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## CASE STUDY | LEADING RUSSIAN BANK

### *HOW SKILLED ARE YOUR HIGHLY SKILLED WORKERS?*

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#### **HOW ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT BANKS IN RUSSIA USED THE DEL-SIM GAME TO ASK THIS QUESTION OF THEIR LEAN SIX SIGMA BLACK BELTS.**

Based on the assumptions that training is standardized, Human Resources believes your team all have the same level of training and skill due to their certifications. However, that is not always the case.

Over time, training and learning methods change and a candidate that has received a LSSBB ten years ago may not have the same skill set as a more recently internally trained LSSBB or as one recently hired from outside your organization. A LSSBB holder trained by one trainer may not have received the same training as one trained by another. Trainers are people and each one presents training from a different perspective with different experiences. Yes, the basics are the same, but does your team have the LSSBB skills that your company needs? Are they all utilizing the same methodology and is it aligned with the Company's objectives.?

To answer that question, this top Russian bank approached Pi-Sims and asked that we put together a one-day assessment to measure the

skills of their LSSBB team. In addition to the usual tests, Pi-Sims decided to use its Del-Sim simulation game to test the Bank's Six Sigma team's practical LSS skills.

#### **OVERALL APPROACH:**

We started by splitting the LSSBB's into two groups and ran four rounds of the simulation game. In-between rounds, we requested two persons from each team to go through tollgate reviews. By doing this we could test their knowledge and practical application of specific LSS instruments, as well as change management and stakeholder management skills. Two of our consultants played the role of tollgate keepers, adding pressure on the assessed in a fashion not dissimilar from "The Apprentice" TV show. In order to formalize rotation of tollgate responsibilities, we were enforcing role changes for each round of the game. We ran four rounds as described below.

#### **DETAILS OF THE EACH ROUND:**

1. Preparation for the next round of the game (20 minutes) – General Manager and his deputy were responsible for ensuring everyone understood his responsibilities for the next round, as well as implementing process changes

approved during the previous tollgate, if any. Their soft skills were observed by two external observers per team and graded on a scale from 1-10 on the following dimensions:

- Change management
- Self-management

2. Playing the round (20 minutes). The General Manger role supervised the round while the rest of the team was performing various tasks.

3. Discussing the results of the round, preparing for tollgate (20 minutes). The soft skills of the GM and his deputy again were observed by two external observers per team and graded on a scale from 1-10 on the following dimensions:

- System thinking and problem solving
- Facilitation skills
- Digital skills

4. Tollgate review (10 minutes). The GM and his deputy presented one LSS tool each. The list of required tollgate deliverables is as follows:

- Tollgate 1: Business Case and SIPOC-R
- Tollgate 2: PARETO on P&L and VOC-CTQ drilldown
- Tollgate 3: Value Stream Map & 8 Wastes
- Tollgate 4: Balancing against Takt time and analysis on detailed data (Graphical and Statistical)

If the teams pass the tollgate, they were then allowed to do a maximum of two changes to their process for the next round. Actual changes to game process layout were performed by Pi-Sims in Facilitator's mode.

## KEY CONCLUSIONS FROM THE PROCESS:

This assessment took a full day of intense focus by the participants. The competitive nature and time limitations, both during tollgates and rounds, to achieve the best P&L created a unique environment to assess the group's Lean and Six Sigma skills. It was possible for the bank, with the assistance of Pi-Sims, to assess both hard skills (i.e. the ability to apply LSS tools to a specific process) and soft skills (i.e. change management) in a span of just one day for a group up to twenty people. Game flexibility allowed for various improvement strategies, highlighting and punishing any shortcomings immediately. As an example, one team that had played a similar game during their original LSSBB training, using paper cards, tried to bypass data entry, hoping that the system would not notice (as they had done with paper card game). The Del-Sim simulation game, in automatic mode, found each case of missing data and penalized the team, showing large losses on the P&L for that round. This made the situation more realistic, with little interference from the facilitators. In addition, the game demonstrated that when under time pressure, teams reverted to impulse decision-making, leaving behind their data-driven decision-making. In turn, this resulted in a seriously underperforming process, even during later rounds.

The client was very pleased with the outcome (having had a senior team observe the day) and the environment it created. The simulation added a bit of good-natured competition to the dynamic as well as providing detailed objective outcomes for each of the participants and the Bank's LSS program overall. Secondly, this exercise opened the possibility of using the simulation in the evaluation of future hires for the group.