



Challenge

How can we help accountants plan their career paths and effectively manage heavy workloads? This was the question that prompted BDO's Audit & Assurance department (A&A) to consult FranklinCovey.

We talked to Kim Versteeg, HRD advisor at BDO: "In the past, we've often found that newly qualified chartered accountants lack something to work towards. For years, they had focused on achieving CA status and suddenly they had no goal. At that point, they would sometimes move on to one of our competitors, where the grass was seemingly greener, only to come back to us several years later, or turn their back on accountancy completely. This was a good opportunity for us to help these accountants find a new goal and take the steps they needed to get there. We chose FranklinCovey because their course content was a

good match with what we were after. It's better to build on something that has already proven to be effective than to try and create something from scratch yourself."

Solution

FranklinCovey's All Access Pass[®] provided the basis for FranklinCovey's collaboration with BDO. We developed the following learning journeys for A&A:

- "Design Your Career Path," based on *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*[®].
- "Leading Yourself," based on *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*[®].
- "Leading Others," based on *The 6 Critical Practices for Leading a Team*[™].

The course attendees absolutely loved the "Design Your Career Path" program. After the pilot course, many



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- Kim Versteeg, HRD Advisor

of the organization's employees told each other about it. They appreciated being given the opportunity, time, and space to work on their personal development and to determine a goal to work towards, without BDO demanding anything in return.

Consequently, and because of the organization's new strategy for 2021-2025, the company decided to not only offer this course to A&A employees, but to offer a similar course to its other employees too. BDO wants its employees to develop their leadership skills at four levels: Leading Yourself, Leading Others, Leading Business and Leading Change. For this reason, two more learning journeys, "Leading Yourself" and "Leading Others," were developed as part of the Leadership program.

Results

Many employees are not used to talking about themselves and looking inward. This program makes them much more aware of what they want. Afterwards, one of the course attendees said: "Before the learning journey, I'd never realized that I aspire to become a partner." Another course attendee said: "Although BDO is a wonderful organization, I've come to realize that my true passion is healthcare." Kim admits: "On the one hand, organizations may be afraid that they'll lose their people, but sometimes, that's a logical consequence. And that's OK, so long as it's a well-considered decision and people aren't leaving because they think they will have better opportunities elsewhere, only to return the next year."

BDO prepares people for the next step in their career, whatever that step may be. After completing the program, managers have found that their employees are better able to make conscious decisions and reflect on their needs. They have also seen an improvement in their ability to manage heavy workloads, a

notorious challenge in accountancy, particularly during peak times. The program helps people deal with this, getting them to focus on their main goals and consciously create space for them in their calendars. "We're also getting better at giving and receiving feedback, something that's reflected in our employee satisfaction surveys," says Kim.

The programs help the organization realize its strategy. Leadership is one of the key focus areas of this strategy. In addition, the organization aspires to switch from hierarchical leadership to shared leadership. BDO wants to help people excel and fulfil their potential. In view of the current shortages in the labor market, BDO seeks to retain talented employees by granting them more opportunities to grow. In today's workplace, people focus much more on learning. Over the years, many organizations have had their people take professional development courses, particularly concentrating on their specialist knowledge, to ensure they obtained enough PE (Permanent Education) points. Now they are teaching their people soft skills, as well. To be able to provide clients with a top-quality product, it is not only important to have employees with extensive knowledge of their field, but also employees who are highly self-assured and competent. These programs help organizations get such a workforce.

"We were planning to offer the course to ten groups in 2023. But how do I get people to sign up for those groups?" was Kim's initial response when the leadership programs were made available to more departments within the organization. Attendance is voluntary, but within a week and a half, all the courses were fully booked. The groups consist of people from different departments, enabling people from different teams, each with their own area of expertise, to meet. As a result, attendees feel a very strong connection to BDO, rather than just to their department or team.

"I'm very happy with our collaboration with FranklinCovey. We have great faith in each other, and they really understand what we want and need. They can always be reached, and if a coach picks up on something in a session, we always receive information on that, anonymously. Their business support is great too. Communication is direct and easy, and the team proactively offers solutions."

About

BDO is an accountancy firm that is active internationally. In terms of revenue, it is the fifth-largest accounting and advisory firm in the world. Its offices employ more than 110,000 people in 164 countries. In the Netherlands, the firm has approximately 2,700 employees.



Website

www.bdo.nl

Industry

Accountancy

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Opportunity

How to retain talented employees for your company, and how to help employees effectively manage heavy workloads?

Solution

- All Access Pass®
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People®
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The FranklinCovey All Access Pass® helps you get the most value out of your L&D investment by providing access to content and technology, as well as a deep bench of experts to design and deliver a unique learning experience tailored to your organization's needs.

For more information, please contact FranklinCovey at info@franklincovey-benelux.com.

