

Convergys



Business Outcomes

- Improved management succession bench by 25%
- Cost neutral customized education program
- Developed student pipeline of 350+ potential learners

Employee Impact

- 83 employees gaining meaningful skills and competencies and earning college credits

Professional Customer Care Center Management Certificate--P3CM

- Collaboratively developed using industry subject matter experts
- Budget neutral business impact with measurement and analysis
- Productivity sensitive – off hours/opt-in
- Encourages online peer network

Cost Neutral Customized Education Grows Middle Manager Pipeline

Convergys

Partnering with a responsive, flexible education provider, Bellevue University, Convergys has improved its management succession bench by 25 percent with little initial investment.

Convergys is a global leader in relationship management serving half of the top 50 Fortune 500 companies. With nearly 65,000 employees (24,000 located in the U. S.), and annual revenues of \$2.1B, Convergys has been named a Fortune Most Admired Company for nine consecutive years. The company commits to improving business performance for their clients through innovative technologies and excellent management of their clients' relationships with their customers. With over two million interactions everyday, the success of Convergys as a "people business" is dependent on employees with consistent technical and customer relations skills. When Convergys needed a customized industry specific program to develop middle managers in their customer care operations, they turned to Bellevue University for support of their working learners.

Custom-designed Curriculum Created in Collaboration

There is a challenging dichotomy at the center of Convergys' talent development strategy. While 80 percent of the company's current managers have been promoted from within, Convergys deals with an industry turnover rate of 85 percent among customer care center agents. The company's goal is to retain top talent and to help those top performers grow professionally into the next cadre of managers. Convergys needed a plan to develop people within current cost constraints-- a challenge under the best conditions. Convergys was further challenged with a domestic workforce of 24,000 that is spread throughout the nation— with at least 2,000 home based agents. Their goal was to first create an education-based career development opportunity and, then, to recruit representation into the program from

each customer contact center based on the projected management talent needs at each location. After looking at four other educational institutions, Convergys partnered with Bellevue University, a private not-for-profit university founded in 1966 in Bellevue, Nebraska to serve adult learners at a local Air Force Base. [www.corporatelearning.com]

PERSONAL STORY

Marie Duque, a wife and mother of four, joined Convergys four years ago as an Agent, moved up to Team Leader, and aspires to become an Operations Manager. With support of the company scholarship, she enrolled in P3CM courses, entering without prior college credit. She finds the online delivery fits into her working mom schedule, doing her assignments while her children complete their homework. She says, "The program connects my studies to my real work, allowing me to grow and become more valuable to the company."

One "critical factor" for Convergys' leadership choosing Bellevue was the University's willingness to bear the cost of custom-designed curriculum development. With Convergys contributing 360 hours of subject matter experts' (SME) time, Bellevue University moved swiftly to collaborate with the SMEs and develop a series of 12 courses, tailored directly to the company's operations. The courses lead to a Bachelor of Science degree in Professional Customer Care Center Management (P3CM). Bellevue University also funds 100% of the outreach and employee communications plus business impact measurement and analysis, resulting in budget neutral start-up investment for the company.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

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Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Pacific Gas & Electric
- Northrop Grumman
- TJX Companies, Inc.
- UPS
- KPMG
- AOL

Scholarship-based Tuition Assistance Program With Employee Investment

A goal of Convergys is to pilot a program that tests if, by targeting the top 25 percent of employees based on performance criteria, the group will produce higher retention rates than the general workforce population. In an innovative approach, the Bellevue University program was moved out of the company’s traditional tuition assistance program (TAP) to a specifically developed “scholarship” program. The recruitment process encourages employees to submit an application against selection criteria. They are to be in good standing on attendance and behavior and in the top 25 percent on call scorecard performance.

Another goal of the company is to test if by requiring participants to have “skin in the game” a higher completion rate might be established than the completion rate in the general TAP. A scholarship of \$5,000 is awarded toward the annual tuition requiring participants to invest the difference—which many cover by applying for financial aid through Bellevue University. The program engenders support from the Convergys leadership team because the investment outlay for the organization falls below the \$5,250 federal tax exclusion for employer provided tuition assistance.

In order to meet talent development objectives, the goal is to have 200 people in the program at all times in increments of 50. Bellevue University promotes the program through webinars, brochures, hosted “lunch and learns” at sites, and more. With their long history of serving working adults through on-line-learning, they are adept at creating “collaborative learning environments” within small groups of 15 to 20 employees from different parts of the country. Because all courses are delivered asynchronously on-line and exclusive to Convergys employees, Convergys is able to meet targeted regional talent development needs. Course content drawn from Convergys operations meets adult learn-

“We do things differently from industry peers and it was important to capture that in the learning process. Bellevue was willing to use our subject matter experts and create curricula based on Convergys’ learning needs.”

— Dan Montgomery,
Senior Director of Learning
Consulting & Curriculum,
Convergys

ers’ need for relevance while the particular learning is beneficial to professional development since it is built on internal case studies. It is notable that students with no college credit may enter their major courses FIRST in the P3CM courses. Bellevue University achieves this innovative degree sequencing by providing an Online Student Success Program (OSSP) for free to Convergys students. The OSSP is a 4-week, 2-credit hour course that prepares students to be successful learners in online college-level learning. Upon completion of the 12 P3CM Courses, individuals earn 36 college credit hours that can be credited toward a bachelor’s degree and receive a certificate of completion of the P3CM program. Bellevue University further supports employees toward degree completion by helping them attain college credit for training and work/life experience.

P3CM Program Supports Professional Progress

In addition to the 82 learners enrolling in the program, Convergys has approximately 63 of the 300 plus approved scholarship recipients currently in the enrollment process. The Convergys customer care center agent population is made up largely of 18-to-25 year old minority females. The P3CM program is designed to support the professional progress of this population throughout the organization. P3CM completers have greater earning potential with the opportunity to move into supervisory positions with salary ranges of \$35,000 to \$60,000 following education/training.

For more information about Convergys, visit www.convergys.com

SECTOR: Customer Relations Management

EMPLOYEES: Nearly 65,000 globally; 24,000 domestic

ANNUAL REVENUE: \$2.1B