

VISIONARY THINKING

THE BACKGROUND

AstraZeneca appointed Oakridge to help its AZ Essentials' Leadership Team with the transition of several existing functions into a single operating unit. All functions were vital performance areas which helped provide a safe and secure working environment and help the company go about its everyday business.

The units all operated on a global basis which meant there was significant functional and geographic diversity involved.

AZ Essential's newly formed Leadership Team needed to formulate a vision for its new operating unit and establish its role in the company. The brief was to gain further buy-in of the concept across AZ Essentials, maintain momentum and establish the new business function to develop closer working and better cost control across all areas.

There were some areas of commonality between the various functions. Better resourcing globally and nationally, visibility of best practice and cost savings were clearly apparent and available, however the move was initially questioned and met with some resistance.



OUR CONTRIBUTION

Oakridge was approached to work with the Leadership Team to develop a clear understanding of AZ Essentials and create a model that could be used to cascade the team's learning, understanding and obligations throughout the operating unit.

Initial one-to-one interviews highlighted that there was inconsistency in understanding the unit's role and purpose. The overall context within which AZ Essentials was to operate was not recognised; there was no shared common picture of who the stakeholders and customers were and although each area had a clear core purpose defined, interviewees were not necessarily sure of the work of other areas and how they fitted into the organisation.

There was also little concept of the value proposition or how it could help deliver the vision.

There were few customer/market facing processes defined and people did not view their contribution to AZ Essentials as any different to their contribution to AstraZeneca.

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OUR APPROACH

Oakridge developed a workshop programme to engage the Leadership Team in a highly involved and participative way. Large visual graphic, imagery and cardboard cut outs were used to demonstrate the work of each business area and to explain what they did for the client.

Work also began on the value proposition, commonality between each area and co-ordinating services. This process allowed the leadership team to identify clear positive opportunities for working together.

Two pieces of work were identified for delivery by the Leadership Team - defining the vision of AZ Essentials and agreeing its value proposition within the overall company, its role, purpose and accountability.

The vision needed to be clear, consistent and one that would drive the organisation. The operating model had to demonstrate what they could best deliver together and what they did best as individuals.

Working groups from the Leadership Team facilitated meetings and drove the work ensuring the development of a way forward in these two areas. Oakridge worked on a one-to-one basis with each working group.

RESULTS

Within 12 months AZ Essentials' Leadership Team had developed its vision, value proposition and operating model and this information was cascaded to AZ Essential staff.

The AZ Essentials programme is now able to demonstrate its value - just over eighteen months since work began. It has maintained reported levels of customer satisfaction while delivering budgetary savings in excess of 20 percent - equating to a saving of around \$90m.

John Sugden, AZ Essentials
Vice President said:

"Having external support was fundamental to the success of this programme. From the start Oakridge were neutral in terms of outcome and they really kept us honest and true to what we were looking to achieve.

"They would keep our minds focused and not allow us to walk away. They ensured we didn't fall out and remained motivated. They also brought a wealth of understanding in this area from their other client relationships and experiences.

"Working with Oakridge has been a truly valuable experience. They challenged and questioned our thinking, even when we didn't want it, and their learning and understanding of our needs was exceptional."