

## Talented employees demand tailored development

The Miller Brands Experience

Miller Brands was only established in the UK 4 years ago. Since then, this UK subsidiary of SABMiller has experienced rapid growth. Being one of the very few brewers growing in the UK has meant that Miller Brands can carefully and rigorously recruit some of the most experienced and talented employees available in the market.

However the downside of having such talented employees is that they relentlessly demand development. For this reason the management teams of Miller Brands and Apter Development faced the challenge of building a programme that met the needs of the individuals and the organisation.

Faced with a group of extremely capable junior managers, Apter Development had to find a way of creating a development approach that could capture this talent and capability and transform it into even higher performance. The first step was to interview Miller Brands' Senior Executives, the participants and their managers in order to truly understand the needs and build a programme that would have a significant and lasting impact.

These interviews identified four key 'delivery' themes to be addressed throughout the programme:

- **Leading in the business** – Seeing the big picture, understanding the change forces acting on the business and making business cases.
- **Leading people** – Developing and promoting vision and clear purpose, creating a change agenda and coaching and mentoring others.
- **Making an impact** – Establishing a flexible communication style, networking, influencing and motivating others by building trust.
- **Developing one self** – Taking responsibility for ones own development and performance, a willingness to take risks, resilience, self-awareness and confidence.

While weaving Miller Brands values into every aspect from design to delivery, Apter Development also integrated their tried and tested performance model –The Performance Cycle to form a strong foundation.

### Preparation and rehearsal

Participants attended a 5 day residential leadership programme lead by Marie Shelton and Steve Carter of Apter Development.

Following The Performance Cycle; initial preparation sessions looked at key aspects of strategic context and skill. These were followed by two major rehearsals – a business simulation and The Wilderness Challenge. This enabled participants to practice, experiment and receive feedback relative to the new insights and skills that had recently been introduced to them.



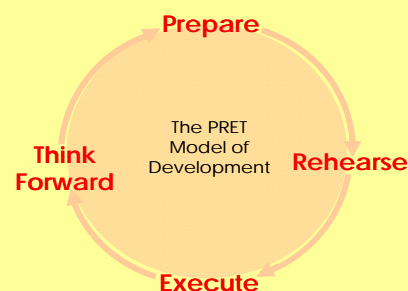
*"We knew we had some talented managers but Apter Development really managed to reveal their full potential."*

John Littleton  
Director, Miller Brands



### The Performance Cycle

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



**Business Simulations** – Delegates were given the opportunity to tackle some real life business challenges in a safe environment in the form of a range of Business Simulations.

**The Wilderness Challenge** was the ultimate leadership test. Out of their typical work environment delegates trekked into the woods, built their own shelter for the night and cooked a meal for the camp!

Support and Challenge groups created a forum for delegates to voice their opinions, share ideas and challenge one another. This was particularly important for the 'Making an Impact' delivery theme.

### Execution and thinking forward

Participants on the programme were then asked to tackle three 'real world' challenges. These were initiated on the residential programme and continued to be worked on in subsequent weeks. These activities were:

- Identify and build a business proposal for a practical initiative that would **contribute £250,000 of extra value** to Miller Brands.
- Use strategic activity mapping ideas and the Miller Brands strategic themes and imperatives and plot out those activities which must be managed effectively to ensure Miller Brands maintains its strategic edge.
- Identify a broadly shared activity which if stopped, would make a positive impact, then develop a proposal to justify this.

These were fed back at a conference with senior managers and go/no go decisions were taken on all of their proposals. Building on this Miller Brands believed it was important for the participants to have the opportunity to put into further practice what they learnt. The Senior Management Board challenged the participants with specific business investigations, gave them a team, a budget and 24 hours to produce a result.

Following implementation of Apter Development's 'Miller Brands Experience' all the participants on the programme are now more confident and have started to effectively challenge their line managers! Several realised promotions within just 3 months of completing the programme and now have their own teams to lead. They continue to meet with their Support and Challenge Groups regularly which has created a feedback culture within the business that is ensuring that the programme lives on long after it formally concluded.

### Case notes:

**SABMiller** plc is one of the world's largest brewers, with brewing interests or distribution agreements in more than 60 countries across 6 continents.

**Miller Brands** is the UK and Ireland subsidiary of SABMiller and is responsible for Marketing and Distribution of brands such as Peroni Nastro Azzurro, Pilsner Urquell and Miller Genuine Draft

***"A fun, challenging and rewarding course, which has created an invaluable feedback culture. I never thought building a shelter and cooking pigeon pie in the rain could be so much fun & teach me a lot!"***

Sharon McCabe  
Marketing Finance, participant



Apter Development provides cutting edge consulting and development in the fields of: strategic capability, leadership and management development, employee research and elite performance.

For more Apter Development Case Studies, visit:  
<http://www.apterinternational.com/casestudies>

For more information about our services, email:  
[enquiries@apterinternational.com](mailto:enquiries@apterinternational.com)

**Apter Development Offices:**

35-37 High Street, Barrow-Upon-Soar, Loughborough LE12 8PY UK  
Tel (+44) 0845 467 0708 Fax (+44) 01509 410 359



Stephen Carter  
[scarter@apterinternational.com](mailto:scarter@apterinternational.com)