
Management development in a motivationally rich environment

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Abstract

With the realisation that it needed to enhance its leadership capability across Europe, SABMiller is working with Apter International to provide a highly innovative approach to management development and leadership. Central to its European Management Development Programme (EMDp) is the synergy that exists between the two organisations in terms of "brand consciousness", but also crucially the creation of a "motivationally rich" learning environment. With the whole programme scientifically based on innovative new approaches arising from one of the world's first comprehensive applications of reversal theory to the world of work, SABMiller is already benefiting from the shared expertise of a confident European leadership network focused beyond function to broader business needs.

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The Apter-SABMiller synergy

As an organisation created from a number of successful, individual national brewers, SABMiller Europe has grown into a European entity that is in a position to facilitate - rather than direct - a variety of activities, processes and strategies which are going to be beneficial to the whole of the business. One of these is the development of more senior management and its leadership across Europe.

Apter International was invited to assist SABMiller for two key reasons:

- (1) they are experienced in delivering large-scale programmes, experience which goes back over 15 years; and
- (2) they bring a number of unique and innovative ideas to enable this to work.

However, in addition to these reasons, important synergies exist between Apter and SABMiller, despite the vast differences between them in scale and history. This understanding crucially lies in brand consciousness. SABMiller has some of the biggest local beer brands in the world, including Pilsner Urquell and, with the recent acquisition, the Birra Peroni brand in Italy. These are in addition to Castle Lager in South Africa and Tyskie, which has grown to be the number one national beer brand in Poland (see Appendix 1).

Apter International itself, through its scientific backing and experienced personnel, has a thorough and innovative understanding of branding concepts, sharing the theoretical base that it uses in its management development field to help organisations understand the relationships between their brands and their customers.

On a more operational level, both businesses are very committed to "making things happen" - the positive, "can do" approach which is at times very important in helping what was a fairly embryonic European structure.

Innovation in the learning environment

In terms of the innovative difference, Apter has a radical approach to making a successful learning design. That radical approach is based on making sure that learning is "motivationally



rich" (see Appendix 2). That idea of motivational richness comes from the research and work of Professor Michael Apter, a British psychologist now working at Georgetown University, Washington DC (see Appendix 3).

Reversal theory postulates that human experience and by implication the learning experience, is made up of a number of opposing motivational states that change how we interpret a situation. Each of these motivational states brings a different aspect of our experience to the foreground of our attention and focuses our intentions and behaviour. Individuals will regard a situation positively in so much as they recognise the potential within a particular situation to match the needs of the motivational state they are experiencing. Effective learning design by implication must address each of these states if development is to be maximised and more effective behaviours established (see Table I). This is not just a matter of keeping participants connected but highlights a fundamental assumption that learning is maximised when someone can respond and understand a situation from more than one motivational state.

For example, perceiving customer relationships from a mastery state will lead to considerations of process and control, from a sympathy state the opportunities for building personally rewarding relationships and, from a rebellious state the opportunity to be different and not "follow the herd".

Motivational richness facilitates the ability for each participant to remain both motivationally connected and achieve a broader understanding

of all that is involved in a range of key issues. This was particularly important throughout a programme which in total lasts three weeks (and potentially on into the future).

Motivational richness was therefore a key feature of the learning design. Added to this were two other building blocks: awareness and confidence. Awareness is an important feature of successful performance as has been evidenced in much sports research, and confidence is central to the effective transition from intention to action. Programmes which seek to establish all three as underpinning any development experience have - in the experience of Apter International - delivered powerful results.

Achieving motivational richness

The motivational richness came from using the framework of motivational states to evaluate both the individual components of the programme and their total learning experience. A set of typical questions were used to make sure that there was a motivational richness to the European Management Development Programme (EMDp). It was not assumed that all components could reflect all the motivational states, but there would be sufficient motivational diversity in each to keep people engaged and able to respond to what was happening from more than one perspective. These questions in themselves proved a powerful stimulus for creativity and design in developing the programme.

Table I

State	Focus/value	Typical questions
Serious	Achievement	How does this help me or my business meet goals and objectives?
Playful	Enjoyment	Is this interesting or stimulating?
Conforming	Fit	Does this help me contribute to establishing and maintaining good practice and the SABMiller way?
Rebellious	Innovation	Will this help me or the business do things differently?
Mastery	Control	Does this help me feel things are more under control and manageable?
Sympathy	Relationships	Am I building strong relationships that will establish a supportive network both now and in the future?
Self	Myself	Am I clear from this learning experience "what is in it for me" in terms of both my current role and future aspirations?
Other	Other people and the overall	Does this help me understand and respond better to the needs of others internal/external to SABMiller?

Key programme elements

Each component operated within an overall learning process which in itself was built around the motivational audit prepared above. The process applied to both the experience of each day and the overall structure of the programme. In itself the model - raise awareness (apply to the learner's own work experience, take action to practice new perspectives and understanding, and provide feedback and assessment of development) is nothing new. Combined with a real focus on the motivational properties within, the process became really powerful and transformational (see Figure 1).

This process ran through the course of both a single event/day and also throughout the course of the whole programme. This meant that it worked at a number of different levels at all times building both a heightened level of awareness and a confidence and experience in new or enhanced behaviours.

In following this process there were a number of key elements:

- 360 degree feedback and psychological profiling;
- keynote speaker inputs;
- SABMiller senior management inputs;
- leadership challenge;
- application review groups;
- workouts; and
- assessment and one-to-one feedback.

Each of which was mapped in terms of their potential impact on participants' motivational

states to ensure "motivationally rich development". Continuous review of the programme has led to a constant refinement of this and an increasingly sophisticated motivational proposition for the EMDp. The whole structure is illustrated in Appendix 4.

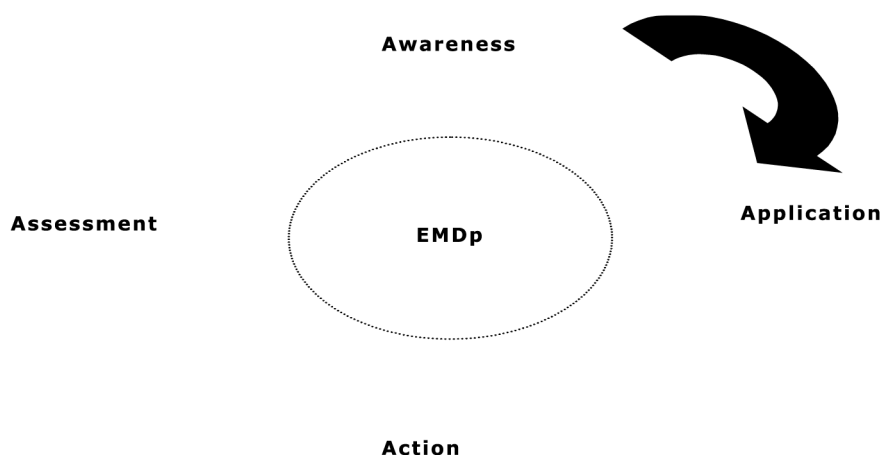
Individually, with the exception of the Apter motivational style profile (AMSP) there is nothing new about these elements. What is rare is the way these elements have been integrated to provide a broad and deep learning experience. Rare, too, is the level of individual assessment on the programme providing a sophisticated level of feedback more typically found on a development centre.

360 degree feedback and psychological profiling

SABMiller has developed a European competency framework that embryonically describes the emerging concept of a European manager - used for development purposes only. All participants received 360 degree feedback on this at the start of the programme and a "portfolio of evidence" was built up throughout the programme to form part of the final assessment and feedback at the programme's conclusion.

This feedback was also supplemented by each participant completing a motivational style profile based on reversal theory. The AMSP is a psychometric instrument that highlights the amount of time individuals spend in each motivational state. Participants often find it a

Figure 1



powerful insight into both their general experience of work and, in particular, illuminates the issues that may lie behind their 360 degree feedback against the competencies. The language of reversal theory is particularly robust and became a powerful means throughout the programme of analysing a range of issues, from personal contribution through team performance, to brand and customer relationships.

Keynote speaker inputs

It was felt that in raising awareness, it was important to raise awareness of both external and internal best practice and innovation. The former was facilitated by inviting speakers from major business schools to deliver focused, high impact sessions on such issues as strategy, brand positioning and information management.

SABMiller senior management inputs

These sessions were complemented by internal inputs covering key strategic issues that effect all the businesses within the European entity. A remarkable feature of the EMDp is the level of senior management support it enjoys: seven senior managers from within SABMiller Europe devoted time to this programme. This enabled the participants to learn more about how ideas apply more specifically to their business, providing the opportunity to listen, question and understand the key issues and strategic messages of the business.

Leadership challenge

The leadership challenge extending over three days within the total programme was a highly interactive event that picked up many of the behavioural themes of the inputs and created an environment in which they could be put into practice. Complex problems involving strategic thinking, decisiveness, resilience and team membership were established requiring participants to operate both in teams and as an integrated whole, thus mirroring the regional/business unit structure in which they operate.

Application review groups

There were daily meetings of self-managed learning groups which were briefed on a number of facilitation processes such as structured rounds, to enable them to evaluate at

individual and group level the important insights from the day's activities. Not only did these sessions help consolidate the learning process but they also provided the raw material for ongoing peer evaluation and feedback that was a fundamental part of the assessment process (see below).

Workouts

The last three days of the programme were given over to work-outs on business critical areas selected by the participants. Project selection, group membership and project management were all the responsibility of the participants themselves with facilitators acting as suppliers of a variety of contributions requested by participants.

Assessment and one-to-one feedback

Apter provided an assessment model which was specially developed by Dr Gene Crozier at the UK's Chartered Management Institute. This assessment model allowed for the ongoing structured collection of data to allow people to receive (and everyone did) specific feedback on their progress over the whole programme.

These were key factors of which the "development centre" approach enabled a focus on the teaching and business applications for what people were going to do next. This was another highly successful element and it is a model that Apter will continue to work on and revise.

Outcomes

Evaluation of the programme by session overall and by assessment of objectives met, has indicated that a high level of utility and positive personal response is being achieved.

In terms of the broader business, there is increasing evidence that the businesses have started to build an international network of managers who are much more likely to communicate with each other and remain in touch and continue learning.

SABMiller Europe already has clear evidence that functionally focused managers are increasingly taking a business perspective for what they are doing, and seeking to involve and work co-operatively across the functional

boundaries of their own businesses. A much greater level of confidence exists in many of the participants who are now taking the initiative, challenging what needs to be done and seeing it through - changing themselves in the process.

Conclusion

The development of a motivationally rich and integrated approach to management development has proved a powerful new tool in the development of people within SABMiller Europe. It is an approach that will be continually refined. Two programmes have been run so far and a third is due in October 2003. But virtually all those concerned can see the growth of a network of European leadership that does not “ride roughshod” over individual country businesses, and instead specifically helps them succeed and achieve the synergies that any global business needs.

Further information on Apter International is available at www.apterinternational.com

Reference

Apter, M.J. (Ed.) (2001), *Motivational Styles in Everyday Life: A Guide to Reversal Theory*, American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.

Appendix 1. Background to SABMiller Europe

SABMiller Europe is part of SABMiller plc, one of the world's largest brewers with a brewing presence in over 40 countries across four continents. SABMiller was formed in 2002 through a transaction which saw South African Breweries and Miller Brewing become one organisation. This newly formed company has built on its portfolio of strong brands and leading market shares in many of the countries in which it has brewing operations.

SABMiller Europe operates breweries throughout the continent: in the Canary Islands, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Russia and Italy. Employing around 9,000 people and with a turnover of US\$1,646 million, SABMiller

Europe is the organisation behind many top national beer brands, including the Czech Republic's Pilsner Urquell which is also now a global brand.

For further information visit www.sabmiller.com

Appendix 2. The Apter learning model

The learning model that underpins the design of many of the Apter programmes derives its rigour and its effectiveness from the insights of reversal theory.

A central position is that learning is promoted by the learning being experienced in as many states as possible. The learning experience needs to be “motivationally rich”. Learning is powerfully promoted through this because:

- (1) No matter what motivational state someone is in - something that cannot be directly pre-determined in any learning event - they will be engaged by the experience. For example, we may want the learning experience to be experiential and fun, but if someone is in a serious state they will complain that they cannot see the purpose of the learning event and feel they are wasting their time. Learning experiences need to be both serious and playful (and as many of the other states as possible).
- (2) Each state highlights different perspectives on the behaviour, situation, process, etc. that is being learned, thus learning is more holistic, deeply understood and transfer is enhanced. For example, many learning experiences major on “mastery” - being in control, dominating a process or situation, ignoring the “sympathy” perspective which would help the learner understand the impact of this on others. The classic case of this would be the development of BPR skills in the late 1990s which in practice failed to lead to benefits owing to some people not realising the impact these changes would have on those involved.

Additionally, reversal theory postulates the psychological existence of a “protective frame” this is the individual perception that allows us to experience high arousal as a pleasant rather than an unpleasant experience. The frame is not

always in existence and can dissolve at any time; which is why we can feel suddenly threatened by events. Given that learning can be stressful for some, great learning events also need to consider the role of the protective frame within it.

Appendix 3. An overview of reversal theory at work

Reversal theory is a radical theory of motivation, emotion and personality, first developed by the British psychologist Professor Michael J. Apter, now working at Georgetown University in the USA (Apter, 2001).

The theory emphasises the paradox and changeability of human nature. The way we experience the world is derived from eight motivational states, each of which emphasise a particular core value. These motivational states are arranged in four pairs of opposites (see Figure A1). We are constantly moving through a dynamic pattern of states caused by reversals within pairs and differing degrees of “salience” between pairs of states. This causes our experience - what we pay attention to or find important, what we are motivated by and the

emotions we experience to be in a constant flow of change - even within the same situation.

Differences between people result from differences in the amount of time we spend in each state and also in the circumstances and frequency in which we “reverse”. The theory is underpinned by an impressive range of evidence from different sources and different universities.

Psychological health, Apter asserts, is to be able to experience successfully all eight states in appropriate ways over roughly equally amounts of time.

The theory has developed in terms of its application to the world of work by an increasing number of people. The catalyst for this has been Steve Carter, now managing director of Apter International. The job of an organisation, he suggests, in pursuit of its goals, is to create a performance climate[®] within the workplace in which all eight motivational states can be experienced, prompting behaviours that are beneficial to the organisation and employee (see Table AI). Such a performance climate bridges the paradoxical demands that organisations make to the paradoxical nature of motivation, harnessing the essential changeability of people.

Figure A1 Pairs of motivational states

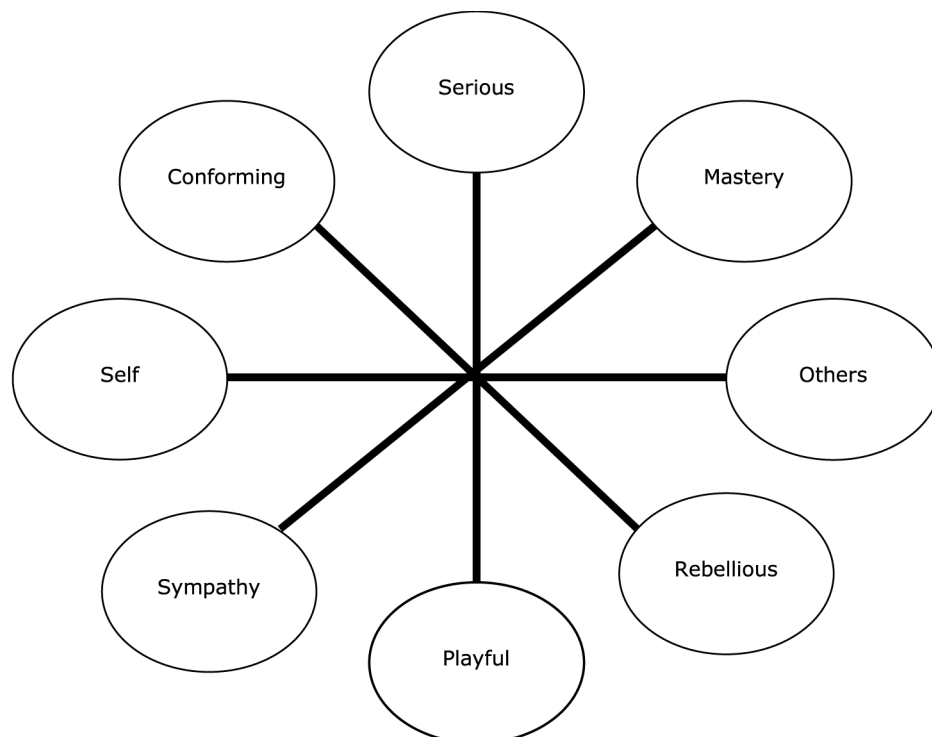


Table A1 Contribution of motivational states to organisational behaviours

Motivational state	Experienced at work as
Serious	Focus on goals, achievement, direction, planning risk conscious. Serious
Playful	Focus on experimenting, trying things out, creativity, open-thinking, intrinsic pleasure of the activity or the job itself. Playful
Conformist	Focus on implementation, following agreements and processes. A concern for maintenance, fitting-in
Rebellious	Focus on being different, breaking conventions, critical analysis, conflict
Self-oriented/sympathy	Focus on building harmony and good personal working relations, wanting to belong and co-operate
Other-oriented/sympathy	Focus on emotionally supporting and caring for others. Team spirit
Self-oriented/mastery	Focus on personal success and a willingness to take responsibility, control and master new challenges
Other-oriented/mastery	Wanting the team or the organisation to succeed. Focus on building up the power and resources of others

Given the evidence from the CIPD, Gallup, HayMcBer and Apter International itself, that climate is the biggest single lever on performance, he argues that organisations need to develop proactively leadership communities that can build such “motivationally rich” climates both within themselves and throughout the business.

Appendix 4. Benefits of the EMDp to SABMiller

The focus of the programme is the creation of value with the aim of transforming the strategic resource of the business. The programme will:

- Accelerate the development of a high performing cadre of international managers

who can think and act beyond the limits of function and geography.

- Deliver a high performing network of managers who, individually and collectively, can act as agents of change and new thinking.
- Establish a European resource that can act locally and regionally.
- Highlight the emerging talent in the business.
- Contribute meaningfully to strategic direction and implementation of country business strategy.
- Create conditions of higher productivity and profit within the scope of participants’ roles.
- Ensure that future value creation of the businesses is maintained.