



It's been a tough market for Nokia in recent years. Throughout all the changes and developments, has been, and continues to be, a core component of our approach to people development



Nokia recognises that developing its leaders is essential to secure a strong talent pool in a competitive marketplace. Working in partnership with Bath Consultancy Group, 'License to Lead' was developed for a sustainable leadership pipeline. With comment from Lise Palomares, HR Development Manager at Nokia.



License to lead

Developing new leaders in times of significant change is essential to stay competitive and retain key talent. Increasingly organisations are recognising that to secure their future success they need to take a long term view and plan a sustainable pipeline of new leaders.

In 2008, Nokia piloted a new global leadership learning solution for new Nokia leaders in USA, Finland, India and China led by Nokia's global Management and Leadership Development team and Gil Schwenk and Fiona Ellis of Bath Consultancy Group. Described as a 'license to lead', the programme works with team and project leaders with a focus on their relationship as coach to the team. The branding of License to Lead was fully developed in 2009. The design has been continually kept up-to-date, particularly in light of the tough competitive landscape, the latest revision taking place in 2010. As part of Nokia's new strategy, the company has recently placed high emphasis on developing a challenger mindset through consistent people behaviours across the company. The programme works to strengthen these in first time leaders alongside building their foundational leadership skills.

License to Lead is a learning journey designed to build the foundational leadership skills in Nokia leaders. The programme gives Nokia leaders an understanding of how to lead themselves and their people to successful results, in a way that is aligned with Nokia's undergoing changes, a challenging business reality, and Nokia's values and behaviours. Throughout the program participants work with their own leadership challenge, using and practicing leadership behaviours and skills to lead people in empowering ways towards engagement, faster execution, and high performance. They practice effective communication skills such as coaching and feedback, also utilising the Nokia people processes for managing performance. Participants develop skills for leading people and networks in their own eco-system - and coach each other on real work issues.

Leaders work to establish methods of developing trust through emotionally intelligent behaviour. By increasing their self-awareness of own accountability and impact on others they understand how to use personal influence, impact and courage to build clarity, simplicity and ensure faster decision-making in a challenging and complex business network. One innovative feature is how they learn how to lead in a complex system through working virtually in a simulation activity. License to Lead was part of a move to create a suite of programmes to help people transition up to team leader, business leader, and strategic leader across Nokia. A key factor in the design and development of the programme was to create a consistent experience for team leaders across the globe. The leadership development at Nokia had become too fragmented and the quality and focus on development in various countries and regions varied too greatly. This was creating challenges as there was no consistent reference points, models, skills or a common leadership language and approach across the organisation.

Lise Palomares, HR Development Manager, at Nokia said: "At Nokia we'd identified that first time leaders needed support to develop, to be challenged and to be networked. We also needed consistency across a large organisation. There were quite a few programmes running already, but with our move to three levels of leadership - team, business and strategic level - this gave us the opportunity to move to one programme for first time leaders and partner with the best providers globally. We partnered with Bath Consultancy Group to design and deliver the programme as they have a really innovative approach to leadership development and a strong expertise in progressive coaching methodologies. They trained our hand-picked facilitators around the world. This was important so that local Nokia HR teams could continue to use trusted regional vendors and it also made the programme cost effective and eased the transition to a single global programme."

The programme has now been conducted in multiple locations globally in all major regions of the world. 3600 first time leaders and project leaders have been through License to Lead. The programme is run across Europe, China, India, Singapore, Middle-East and Africa, South America and the USA. In China, the programme is delivered in the local language. The programme begins by helping a first time leader understand the ecosystem of a team. Every team is different and works and interacts in particular ways. Identifying the different components and relationships within one's ecosystem is a vital starting point for any team and project leader. This session helps leaders formulate a team vision, purpose and sharing of goals, so that the

leader as coach can clearly communicate the purpose of the team and goals for clarity and faster execution. The programme provides a structure for identifying changes that the people in the team need to make to become a high performing team. Leaders learn how to engage people throughout the organisation with the work that the team is doing. A key aspect of this section is to develop the leader as coach. Lise Palomares says, "This is a really important part of the programme. It's a central focus for Nokia to develop leaders that in their first leadership roles begin to develop a coaching style."

Lead yourself is a part of the programme that helps new leaders adapt to change and to transition up to a first time leadership position. Effectively managing this transition takes a tremendous amount of self awareness. Part of the pre-work is a Myers Briggs Type Indicator assessment which highlights strengths and risk areas and includes influencing styles and how to modify communications to reach different people. For example, in Nokia's complex global organisation, all leaders need to influence stakeholders to make timely decisions and influence up and down their ecosystem, to get faster execution. For one participant from Mexico this made a real difference. "What I like the most is the self-assessment, as it is helping me know what kind of leader I am. I know how to interact and treat my partners that have different MBTI preferences. I now collaborate with my direct reports and understand them in different ways. I know that some of my team members are really committed and I can help those that are disconnected - or just involve them more to increase their commitment. I recommend the course 200 percent to help any leader."

One area that many leaders struggle with is how to give feedback. One participant knew what needed to be done but didn't know how to achieve the intended results. "Never underestimate the power of formative feedback to turn internal relationships around. I had a two hour meeting with follow up and an agreed action plan. I now have a shining star of an employee with high morale, motivation and a desire to win who has a great Nokia career ahead of him. I asked him to speculate what might have happened without the formative feedback conversation. He doubted he'd still be in the role and possibly not in Nokia. So, a two hour conversation, with good follow-up, transformed a possible casualty into a shining star!"

Leadership development starts early in Nokia and the License to Lead programme has become one of Nokia's key development initiatives for building a feedback and coaching culture across the company. Coaching and providing feedback

are considered key skills to improve performance and increase engagement, while doing it in a way that is open, honest and fair, in a trusted environment. License to Lead is recognised as one of Nokia's core global leadership programmes. The programme has gained a great reputation across the organisation and with Nokia's leadership population. It has received excellent feedback from both participants and business stakeholders. The partnering network of 18, highly-dedicated professionals around the globe stay closely connected on updates and business needs alignment.



Changing our culture and behaviours is critical for the company and has a direct impact on our results. If we adjust our way of working to reflect these behaviours in our daily actions, we will vastly increase our combined contribution to the business



Lise Palomares says, "It's been a tough market for Nokia in recent years. Throughout all the changes and developments, License to Lead has been, and continues to be, a core component of our approach to people development. It has been a real success internally and supported at all levels, particularly with our senior leaders. Many of our senior managers have taken an active role in the programs to build understanding and communication lines up and down the leadership pipeline."

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