

## Coffee Circle CASE STUDY

**Country**  
Germany

**City / Region**  
Berlin

**No. of Employees**  
65

### Description of the organisation

We are a coffee roasting company. For 10 years, we set new standards for fair trade and high-quality coffee. We are constantly searching for exceptional coffees, even if it means to explore remote areas of the world. We foster direct trade relationships with our partners and pay high prices for high quality coffee. We roast our coffees in Berlin. 1 € per kg we invest in coffee communities around the world to improve the lives of farmers and their families.

### Workplace Innovation practices implemented

#### Motivation to Start

The majority of our team leaders in the organisation grew organically into leadership positions inside the company without prior leadership experience. We want to increase their confidence in dealing with everyday people management challenges. As an organisation, we believe that innovation and personal growth are tightly linked. The recent changes we have seen happening in the workplace, underlined the importance of equipping our leadership team with the right tools to empower themselves and others to enhance engagement, resilience and ultimately business success. To achieve this, we saw the urgency of evolving our leaders into coach-leaders. The coach-leader leads by coaching, builds a helping relationship with teammates, empowers them to find answers and opportunities.

#### Actions Implemented

We develop together with the EX-Lab a Leadership Program, the Coffee Leadership Circle, which is fully online, cocreative and anchored in coaching and servant leadership principles. We want to create a community of leaders that have the tools to learn together and from each other, where people's capacity to find their own answers is at the center -not the content itself.

The curriculum is based on the following macro-topics:

- Basics of coaching and self-reflection journaling.
- Self leadership: how to be caring with yourself and others.
- Organisational leadership: how to be inspiring by pinning down a team purpose and vision and communicate them effectively.
- Team Leadership: how to be empowering by giving guidance, challenging and praising others.

Moreover, every member of the Coffee Leadership Circle has regular meetings with a Leader Buddy to share experiences and follow-up with the micro learning exercises.

#### Immediate Outcomes

By having regular Coffee Leadership Circle meetings where we give each other the safe space to be vulnerable and share our challenges, we increase the sense of belonging and strengthen the relationship among our team leaders inside the company. Leaders now work together with more trust, mutual understanding, and



a common language to identify and solve potential issues. We have created a space where leaders feel part of a community and they can ask and receive support in their leadership practices.

The Leadership Program is enabling us to set the basis for our organisational culture to develop and mature to face everyday challenges in times of uncertainty and growth by introducing new habits and enable a mindset switch that will pay off long term.

### Main Achievements

- We are increasing the effectiveness of our 1on1 meetings: from being strictly operational, 1on1 are honest conversations that help building rapport and trust.
- Leaders are more equipped to deal with difficult conversations, by having frameworks to look at when it comes to deal with their own and other people's emotions and reactions
- Leaders are introducing new habits in their teams to celebrate achievements and make their reports connect with their purpose and motivation
- Career and performance conversations are significantly improving: leaders focus more on listening, asking the right questions and give their reports tools to empower themselves, rather than quick solutions or unsolicited advice.

