

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a mountain range. In the foreground, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees. In the middle ground, a valley is filled with a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees, some of which are showing autumn colors. In the background, several mountain peaks are visible, some with patches of snow or light-colored rock. A large, semi-transparent circular graphic is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image, containing the title and subtitle text.

The Case Study

Clarasys

Coaching the leadership team
for the company's next chapter

“What was important was to have someone external to force us to reflect on the things that weren’t working, and give us space that we wouldn’t give ourselves. This allowed us to reach conclusions we wouldn’t have reached. This allowed us to heal heal rifts, and become happier about a future we could all be certain about.”

- Matt Cheung, CEO of Clarasys

This is a case study on Lea_p's team coaching with the founders at Clarasys between May 2016 and October 2016. The purpose of the case study is to share Lea_p's approach to team coaching and outcomes from the intervention.



Matt Cheung
CEO at Clarasys

Website:
www.clarasys.com

Industry:
Business management consultancy

Employee Count:
130

[CLARASYS]

Background

Clarasys is a management consultancy that was founded in 2010 by three friends who felt the world of consultancy could be done differently for the benefit of clients and staff.

At the time of engaging a team coach, Clarasys was a thriving and successful business. But every business has its low points. They had hit a bump in the road with a challenging client and the impact on the leadership team was evident. There had also been a tough trading period where the firm came too close to comfort to having to declare bankruptcy. These challenging times had tested the leadership team to the limit and in the aftermath, their personal relationships with each other had been damaged, resulting in a loss of focus from the team. The request of the coach was to support this team to have the honest conversations required about their strengths, the challenges faced, and the direction needed for the business.

“The alternative to team coaching was to do nothing... and to do nothing, we would have had to accept that we were broken as a team, a group of founders and as friends, and I wasn't ready to do that.” - Matt Cheung, CEO

The Coaching Plan and Approach

The engagement started by gathering information on how the team saw itself, and how the staff experienced the team. This data was gathered through a series of one-to-one interviews with the founders, the new Head of Sales, and several of the senior staff. The staff were immensely proud of the firm and admired the individual founders but felt that the strength of diversity of the founders was being over played and resulting in inconsistency in messaging. They wanted the founders to be more of an aligned and cohesive team.

Following the assessment interviews, the coach and team met for four workshops over as many months. In the first session, the team discussed the assessment - a summary of their strengths and challenges – and signed up to a coaching plan that would focus on the following development areas:

- Build a muscle for difficult conversations
- Be clear about strengths and weaknesses of this team and how to leverage that
- Reconnect with ways of working from earlier when work was fun and enjoyable
- Align on a vision for the future of the business
- Support the team to show up consistently to the staff

“It was also important to reveal the personal hopes and fears of each of us on the team, so we could work consciously with that.” - Matt Cheung, CEO

The remaining workshops created time and space to address these development areas. The coach used a variety of tools and techniques to ensure all the voices were heard, that elephants were addressed, and in the final session, the team coalesced around a new vision for the organisation.

“At their best, this team were like the Power Rangers with their powerful impact and their diversity in skills. But at their worst, this team was not aligned and showed up inconsistently in how they behaved and communicated. This caused confusion and uncertainty in the company.”

- Catherine Stagg-Macey, Team Coach



The Results

During the coaching workshops, the team was able to see how they were operating and break open a hidden set of assumptions about what each of them wanted to do. The sessions helped the team acknowledge the frustrations that existed, and with the careful facilitation, built trust again and ultimately the willingness to each team member to take more ownership of what they collectively wanted to happen.

“That took away so much stress from me allowing me to make decisions. We were able to get really clear on our roles which really reduced the anxiety about stepping on each other’s toes.” - Matt Cheung, CEO

In the last session, the team make a significant decision to change the model of how they operated as a team. It was a significant change to a more traditional operating model but it relieved much of the anxiety and stress that had been in the team.

“Today, we are being even more ambitious and evolving the company in a servant leadership / Teal model. This evolution would not have been possible had we not done that initial work in those coaching sessions. We were able to bring the staff along on our new journey as we were aligned and clear in what we were doing and why. That wouldn’t have been possible without team coaching.” - Matt Cheung, CEO

Conclusion

“As a CEO, you can carry a lot of the world on your shoulders. Team coaching is perfect for when you are frustrated with all around you, and you are carrying huge anxiety, you are not enjoying your job, and your team isn’t functioning as a team. Catherine brings a rigour and structure to this process that’s really important and also is also adaptable to the pace we need to move at.” - Matt Cheung, CEO

“The leadership team of Clarasys has been brave enough to do their own work in order to take the company on an exciting journey. Their passion and vision is demonstrated by their award in the “Sunday Times Best Small Companies to Work For”. They have modelled that putting in the work as a leadership team brings deep and long lasting change in the culture of the organisation.” - Catherine Stagg-Macey, Team Coach

“There is no possible organisational transformation without a preceding transformation in the consciousness of the leaders.”

- Bob Anderson, Thought leader and CEO of Leadership Circle

Get in touch to get your team from
good to great.

E: catherine@lea-p.com

W: www.lea-p.com

