

## Raising Finance Business Partner Capability

### Challenge

Increasing their finance business partner capability was a strategic intent for a global telecommunications company. Finance business partnering was inconsistent and finance functions of the different operating divisions varied significantly in size and capability and interaction with stakeholders. Different cultures, languages and time zones added layers of complexity to developing consistent World-Class Business Partnering skills. The Group Centre had developed a Finance Business Partner competency model which needed to be incorporated into any solution and were looking to roll out face to face business partner training.

### Innovative Solution

Our approach was to firstly ensure that the Edge PACE Indicator for Business Partnering was aligned with the Group Finance Business Partner competency model in terms of language and weighting of skills and behaviours. Using the competency model as the basis for developing training material a 2 day pilot course was created. Senior leaders were selected to attend the course in order to ensure fit for purpose. Their aim was to challenge and input ideas to improve the course prior to world wide roll out.

Following the success of the pilot a three tier approach was taken:

- 1) **Senior Finance Business Partnering Programmes** were run at the Head Office site. These targeted senior management from all global markets. This ensured consistency, created role models across markets and provided essential networking opportunities for Senior Finance Managers. This programme was particularly challenging for participants and 1:1 coaching extended for up to 3 months after the initial course. This was to ensure the right support was in place to embed behavioural changes and establish the role models that the company wanted.
- 2) **Developing Finance Business Partnering Programmes** were created and delivered for the next management level down with the aim of creating Finance Business Partner Champions across the organisation. These two day programmes were delivered globally face to face in local markets across four continents.
- 3) Two approaches were developed to maximise the opportunity for all finance staff to access finance business partner training.
  - a) **Finance Business Partner Basics**, a face to face 2 day programme was created to introduce business partnering concepts to finance teams.
  - b) **Finance Business Partner Fundamentals**, a 6 month virtual journey was created for smaller teams that did not have the numbers to justify face to face courses or the flexibility to release staff for 2 days.

Each programme utilised **Edge PACE**. This enabled each participant to create a detailed personal development report which incorporated 360° insights from managers, stakeholders, customers and peers and benchmarked their business partner skills against **Edge Benchmark**, an external benchmark for finance professionals. They could also benchmark internally against their peers.

Each programme was designed as an experiential journey, highly creative and innovative combining 1:1 coaching, relevant case studies, role plays, forum theatres, personal and group challenges and introduced practical tools and resources that could be taken back into the work environment.

**Edge Pulse** – a unique ROI tool was used to gauge the return on investment and the value added to the business in financial and nonfinancial terms for each programme delivered. Information was gathered from an online participant, manager and customer survey and together with additional inputs from the business was used to create summary reports for the Client.

### Benefits

Over 500 participants across global markets (Europe, Africa, Australasia and India) participated in Business Partnering Programmes in the first 12 months.

Edge Pulse identified that there had been a demonstrable and measurable step change in the Business Partnering capability across the organization. In 12 months over £900k of value was added to the business

The success of the programmes continue as part of the L&D business as usual offering as they strive to maintain and embed World-Class finance partnering across the organisation.

### Quote

*'Edge Plus were excellent to work with, bringing a lot of knowledge and experience to create highly innovative programmes which had fantastic feedback from all participants and made a real difference to our business partnering skills'* Head of Learning Academies, 2012.