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SUCCESS STORY

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Business and Team Performance

WELLS
FARGO

CHALLENGE

A few years back, a team at Wells Fargo was seeking a brainstorming retreat to explore how they could work together better. They could never seem to get on the same page, and there were a number of reasons why this was happening, the main issue being that they were a very diverse group. Some members only had a year or two of work remaining before retiring, while others were in the first stages of their professional careers. Because each of these team members were so different, it was important for them to become more in touch with each other's goals and purposes in the workplace. The fastest ways to improve their performance were focusing on better communication and setting common goals.

SOLUTION

For this particular team, we did an offsite retreat in northern Minnesota for a two-and-a-half-day version of the Discovery Program. Team members were told to bring casual clothes and tennis shoes, but were not told what they would be doing. On the first night of the retreat, they participated in a cooking activity, and went to a golf course the next day.

In the group, there were only two golfers out of seven people. In order to help everyone feel more comfortable, they hit some shots on the driving range before playing. This also helped them become more familiar with the concepts of targets and focus.

Then, we had them do a putting exercise in which each team member hit putts in five different ways – their “correct way,” with their eyes closed, looking at the hole (rather than the ball), one-handed, and putting to a club instead of a hole. Each of them performed best using one of the experimental ways, not their perceived “right way.”

After this exercise, they participated in a putting competition. Each member reverted back to their perceived correct way of putting, despite knowing that they performed better using other methods. This shows that they were open to trying new things, but struggled with sustaining these changes when it really mattered. After a brief discussion, they became aware of how their thinking changed under different circumstances.

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Later that day, they played eight holes of golf with the intent of mapping out a strategy. They were surprised at how much better they performed than expected. They learned from this experience that having a clear intent made their goals much more attainable. Finally, the next day, we discussed individual visions and allowed team members to present their visions for the upcoming year. Through this discussion, they discovered things they never knew about their coworkers. New insights about each other improved their communication and helped them get on the same page in terms of their work goals.

Benefits

The Vice President of Wells Fargo had three goals for his team coming into the event: He wanted everyone to learn something they had never thought possible, gain a clearer understanding of what was important to them in their lives, and learn something new about the rest of their team members. After the retreat, he said that all three goals had been achieved.

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On a different note, two of the people who were not golfers to begin with started to play with their kids, and another was planning to pick up golf as a hobby when he retired. The Vice President himself saw his own scores get better as his mindset changed. By seeing that he could realistically break par and nothing was stopping him, he became less hesitant to take risks on the course. He no longer dwelled on his bad shots, but instead learned from them and began to enjoy the game more than ever. As he began to recognize the correlations between work and golf, he and his team were able to make key decisions that allowed them to save over \$300,000 on one initiative alone.

To find out if performance coaching using the medium of golf can help you to better achieve your goals, please contact Dan DeMuth at Performance in Motion, at 763-513-9285 or dan@performanceinmotion.biz.