

A Fresh APPROACH



100 individual contributors and managers
8 key drivers of trust
9% overall improvement in key drivers of trust after 3 months

Cultivating Trust at the Produce Marketing Association

An Emphasis on Culture

As CFO of the Produce Marketing Association (PMA), a trade organization representing companies from every segment of the global fresh produce and floral supply chain, I believe it's important to invest in people. After a major internal changeover, including a new CEO, we realized that we needed to take a good, honest look at our culture. We identified several main competencies to focus on – things like coaching and mentoring, communication, and conflict resolution – but the competency that rose to the top was trust. We realized that if you don't have trust, you have nothing.

We talked to several vendors about helping us develop a program that would build trust while energizing people at all levels. Advantage Performance brought us the most holistic and engaging solution, and they were flexible and willing to customize their programs to meet our specific needs.

“Being a not-for-profit organization, we need to look very carefully at our return on people development when making investments. Considering the learning journey we have been on for more than a year, Advantage has proven to be a true partner, providing both flexibility and, most importantly, organizational impact.”

Yvonne Bull, CFO, Produce Marketing Association

Trust in Action

Advantage worked with their partners at BlueEQ, a thought leader in emotional intelligence (EQ), to customize a workshop that explored the competencies that drive increased trust or lack of trust. Focusing on eight key drivers of trust – Relationship Management, Openness, Conflict Management, Empathy, Self-Awareness, Influence, Mindfulness, and Ego Management – participants discovered connections between these drivers and their own personal values.

Prior to the session, participants took a comprehensive emotional intelligence assessment and brought their personal EQ “heat maps” to the workshop. The engaging workshop activities gave participants several opportunities to “look in the mirror” and build self-awareness around personal values and competencies, and customized challenges provided realistic practice in improving trust.

Self-Awareness Is Not a “One and Done”

Every participant left the workshop with a personalized action plan to put into practice. Go-Do's included a number of checkpoints, including work with an internal accountability partner. After the workshop, Advantage coaches conducted follow-up calls and facilitated activities to ensure that participants were on track to implement their plans. Three months after the initial assessment, participants took the BlueEQ assessment again and participated in a three-hour follow-up session. The assessment showed 9% overall improvement on the eight trust competency drivers over the initial assessment results.

Since the program, we have continued to use the cross-functional peer coaching method to drive change faster. We've also worked with Advantage to implement programs addressing the other competencies we identified. Advantage has been very responsive and flexible, and they've brought in the right partners to help deliver what we need.

