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Executive On-Boarding

Case Study



Avant was asked to help prepare a high profile, talented, female senior executive for a critical leadership position

Situation

A high profile, talented, female senior executive with exceptional capabilities in the engineering and business worlds had experienced distinguished success in a hierarchical, highly autonomous ego-driven work environment. She was recruited to another organization and needed to assimilate into a markedly different culture. The new organization was matrix in nature, emphasized persuasion instead of demands, was demanding yet respectful and emphasized business results instead of individual distinction.

Avant was asked to help prepare her for a critical leadership position by accelerating her understanding and adjustment to the new organizational culture. Her assignment was to stabilize and turn around a historically struggling business that was believed to be strategically essential to the future of the business. The mission was to support the onboarding of the executive in a manner that accelerated a business turnaround without working at cross-purpose with its culture.

Avant was asked to support an executive onboard in a manner that accelerated a business turnaround without working at cross-purpose with its culture.

Client Solution Specifics

Avant worked in concert with the HRVP and division president to understand the business context, challenges and opportunities facing the team, and indicators of successful accelerated onboarding. The approach was a hybrid model of internal and external support to successfully guide the executive's transition.

- Created an actionable, measurable plan during a kick-off meeting with the new leader, the company's HR executive and a business executive sponsor. The plan addressed:
 - **Role:** Focus, priorities, expectations
 - **Relationships:** Boss(es), direct reports, key customers, other stakeholders
 - **Culture:** Nature of the industry, company beliefs about business/processes
 - **Early Wins:** Work to get involved immediately, how to make contributions to others' success
 - **Mentors:** Act as cultural guides, support critical onboarding priorities and serve as internal coach for select development areas
- Established monthly coaching meetings with the new leader to discuss her progress to plan, break through experiences and potential barriers (when appropriate, her mentor joined).
- Quarterly meetings were held with the new leader, sponsors and coach to review progress to date, future action steps, goal achievement metrics and resources for accomplishing the goals.

Outcomes

- The executive was able to blend into the overall organizational culture while retaining her individual nature and leadership style.
- She successfully transitioned a predominantly R&D oriented group into a "go to market" mindset with requisite behaviors.
- She recalibrated expectations and standards of excellence, developed talent and attracted new talent to the team.
- With her leadership, the team was able to land new contracts with key customers, develop new technology and secure significant scientific partnerships.

For more information, contact info@avantleadership.com.