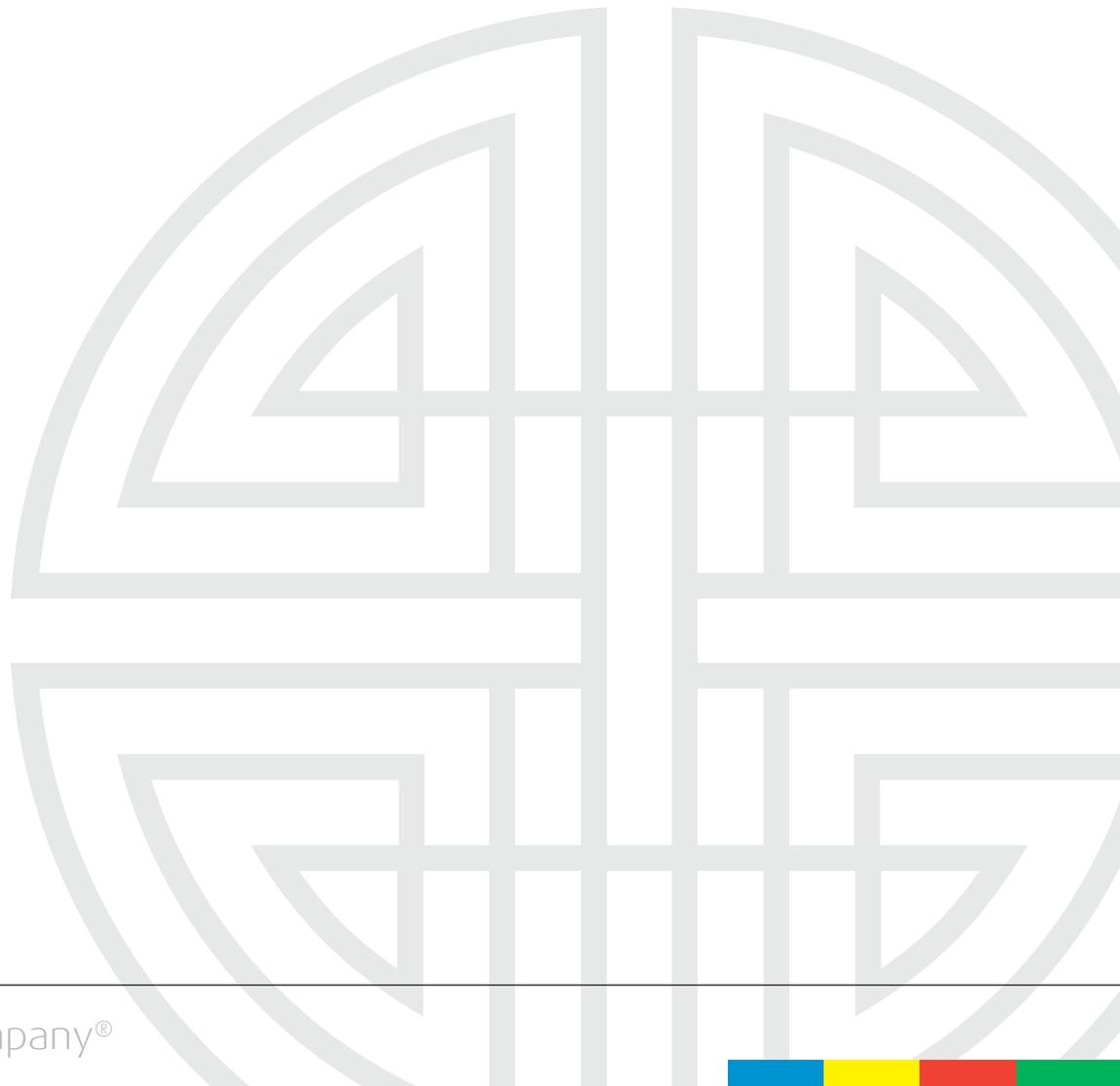


Case Study

IBM

An innovative Whole Brain® solution develops the next generation of great IBM leaders



Whole Brain® Thinking elements could serve as a jumping-off point and framework for a new way of delivering training to global audiences, one that would reduce overall face-to-face classroom hours while actually enhancing the business and learning impact of the training itself.

When IBM began the process of updating its highly benchmarked and successful Basic Blue for New Leaders (BBNL) leadership development program, one thing was certain: quality couldn't be sacrificed for efficiency.

"We view BBNL as a competitive advantage for IBM," notes Richard DeSerio, Manager of IBM's Leadership Development Programs' Global Design Team. "Any changes would have to maintain the quality and level of results the program had shown since its inception in 1999".

The company is based in Armont, NY, and operates in 170 countries, generating nearly two-thirds of its revenue in 2008 from outside the United States.

With nearly 400,000 employees worldwide, the business was faced with a real concern of finding a way to seamlessly and cost-effectively reach their global leaders at any time, no matter where they may be located. At the same time they wanted to reduce overall expenses and time spent in the classroom.

"We have a globally integrated culture that prizes intelligence and innovation," says DeSerio. "That means that, even when an initiative is

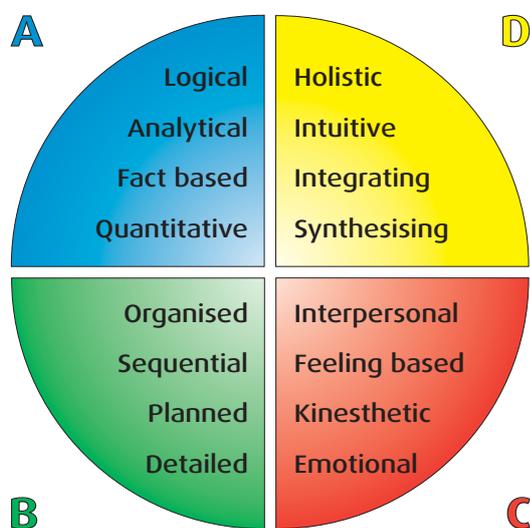
successful, we'll continually look for ways to remain on the leading edge in programming, ideas and efficiencies."



Part of that process, he says, involves evaluating and improving leadership development offerings within the context of what's going on in the world today. "Increased individual responsibility and new leadership competencies are a necessity in our current business environment, and we need to be able to rely on a globally integrated team to get the best business results."

"At the same time," DeSerio notes, "we want to spend our classroom training time and resources wisely, while making sure the learning is designed with a clear business application, so people get the most out of the experience."

With these goals in mind, IBM began discussing program design ideas with North Carolina-based Herrmann International. Originators of the Whole Brain® methodology and approach, Herrmann International helps individuals understand preferred thinking styles and develop the skills to broaden their thinking beyond the confines of their preferences, as well as communicate across thinking styles for better results. The company immediately recognised that IBM was not alone in the issues it was facing.



“Increased globalisation and volatile economic conditions are making it that much more difficult for organisations to reach everyone face-to-face,” says Ann Herrmann-Nehdi, CEO of Herrmann International. “But typical e-learning programs don’t deliver the quality, interaction and engagement to match the results of the classroom.”

“With classroom hours at a premium,” she adds, “clients tell us they need to be able to devote that valuable time to business focused application. And it’s only getting more challenging as people are trying to do more with less.”

Herrmann Whole Brain solutions already had a successful track record at IBM. The Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument® (HBDI®), the assessment tool at the heart of Whole Brain Thinking, was the ‘instrument of choice’ for the existing BBNL program. During the program, the HBDI assessment, profile debrief workshop and Whole Brain application solutions were being used to help IBM’s new leaders enhance their leadership effectiveness by applying a Whole Brain Model™ to communication, problem solving and decision making.

The two companies realised that the foundational Whole Brain® Thinking elements could serve as a jumping-off point and framework for a new way of delivering training to global audiences, one that would reduce overall face-to-face classroom hours, while actually enhancing the business and learning impact of the training itself.

Accomplishing these goals meant focusing on two key areas: integration of state-of-the-art technology and learning design, and development of a conceptual plan to reinforce the learning’s business context and better leverage classroom hours.

“We knew if we focused on what we do best—IBM’s expertise in developing innovative technology solutions combined with our methods of harnessing the power of thinking styles for real-world application—we could create a blended solution that would meet or even surpass what could be achieved in the classroom alone,” Herrmann-Nehdi says. “We’d also be able to increase efficiencies and reduce the amount of time, travel and other expenses associated with traditional classroom-only training.”

The result of the partnership is a blended solution that incorporates asynchronous learning, including an experiential simulation program, with synchronous learning delivered both online and in person through 'virtual classroom' learning labs, webinars, coaching and face-to-face classroom labs.



The state-of-the-art, five-module simulation program, The Thinking Accelerator™ featuring HBDIinteractive™, was developed in partnership with Herrmann International's product development team. During the program, participants learn about their thinking preferences through the HBDIinteractive assessment; they are then immersed into the simulation environment of 'Preference Island', where they learn more about Whole Brain Thinking and how it can be leveraged as a critical leadership success factor. The unique environment of the simulation gives participants a personalised experience, as their own HBDI Profile is incorporated throughout the program, and they have the opportunity to create action plans and complete exercises using their own day-to-day work challenges.

When participants attend the BBNL face-to-face classroom lab following the ramp-up activities, they come prepared to focus on real-world business application of Whole Brain concepts

and other leadership skills. That means they're able to spend the bulk of the face-to-face time working through issues they currently or are likely to face as leaders at IBM. Follow-up activities, including coaching and instructor-led webinars, allow them to continue applying and reinforcing the initial learning, while expanding to new and more advanced levels.

An additional and important component of the new program is a dedicated online portal that allows participants to access training information, the simulation, their HBDI Profile and other resources when they need it. Leaders also have the capability of inviting their own direct reports to participate in learning activities, including providing access to the Thinking Accelerator featuring HBDIinteractive, through the portal. The result is a system that extends the reach of Whole Brain Thinking beyond the leaders to the broader ranks of the company.



A full 100% found the ThinkingAccelerator™ featuring HBDIinteractive™ to be valuable, and all respondents said they intend to apply what they learned in the overall new leader program to their current or future roles as leaders.

"Ultimately, to get the full advantage of Whole Brain Thinking in an organisation, everyone needs that foundation," says Herrmann-Nehdi. "IBM found a truly innovative way of making that happen."

“The results show the online program to be an effective alternative to the face-to-face session enabling (face-to-face) lab time to be devoted to applications.”

IBM has piloted the new BBNL blended solution in India, Europe and North America with impressive results. Participant surveys revealed a 92% satisfaction rate with the virtual ramp-up activities. 96% also strongly agreed or agreed that the learning was relevant to their current or future roles as leaders. A full 100% found the Thinking Accelerator featuring HBDi interactive to be valuable, and all respondents said they intend to apply what they learned in the overall new leader program to their current or future roles as leaders.

DeSerio says the results show the online program to be an effective alternative to the face-to-face session, “enabling precious [face-to-face] lab time to be devoted to applications.” The pilot results also demonstrate that the live virtual classroom and ramp-up activities provide a ‘valuable and effective linkage’ to the initial classroom lab module.

One other key finding from the pilots that bodes well for the ongoing implementation: DeSerio says that both “the entry- and exit-level participant knowledge at the BBNL Lab is superior” to the prior BBNL program.

And with that, this most important goal—maintaining a level of quality that has become a competitive advantage for IBM—has not only been achieved but exceeded.

better results through better thinking

Clients

Herrmann International Asia's clients include:

Air NZ	Flotech	Rutherford Group
ANZ	Frucor	St George Bank
Australian Central Credit Union	Janssen-Cilag	Southern Cross Healthcare
AXA	IBM	Telecom NZ
Bank SA	Manukau City Council	Transfield Worley
Bendigo Bank	Manukau Water Limited	The Warehouse
Coca Cola Amatil	Microsoft	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
CPA Australia	Ministry of Education	Warehouse Stationery
Department of Community Services QLD	Nestles	Westpac
Department of Conservation NZ	PNB Paribas	Worley Parsons
Department of Primary Industries	PricewaterhouseCoopers	Zespri
E-Time		

International clients

Herrmann International clients include:

Allstate Insurance	GE	Nortel Networks
American Express	Home Box Office	Novartis
AT&T	IBM	Procter and Gamble
Bank of America	Johnson & Johnson	PR Donnelly & Sons
Barclays	Kaiser Permanente	Shell Oil
Boeing	Marriott Hotels	US Navy
Coca Cola	Morgan Stanley	Weyerhaeuser Corporation
Disney University	MTV Networks	Wharton School of Business
DuPont	National Semiconductor	Xerox
Frito Lay		



The Originators of Whole Brain Technology® and the Creators of the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument® (HBDI®)

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