

Client: BP

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Operational Excellence Network Case Study

Changing organisational culture to embrace standardisation

SITUATION

BP is one of the world's largest energy companies, providing its customers with fuel for transportation, energy for heat and light, retail services and petrochemicals products for everyday items. Refining and Marketing is BP's product and service-led arm, focused on fuels, lubricants and chemicals products. Its refineries are very diverse, with seven different company heritages and major operations in six countries. Bringing the different organisations together has brought post-merger autonomy and benefits to BP Refining, along with many opportunities to learn and be creative. As a company, one of BP's brand values is innovation. However in refining it wished to move to greater standardisation, delivering economies of scale and accelerated performance improvement through share learning. Through the H-I Tailored Programme, it was seeking insights into getting the entire organisation to move from its traditional focus on innovation to want to embrace greater standardisation, learn from other parts of the business, and apply those learnings throughout the organisation.

OBJECTIVE

The key objectives of the BP Refining Tailored Programme were:

- To identify different approaches to changing organisational culture
- To share lessons learned by practitioners who have led endeavours to change culture
- To determine the best approach and key success factors for BP Refining's situation.

APPROACH

H-I Network used its extensive network of contacts to create a tailored programme with stages which included:

- Detailed discussion on the objectives and definition of successful outcomes for BP
- Creation of a 'wish list' of attendees to encompass different approaches, different industries, and different former cultures
- Interviews with individual managers from target organisations
- De-brief with BP on results of interviews resulting in the design for a workshop and attendees to invite
- Facilitated workshop at BP Sunbury
- Key findings distributed to all participants
- BP-specific recommendations discussed and documented as illustrated.

Participants included Shell, National Grid, E.ON, GSK, BOC Linde, and a leading UK charity.

RESULT

H-I was able to draw on its consulting and practitioner experiences to refine the definition of the issue and devise the best approach to address it.

The programme resulted in a recommended way forward that balanced BP Refining's need for fast change with mechanisms to sustain that change, including many practical ideas to ensure success.

"The H-I Network programme gave us access to practitioners with a genuine desire to help and share their successes and failures. Getting this input from those both inside and outside our industry in an open and collaborative way cost a fraction of the estimated costs using our traditional approaches.

I doubt if any of the more traditional approaches would have given us the access to real people working with the same issues we are facing in a format designed to promote real learning."

Colin Reid, Operations Excellence Manager of BP.

