introductory level management, 30 Managers at middle Management Level and our Executive Level Management team consisting of Senior Managers and Board Level Directors.

The organisation's long term strategic approach is to achieve the twin aims of business growth through acquisition coupled with the smooth transition and amalgamation of these teams. Now some 18 months into this period of aggressive dynamic growth, we anticipate somewhere between another four to five years before we can achieve our next major milestone of consolidation.

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The Solution

For a few of the acquired businesses within our group, implementing a new learning and development pathway for their people was entirely new to them and a complete cultural shift.

At the core of the SHS Group vision lies our **SPiRiT**, encompassing values that reflect the following attributes:

- S**tronger together attitude
- P**erformance driven approach
- I**ntegrity within our people
- R**esponsibility from everyone
- I**nitiative and drive
- T**eamwork based approach

SPiRiT captures our essence, demonstrates our culture and reflects the behaviours required to drive our business forward. These values and associated behaviours have been core to our business success for the last 40 years and we have captured them with SPiRiT for perpetuity.

Our values and behaviour framework builds upon the behaviours we already see demonstrated and lived across our Group today, and they form the culture that helps differentiate us from other organisations and will support our growth. The framework shows examples of the collective behaviours that we expect to see in our colleagues and ourselves, as we live our company values every day.

To this end, it was vital that we partnered with a learning & development provider with a strong track record of Middle Management and Senior Management Development experience that not only understood our business but was prepared to take the time to understand and live our mission and values as an organisation and help us forge our strategic pathway for the future of the company. Cosensa's team of lead facilitators have engaged with our Management Teams pre-training and coaching to understand our business and explore strategic opportunities for our business and our people.

There are numerous training providers in Northern Ireland. In my current and previous capacities as HR and Training Manager for two of the countries largest employers (Top 100 companies), I have met with many, worked with many, but few have the professionalism, flexibility and the range of interventions that Cosensa Learning & Development offer. I have worked with Richard and his Management and Executive Level team of trainers and coaches for many years and their friendly, flexible, supportive and innovative approach really works for us as a business. Nothing is too much trouble and they understand our challenges within the business and work with us. They have become our strategic business partners as opposed to simply our training provider.

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This has been absolutely instrumental in helping us change the hearts and minds of colleagues across the board as we have involved them in our vision of using our people development framework to help drive the business and everyone within it, forward.

The Outcome

Cosensa provide our Senior Management Team with a range of suitable interventions designed to address specific local and group-wide needs.

They cover our various sites across the UK and Ireland and continue to help us focus on driving innovation, strategic change and project management across the group.

We have chosen to work with Cosensa for many reasons, but predominantly it is the interactive and engaging style of their programmes and skilled Training Practitioners, their high level international management experience and their learner centric focus

After the initial consultation and design phase was completed between Summer to Winter 2017, a wide ranging and impactful roll-out training programme was conducted throughout 2018 spanning a variety of various disciplines design to enhance employee performance, improve job satisfaction and ultimately drive forward numerous areas of business improvement and encourage an on-going culture of 'embracing change for performance improvement'.

We have noticed a tangible improvement and increase in levels of engagement across all our group sites. Areas of the business that were previously reluctant to embrace change and resistant to the notion of adopting a people development approach as a crucial strand to the future of the success of the company, have been inspired and invigorated by the new corporate strategy we have rolled out. Cosensa have been instrumental in helping the business implement that change and improvement.

Elaine Sinclair
HR Business Partner

