

OVERLAND
www.overlandfootwear.co.nz

Overview

The need

Overland needed a way to measure the effectiveness of its training and leadership development program to monitor workplace engagement and to help ensure that what managers were learning was being used at the stores on a consistent basis.

The solution

The company determined it would be able to track its engagement by participating in IBM® Kenexa® Best Workplaces survey, which enables businesses to measure engagement levels of employees and provide insights into the workforce.

The benefit

- Improved management development and training keeps the company's network of leaders connected and committed to their mission
 - Enhanced employee performance measurement fosters company-wide visibility on where everyone stands compared to each other
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Overland Footwear

Sharing a passion for customer service leads to higher engagement at Overland

Overland's vision is to bring its valued customers the best range of quality fashion footwear, sourced from around the globe. Overland is committed to exceeding customers' expectations in service and knowledge with every interaction, from showing the latest fashion trends, to sharing knowledge on care and fit, to answering each and every question. Website: www.overlandfootwear.co.nz

Customers who walk into an Overland Footwear store expect exceptional service and a fashion experience that is second to none. That is a promise Overland founder and CEO Shane Anselmi made when he opened the retail store in 1990.

The promise still holds true today, even though the task keeps growing. Since Anselmi opened Overland with one store in Auckland, the business has expanded to include 49 stores throughout New Zealand. And in 2012, Overland went international, opening its first store in Australia. The company has also grown to more than 400 employees, who serve primarily as managers, assistant managers, or retail sales associates.

Overland has lofty business goals: Striving to double in size every five to seven years, expand its global presence, and further set itself apart from the competition. Anselmi says the focus of the business is to deliver an exciting and compelling fashion through passion, innovation, and design, and it all starts with having a "share of heart."



Solution components:

- IBM® Kenexa® Best Workplaces
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The challenge for bridging the divide

Gaining a “share of heart” does not happen overnight. To make it a part of his company’s culture, Anselmi knew he would need a great network of leaders in each retail store – as well as managers based in the support office – to help ensure the company stayed connected and committed to its mission. Anselmi reasoned that if the company’s managers and leaders engaged and enabled their people, employees would become even better ambassadors for Overland and be more motivated to serve customers.

It is a big task, especially when you consider the number of stores that are spread over a large geographic region.

“We have the tyranny of distance,” Anselmi says. “Trying to get engagement across all stores is hard work. The linchpin is the manager in each store and the extent to which he or she is engaged and believes in the culture and philosophy. If they are strong advocates, it flows through to the employees in their stores.”

As a result, Overland implemented a leadership training and development program to strengthen the skills of its managers so they could drive employee engagement in each store. Anselmi included an element of transparency in the initiative to make it more effective by informing the group about the company’s key business metrics and its progress toward meeting financial goals.

The solution: engaging managers

Overland needed a way to measure the effectiveness of its training and leadership development program, to verify that what the managers were learning was being used at the stores on a consistent basis, and to monitor workplace engagement. The company was able to track its engagement by participating in the annual IBM® Kenexa® Best Workplaces survey, which enables businesses to measure engagement levels of employees and provide insights about the workforce.

Kenexa, an IBM Company, is one of the leading employee engagement survey administrators in the world. With a database of nearly 1 billion data points, Kenexa helps organizations understand how they can solve workforce-related issues and provides a sense of how they compare to similar companies around the world. Being a New Zealand-based organization, Overland tapped into Kenexa’s New Zealand benchmark data to obtain an external comparison.

In order to improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of an organization, Kenexa can design its surveys to measure what matters for each individual client. Surveys can be tailored to focus on key areas that are important to an organization with the goal of creating a more engaged and productive workforce.

Kenexa's consultants use their expertise to design the best possible survey tool to help meet any situation. Once the survey is complete, they help clients to evaluate and report on the results in a concise, easy-to-understand way that provides insight into how employees feel, what trends have emerged over time, and which external benchmarks will be important to follow.

The results: the trickle down effect

Overland's focus on training and developing its managers has had a profound impact on engagement.

Store managers are involved in two-day training programs every three months, during which time they complete training modules on topics such as emotional intelligence and overcoming conflict. In addition, Anselmi shares business metrics on a quarterly basis so managers are aware of the impact that increased sales can have if costs are kept constant. "It helps them get a real sense that they are part of a bigger picture – that what they do in store really matters," says Amy Buller, People and Development Leader at Overland.

Employees are constantly measured on their performance and there is clear visibility throughout the organization as to where each employee stands in relation to one another. Managers encourage each employee to focus on raising their performance, and provide additional attention to low achievers to help them achieve their personal goals. The end game is to help each person improve.

"Our first assumption is that if someone is not doing well, it is our fault and we need to bridge that gap," says Melissa Mason, General Manager of Retail at Overland.

As a result, engagement levels have soared at Overland to the point where the company was named the overall winner of Kenexa's Best Workplaces 2012 survey. Overland's overall Engagement Index score in 2012 reached new heights of 87 percent and even higher scores were found in areas that involve customer service and focus.

About Kenexa, an IBM Company

To us, business has always been personal – and it has always been about helping to make the workforce smarter, which is why we are proud to be a platform for a Smarter Workforce. We look at it from two angles – empowering people and transforming business. Our tools help enable businesses to attract and keep the best people, develop their skills, cultivate new leaders and capitalize on their collective intelligence by applying human insights, social tools and workforce analytics to transform the way they work. We provide deep insight and experience in employee engagement, talent management and leadership development mixed with industry-leading technology and social platforms, giving us the unique ability to build a Smarter Workforce.

For more information

To learn how to build a smarter workforce, visit:

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