

SOFTCAT CASE STUDY

Supporting commercial
outperformance



TOOLS USED



PERSONALITY (HPTI)

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Softcat

Technology

2000 employees

International reach

www.softcat.com

THE CHALLENGE

An infrastructure and services provider in the fast-moving technology sector, Softcat faces the widening skills gap created by technological development. The company also needed to be able to resource for rapid growth. Noticing a growing gap between the skills required of Leadership team members, and middle management, Softcat took a proactive approach to its talent development.

Learning and Development Manager Heather Bustin says, “Our leadership development programme started about four years ago because we saw that there was too big a gap between what we needed at senior leadership team versus where our middle managers were. We recognised that we needed to address that to make sure that we weren’t losing talent to other opportunities, and we were also growing what we needed to fill those seats in the future. That’s where the HPTI comes in to provide us insight to support that programme.”

THE SOLUTION

Softcat introduced Thomas’ Personality assessment in 2019 to help to define participants’ development needs, and provide them with insights to increase their self-awareness. “We use the HPTI to match programme participants with mentors” says Heather.



“We’ve profiled our senior leadership team and leadership development programme participants. We then match them, pairing people who may be low in one area with a person who has optimal levels of the same trait. We use that comparison to generate some interesting conversations. That’s been quite useful.”

Three years on, Heather says, “We are using the HPTI far more on the programme. Every time a director comes in to share or give a talk, they share their profile. They are able to say, ‘This is my profile, this is how it shows up in work and this is how I manage the different traits.’ It provides an extra level of understanding to the director, and also allows the group to reflect and say, ‘if my profile is different from theirs in these ways, how is that showing up in what I am doing?’ So it’s working really well.”



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Heather Bustin

Learning and Development Manager
Softcat

“We use the assessment in conversation, and we also use it to define Personal Development Plans, where it allows us to identify areas for individual development. It shows us where there is an area to address. While you can’t change your personality that much, this allows us to sit together with participants and ask, ‘What are you going to do to manage this? Who is going to help you?’”



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Softcat

THE RESULTS

In the four years since it launched its leadership development programme, Softcat has grown along with its people. Despite the stock market crash in 2020, recently exceeded its revenue target by 27%. “People are the most important part of our culture and we’ve grown completely organically”, says Heather. “Two of our senior leadership team started as graduates. They came out of university, and they are now CEO and Operations Director. As a business, we have really taken that journey. If you go down a level to our executive or extended leadership team, there’s so much home-grown talent in that group. It makes sense to grow talent. That’s why the leadership development programmes we’ve run are so important.”

The programme’s success has been reflected in both the success of the company since Covid-19, and the rapid progression of leaders through its ranks. By empowering its people to take on more responsibility, Softcat has maintained its position as an industry leader, outperforming competitors. Heather comments, “Growing greater diversity within our business is a big focus for us. We have a head of Diversity and Inclusion within Softcat. Her story is amazing in that she started as a graduate and worked her way through sales into management, headed up the L&D team and then moved to become our head of Diversity Inclusion. So we’ve got lots of lived examples of recognising where we needed to grow and then success stories that have resulted from that.”

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