

A Better Way to Assess Managerial Preparedness

CASE STUDY



■ SUMMARY

Salespeople know success through their sales performance. That's why even the most successful salespeople aren't always interested in or ready for managerial positions. So when Ecolab sought a more effective assessment process for identifying and developing candidates for front-line sales management positions, it turned to longtime partner MDA Leadership Consulting. MDA provided the company with a timely, tailored and cost-effective version of MDA's information-rich Fast Track Assessment process. The results? A clean sweep for Ecolab: better information, better-prepared managerial candidates and better business results.

Better Leaders Create Better Results





Ecolab Enhances Managerial Assessments with Custom MDA Process

CHALLENGE

Ecolab, the world's leading company in premium cleaning and sanitizing, needed an effective and efficient process for identifying high-potential sales manager candidates for its Institutional Sales division. The Institutional division provides cleaning and sanitation products, programs, and services to Ecolab's foodservice, hospitality, long term care and commercial customers. Each year, Institutional leadership identifies approximately 100 top salespeople as candidates for the division's sales management training program. But because these salespeople are geographically dispersed and continuously need to focus their attention on sales, assessing their managerial preparedness posed some logistical challenges.

SOLUTION

In an effort to build on and strengthen its talent development processes, the Institutional division turned to longtime partner MDA Leadership Consulting to create a timely, cost-effective, customized version of its Fast Track Selection Assessment process. The result, called the Field Leadership Assessment (FLA) process, includes a combination of personality and motivation inventories, and several tests of cognitive skills. All tests are administered to candidates online and results are automatically transmitted to MDA for review and interpretation. Based on this data, MDA consultants write a tailored report that includes a recommendation on the candidate's readiness for managerial training and provide it to Ecolab within 48 hours. The results are also provided to the candidates themselves to help them identify and focus their developmental efforts to accelerate their preparation for a managerial role. Starting in 2007, Institutional Sales began requiring all front-line management candidates to complete the FLA process.

RESULTS

Upon using the FLA process, Ecolab immediately gained a faster and more valid means of assessing the promotional preparedness of its managerial candidates. Overall, according to John Vegas, Ecolab Regional Vice President of Institutional Sales, the company gained four principal benefits:

1. A more robust, substantive and analytically based assessment process.
2. Clear and defensible information about a candidate's potential career progression.
3. In-depth, comprehensive and holistic assessment information, because of MDA's familiarity with Ecolab.
4. Greater credibility and recognition for the thoroughness of the division's assessment process.

As the former Vice President of Human Resources for Institutional Sales North America, Vegas has seen the FLA process used since its inception. "The process is a tremendous value," he said. "The valuable information we get from the assessment process, given its price point and its robust design, would be difficult to match. It has helped strengthen our talent selection and talent development process for leaders in our organization."

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