



Mobilising Strategic Leadership

Creating a shared European leadership mindset

SABMiller, the global powerhouse in the brewing industry, needed to establish a broader base of local talent to create a 'European' or 'Group' mindset to drive growth and value creation and achieve economies of scale. Here's how they did it...

As one of the world's most successful brewing companies, SABMiller has rapidly grown from a regional player in an emerging market to a global presence. They became a 'top-3' player in less than 10 years.

Initially growth came from acquisitions in other emerging markets where existing management expertise would have the best fit. More recently the business has made major acquisitions in developed markets, for instance the Miller Brewing Company in the US and the iconic Italian brewer Birra Peroni.

Some of the early acquisitions were in Central Europe where a string of breweries from the Czech Republic through to Russia were brought into the group.

The Challenge

At first these were very much run as separate businesses with a predominance of ex-pats in senior roles. Increasingly however leadership in the business has needed to respond to two major drivers of change.

First it was necessary to establish a broader base of local talent able to fill senior and board positions to meet the demand of an ever expanding group, both at European level but also in other parts of the world, particularly Latin America.

Secondly it needed to create a coherent corporate mindset across geographical boundaries, in what had hitherto been very local businesses. Only in this way could they achieve the economies of scope and scale that shareholders expected.

The SABMiller response was bold and innovative.

The Response

SABMiller worked with Apter Development to design a development experience that would create, within a very disparate group of managers, a powerful sense of identity, shared perspectives and the ability to mobilise themselves around emerging issues: in short, establish greater Leadership Capital across the European businesses.

The SABMiller **European Leadership Programme (ELP)** had as its core aim:

To create a growing pool of board level leadership talent, capable of driving sustainable value creation at a country, regional and increasingly group level.



From a brewery in Russia...

'Within SABMiller Europe we now have a real momentum for change ... with a network of leaders ready to work together to implement our strategy and meet the diverse challenges of our markets.'

Richard Waters
European HR
Development Manager
SABMiller

Case notes:



SABMiller plc is one of the world's largest brewers, with brewing interests or distribution agreements in more than 60 countries across 5 continents.

In Europe **SABMiller** has 18 breweries, with operations in Poland, Hungary, Russia, Italy, Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and the Canary Islands.



By achieving this aim, leaders would be able to:

- contribute more effectively as a senior player and a current or future 'top team' member
- build and enhance the climate for performance in their business
- work more effectively across functions and culture – indeed wherever boundaries may inhibit performance
- translate SABMiller values into confident action
- establish a European Network to lever the value potential across the European business

The programme was aimed at those within the current European talent pool at or near country board level, together with a number of special invitees.

Programme Design

The focus of the programme was firmly on defining the role of a leader within the context of the evolving SABMiller European business strategy. It provided opportunities for leaders individually and collectively to gain greater personal insight and confidence in the skills required within their senior roles.

The programme followed two of the key design principles of Apter Development's work in this area: the **performance equation** and the **performance cycle**. The performance equation clearly defines all of the ingredients of the role that contribute to high performance: ability, mindset and the opportunity to deliver. The performance cycle follows the principle that breakthrough performance requires rehearsal, practice and 'real time' feedback. This principle is implicit in all areas of development from Sport and the Arts through to the world of work.

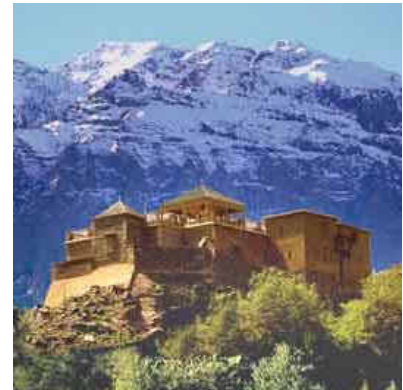
The location of the programme was also critical. A venue was required that broke up any complacency about expectations, inspired new levels of debate and provided a powerful shared experience for all participants. The selected venue – the Kasbah du Toubkal in the High Atlas Mountains, went one better than that. It provided an award winning example of corporate social responsibility and the opportunity for leaders to develop their performance 'in situ' on some real business challenges. It embodies the inspirational qualities they were seeking to instill in the participants.

The staffing on the programme was equally important. A blend of high levels of business experience, highly skilled and assertive performance coaching and innovative thinking was required. The programme faculty was drawn from both Apter Development and SABMiller to meet these needs, and was reinforced by the time committed to the programme by the European Managing Director and other members of the European ExCo.

Outcomes

'Within SABMiller Europe we now have a real momentum for change with a network of leaders ready to work together to implement our strategy and meet the diverse challenges of our markets.'

Richard Waters, European HR Development Manager, SABMiller



...to the Kasbah du Toubkal.

The Performance Equation

Performance can be understood as a function of the factors within this equation:

$$P = A \times M \times O$$

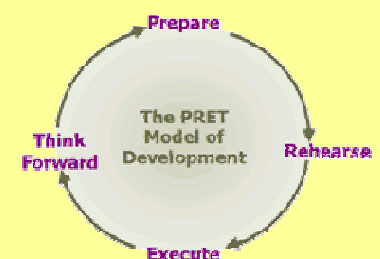
Where: P = Performance;
A = Ability; M = Mindset; and
O = Opportunity

This provides a method to reveal the essential 'agenda for change'.



The Performance Cycle

This process enables the 'agenda for change' to be brought about:





The ELP has been reviewed in a variety of ways. Possibly the most powerful insights came from focus groups with participants conducted three months and six months after the programme. Another key component was delegate feedback to the European Executive committee, on their challenges, where ideas and proposals were not only listened to but critically reviewed, debated and often actioned. SABMiller has also seen:

- The direct generation of many millions of dollars of new value
- Increased networking / fast tracked relationships enabling transfer of experience across Europe
- Increased responsiveness – reduced complexity
- Re-engineered top-team meetings, to become a 'player' in a larger entity (Europe)
- Shift from functional representatives to business leaders
- Change in attitude to self, more aware / confident
- Development of a European mindset – look at problems from multi perspectives
- Appreciation of the value of diverse teams

The recognition of the value of European talent through the promotion or movement of participants to other parts of the SABMiller Group has demonstrated, in no small part, the power of the European Leadership Programme in meeting its stated objectives.

A Final Word

'We have partnered successfully with Apter Development on the development of a suite of management and leadership development programmes. Apter have not only brought fascinating in-sights on leadership and management but have worked closely with us to build innovative, thought provoking and challenging development interventions. I have also been delighted with their flexibility, pragmatism and above all their willingness to 'roll up' their sleeves and work hard with us to produce a truly excellent programme in the ELP.'

Richard Waters, European HR Development Manager, SABMiller

The European Leadership Programme (ELP):

This challenging programme consists of pre-work, a five-day residential **Leadership Workout** in Morocco and follow-up peer coaching sessions.

The Leadership Workout establishes complex situations and an environment in which the team individually and collectively must operate. Participants explore through open-ended activities the real obstacles and opportunities they face.

The ELP inputs included one from the European CEO. All the participants had feedback from the **Apter Leadership Profile**, completed by themselves and their subordinates and/or team members.

'I have also been delighted with [Apter's] flexibility, pragmatism and above all their willingness to 'roll up' their sleeves and work hard with us to produce a truly excellent programme in the ELP.'

Richard Waters
European HR
Development Manager
SABMiller

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