

Applying the global strategy on local markets

How do you exercise 90 middle managers in strategic thinking, with a clear connection to the company's real challenges?

In 2011, the Fujitsu Key Talent program was sponsored by the financial department with a challenging objective: To instill a profound understanding of competition in multiple markets. In addition, Fujitsu wanted their 90 middle managers, handpicked for the Key Talent program, to practice the elements of strategy, such as portfolio mix, growth in emerging markets, etc.

Besides the ambitious learning objectives, the training needed to be completed in one day, be suitable for a diverse group of 90 people from vastly different backgrounds, and adhere to Fujitsu's leading learning principle: *Development should stem from experience and relationships, and not from "education"*.

An interactive learning experience

Fujitsu applies the business simulation Celemi Apples & Oranges™ to teach business finance skills to non-finance employees. For several years, this interactive, hands-on learning experience has delivered results beyond expectations, and made Fujitsu turn to Celemi with this new challenge. When describing the learning needs for their Key Talent program, the Fujitsu Training & Development executives were introduced to Celemi Enterprise™.

Changing strategies in dynamic markets



"This was extraordinary! I've never seen such an engaging learning method, while at the same time encouraging profound discussions. We needed the kick-off to be relevant, but this widely surpassed our expectations."

– Finance Manager, Fujitsu

The Celemi Enterprise™ business simulation

In Celemi Enterprise™, participants are divided into teams of 4-5, representing company management. Just like in reality, the simulated companies compete for clients in a dynamic market. Through its tangible, hands-on format, where participants physically move resources and clients across the simulation board, Celemi Enterprise creates the "big picture" understanding crucial for strategic business decisions.

While building and learning to execute a winning strategy, the teams must balance short-term results with long-term value, and allocate financial resources with business needs, such as:

- Targeting and selling to preferred customers
- Developing an attractive product portfolio
- Getting the most out of people & processes
- Creating a strong, sustainable brand

Simulating Fujitsu's reality with tailored facilitation

As with many international businesses, the global Fujitsu strategy may be a challenge to implement locally. Therefore, to further connect the Celemi Enterprise simulation to Fujitsu's reality, a multi-market version of the simulation was presented. The 90 participants were divided into six global company groups. After each group decided on a global strategy, they were divided once more into three teams, to compete against other teams on three regional markets.

Wrap up and take home learnings

At the end of the day, the teams presented their accomplishments, what they learned from their mistakes, and analysis of how to manage their simulated companies in the future. In a "Dragon's Den" setting, three C-level directors challenged the participants with questions on finance, product portfolio, and competitive positioning. The CFO spoke about the value of cash management – "Profit is an opinion, cash is a fact" – tying his messages to those of the simulation. Finally, based on the strategy and level of success, one team was declared the winner.

Participants appreciated the clear illustration of how good and poor investments manifest themselves so powerfully throughout the company, and the learning points were many; "The strategy aspects of the simulation were painfully realistic – if you attract customers, but don't bother finding out *why*, you're bound to lose them," one customer service representatives said. "I didn't think playing a board game would have an impact on my everyday work, but I was amazed by how it allowed us to try various strategies and see the direct impacts," said one of the sales managers.

One of the HR consultants concluded: "When conducting a workshop of this magnitude, it's always a challenge to keep this many people focused and active. When I saw 90 managers coming back from lunch 15 minutes ahead of time to keep going, I knew this was a good investment."



PHOTO: FUJITSU

About

Fujitsu Ltd is a multinational information technology company headquartered in Tokyo, Japan. With 172,000 employees and representation in more than 70 countries, Fujitsu's global revenue in 2011 amounted to USD 56 billion.