

P&O NEDLLOYD

Coaching for Leading Change

Introduction to P&O Nedlloyd

P&O Nedlloyd is a major international shipping company - number three in the world based on volume. The company was founded as a result of a merger in 1997 between P&O of London and Royal Nedlloyd of Holland, which operated as a Joint Venture for seven years until it listed on the Amsterdam Stock exchange in April 2004.

Prior to the listing, P&O Nedlloyd had a separate corporate region for Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) supporting a regional management structure of about thirty people. In late 2002 and early 2003 the ANZ region was pulled apart and the two countries became part of the Asia Pacific Region reporting into a regional director in Hong Kong.

Bob Kemp, General Manager of P&O Nedlloyd explains, "Even though I was running the Australian operation, I always had a director in Sydney above me. So, when that support departed, we were suddenly very much masters of our own destiny and it was a big change."

The outgoing regional director had been working with Hewsons immediately prior to the re-structure and he spoke to Bob about how Hewsons could help put the changes into perspective.

A Vested Interest in Success

"P&O Nedlloyd turns over half a billion a year in Australia alone. We are also P&O's 4th or 5th largest market. So, we had a significant stake in making the re-structure work here in Australia," explains Bob.

I called Hewsons and I confess I was cynical. I couldn't see how it would benefit me and Hewsons knew nothing about my business. I was amazed at just how perceptive my coach was and how quickly he picked up on what was important to me and to the business.

Hewsons Set Measurable Goals

At his first session with Hewsons, Bob identified five key areas or Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) he wanted to focus on:

- 1 Business strategy
- 2 **Decision making**
- 3 Handling conflict and non-performance
- 4 **Leadership and influencing**
- 5 Interpersonal skills
- 6 **Questioning and listening**

"I was rating myself 2's, 3's and 4's out of ten on all of these KPI's, but ranking them 7's, 8's and 9's for importance in doing my job properly," explains Bob, "So I knew we had a fair bit of ground to cover."

"We did a review at the end of the third week and then two subsequent reviews, and in every one of them I felt we were making substantial improvements."

Hewsons came back to my KPI's at every stage of the process. There was never any slipping off the agenda. Everything was focused towards the areas that I wanted to work on.

Hewsons Achieved Measurable Results

Within six weeks of starting with Hewsons, Bob put his KPI's to the test, dealing with some tough decisions that couldn't be avoided.

"I had been struggling with a couple of Senior Managers and I knew that something had to be done. We went through a process which left me feeling far more comfortable about the decisions I had to make."

Bob also began to register success across his other KPI's as well, "We evaluated how I was making decisions and I was gratified to learn that mine were measured decisions, with proper thought for the outcomes," explains Bob.



“I think I needed to make the decision-making process more democratic, which I have done. I am also a far better listener now and much more approachable. I believe that most of my colleagues feel they could walk into my office, at any stage and put their cards on the table.”

Bob continues, “I was very keen to be able to set a standard for my colleagues and offer them a leader with credibility, particularly when I came into contact with other industry players.”

“After discussing it with Hewsons, I was reminded of the things that I brought to the position which a lot of others couldn’t. I had a far more objective understanding of my abilities and all the skills I brought to the role.”

The Link Between People and Profit

I think the most important result was understanding more fully the link between people and profits. People will go with you if you give them enough insight into how, where, why and what the benefits are – you can’t beat them into submission.

“My staff and colleagues now understand that we have a direction, and that they are helping us to get there, I’m not dragging them along. They planned the direction themselves. I knew roughly where they would end up and in fact a lot of them exceeded my expectations. I feel as though I’ve empowered them to go forward themselves, I trust in their ability to achieve.”

Bottom Line Impact on Sales

“Hewsons has already coached one of my colleagues and I have asked them to coach several others,” says Bob, “It is such a great process to go through and it has helped our leadership program immensely.”

Since we used Hewsons to help with the sales strategy, we have measured a 25 per cent increase in contributions to revenue, which has had a significant, positive impact on our bottom line.

