



“It was important for us to make sure our leaders had the skills they needed to support the individual needs of each employee.”

Client Story

Strengthening Leadership Culture at PepsiCo Serbia

PepsiCo in Serbia produces and distributes its popular snack brands across the country from its modern facility in Backi Maglic. Even though they are recognized as a desired employer in the market, they knew that building an even stronger leadership culture focused on coaching would help them improve employee engagement and retention. It would also provide opportunities for growth while protecting their position as a favorite employer in the region.

“We assessed our leaders and realized that many were not aligning their leadership style with the development level of their people. It was important for us to make sure our leaders had the skills they needed to support the individual needs of each employee,” says Maja Ignjatovic, South Central Europe and Baltics commercial capability lead.

The goal was to equip leaders with a coaching style that would help them develop their teams by meeting the needs of each person. Building this leadership culture would help improve employee engagement and create a positive, growth-oriented work environment. Ignjatovic and her team worked with Marija Pavić and Jelena Acević, consultants with Blanchard® authorized global partner Blanchard Serbia, to create and implement the leadership development program using SLII® from Blanchard.



Maja Ignjatovic



SLII® is a time-tested model that trains leaders how to provide the right amount of support and direction to each team member as they navigate certain tasks. SLII® also focuses on teaching leaders how to have productive conversations that empower their direct reports to achieve goals.

"We implemented SLII® training to teach leaders how to set clear goals with their people and understand their development level in order to give them the leadership style they need on each specific task," says Ignjatovic.

PepsiCo used a blended learning design for the training initiative. Key concepts of SLII® were introduced to leaders at in-person sessions. Then, online coaching sessions were held where participants could share experiences putting their new skills into practice and get advice for managing any challenges they were facing. "To sustain the learning, we incorporated on-the-job activities to encourage leaders to actively apply their new skills daily," says Ignjatovic. "We can monitor these efforts through our commercial applications, which allows us to track progress in real time."

Feedback from participants indicated that they appreciated not only the content of the training, but also the blended learning design. The structure of the learning experience that combined classroom learning with online coaching and on-the-job activities helped them retain the knowledge and apply it easily. "We were pleasantly surprised by the high level of engagement of the participants. The demand for training is so high that it consistently exceeds the available spots. That confirms the clear appetite for leadership development within the organization."

To measure the impact of the training, they monitored daily interactions between supervisors and presellers focusing on the key principles of SLII®. They measured how leaders determined the employee's development level on a task, applied the appropriate leadership style, and provided feedback or coaching. "Average scores improved from 1.72 to 1.80 on a 1-to-3 scale. This might not seem like a huge improvement, but it indicates that we are moving steadily in the right direction. It reflects our ongoing, persistent effort to shift the culture through continuous improvement," says Ignjatovic.



Transforming the leadership culture at PepsiCo required the organization to embrace the change with a flexible approach. They taught the leadership skills of SLII®, provided the opportunity for leaders to practice and refine the skills on the job, and supported them throughout the process with coaching sessions.

Looking ahead, Ignjatovic plans to offer online certification through e-learning sessions to ensure that managers continue to develop their skills and further embed the culture of coaching and empowerment throughout the organization.

“Cultivating a culture of coaching and empowerment requires commitment, a solid strategy, and an openness to embracing change. But remaining true to the intentions of the effort ensures long-term results. By prioritizing leadership development, we have made significant progress toward fostering a supportive workplace that delivers improvements in engagement, growth and retention. We see the benefits for leaders, their employees, and the entire organization.”

Enable leaders at every level to become
the ultimate agents of progress and
transformation for your organization.
Visit us at www.blanchard.com
to learn more.