

Schindler Lifts case study

Business simulations reinforce Schindler's talent development

Schindler, the elevator and escalator company, is a worldwide operation, whose products move more than 700 million people every day. As part of its long-term training for talent development in Asia, Schindler incorporates business simulations from Elgood Effective Learning.

Schindler invests in extensive executive development for senior management. This includes training in the company and its products, the elevator industry, and general economic theories. The company encourages executives to think at a higher strategic level as preparation for future responsibilities in emerging Asian markets. The training tests participants, particularly, for risk-taking capability and long-term thinking as opposed to tactical fire-fighting.

David Cheah, HR Director of Schindler Lifts Singapore, had used a business simulation from Elgood Effective Learning in a previous role, and knew from first-hand experience the value of such material. So, when designing the Executive Development programme, he wanted to include a simulation element and thus provide a mix of theory and practice that would maximise discussion between participants.

David incorporated a tailor-made solution in a course entitled Advanced Topical Finance and Commercial Issues. It was very successful, but a lot of time had to be invested in the design and testing phases before it was run as part of the overall course.

A third stage of the programme, Global Finance and Multinational Issues, was rolled out in 2005. This programme used the "Multimarket" business simulation to enhance the more traditional classroom learning. The game encourages participants to consider cultural differences, buying patterns, politics and exchange rates in a manufacturing context. It uses fictitious companies and countries to illustrate principles.

Multimarket is one of 32 packaged games written and supplied by Elgood Effective Learning to companies looking to enhance their training. David Cheah believes that “they must be understood by the trainer and integrated into the wider content. They should not be used just for their own sake to fill time.” He chose to use a packaged game in this instance as he wanted the benefits (e.g. an additional learning method - high interest - course relevance), but required shorter preparation time and shorter playing time.

As a packaged business simulation “**Multimarket**” is relatively easy to integrate with other course content, usefully underlining the theory covered. It only needed a trial run to train the trainer. Elgood provide all the materials required including bespoke software and supporting tutor manuals. Schindler also retained Chris Elgood to provide extra support during the first course, which was run in Hong Kong with a multilingual team. The participants were from all over Asia, but the game proved relevant to everybody because it concentrated on general principles rather than a detailed specific case.

The feedback from the participants was good. Schindler use a six-point rating scale - and the business simulations received an average of five out of six. As David Cheah said: “In the Asian culture this can be regarded as an exceptional score!” The executives remember the business games long after the programme, particularly their personal successes and failures. Games help to make training enjoyable and memorable, arousing enthusiasm for further learning. The connection between training and the bottom-line is always qualitative rather than quantitative but, for David, simulations greatly increase the retention of learning.

David is happy to recommend Elgood Effective Learning. He said “both Chris and Christine Elgood were very easy to work with. They really listen, with a very customer-orientated approach. It is good value for money. Because they were up-front and honest about the limitations of packaged material my expectations were fully met. We have a good working relationship based on trust.”

Schindler will continue using business simulations from Elgood Effective Learning in future development programmes.

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Further information

Schindler Lifts (SCHP/SCHZN.S) is a worldwide operation, with local companies in all major markets of the five continents. Schindler elevators and escalators mover more than 700 million people every day. For more information visit www.schindler.com

Elgood Effective Learning specialise in the creation and facilitation of business simulations. The company designs unique training materials for individual clients and offers a range of generic packaged simulations for sale. Detailed information is available at www.chris-elgood.co.uk