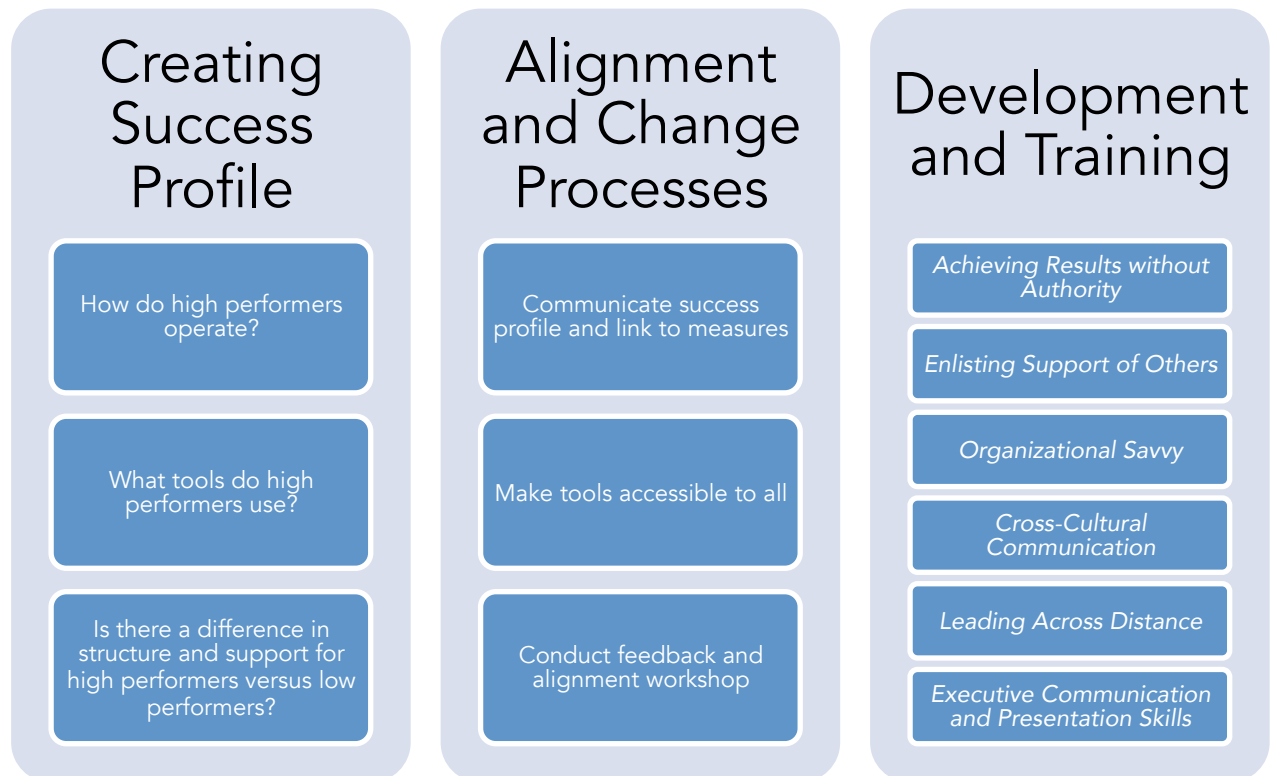


## Improving Influence Skills for Project Managers and Team Leaders

Project Managers, Team Leaders and others who have responsibility for working across lines of business and organizational functions often do not have formal authority to implement processes, garner support and achieve results. One way to build their skills is to use an integrated process to improve both individual skills and organizational support systems.

PPS International Limited can partner with organizations to conduct this process. Some support we provide include:



We have worked with Project Leaders and Team Leaders to address common influence challenges, especially where we find:

- Managers and supervisors primarily rely on their formal authority to get work done.
- Individual contributors are frustrated by constantly having to “push others” in order to get tasks done and manage projects.
- Business success is dependent upon those inside and outside the company at all levels, yet, there is misalignment on priority of project and project tasks.
- Critical results will require efforts by those who don’t have an obvious reason to cooperate with each other.
- Few plans are made that fully incorporate stakeholders in decision-making and goal setting.

Some examples and case situations from our work:

**For 60+ team leaders, project leaders and managers working in an international manufacturing company**

This organization faced vast growth and change due to acquisitions and business restructuring to address market changes. They restructured in order to launch several new lines of business. Part of the restructuring included forming cross-functional business teams to sell, implement and manage customer accounts. Team Leaders and Project Leaders often worked long hours in order to complete tasks that fell to other’s areas of responsibility in order to meet project deadlines. A lack of a common project structure created confusion for individuals who served on multiple project teams. We implemented a blended development program that is structured around real-world projects: a project is launched in conjunction with an internal sponsor and a facilitator from PPS International Limited. Participants attend a kickoff webinar, complete multiple self-paced learning modules on influence and communication, attend a structured workshop and receive coaching on their real-world project. This development is on-going; as a result of the initiative, this organization now boasts a common project process and improved speed of decision making, communication and target achievement for projects.

### **For 35+ project leaders working in an international apparel company**

Team Leaders and Project Leaders struggled to create alignment on new line implementation, which involves representatives from nearly all departments (design, marketing, manufacturing, quality, finance, HR, etc.). These team leaders and project leaders had no formal authority, but wide-ranging accountability. Decision-making was slow and sometimes key stakeholders were caught short by decisions, project deliverables were often delayed and team leaders and project leaders had especially high stress levels at peak project times (leading up to 'market'). We tailored and implemented an *Achieving Results without Authority* program that included an application project. This development is on-going; current feedback is that the inclusion of the application project allows for real-world use of skills and common language for entire project teams. We are now working with senior leaders on an alignment process so that systems and structures are aligned across all functions, further supporting Team Leaders and Project Leaders.

### **For 60 project leaders working in an international biotechnology company**

Project Leaders had to work cross-functionally to form working teams from IT, HR, Finance, Marketing and Sales that would implement new products or product updates across various regions. These Project Leaders often underestimated the amount of influence necessary to implement changes and secure support and alignment in this heavily regulated, risk-adverse, authority-driven culture. We implemented an influence assessment to give Project Leaders an understanding of their preferences in influencing and implemented an *Organizational Savvy* training program, which included segments on how to identify and engage stakeholders for both specific projects and long-term relationships. Project Leaders now use the specific strategies introduced in the workshop and through the assessment to guide discussions and long-term relationship building.

**For 40 project leaders and internal consultants working in an international defense engineering organization**

Project Leaders and Internal Consultants often needed to present recommendations and garner support from senior leaders in the organization. Project Leaders and Internal Consultants needed to make very fine-tuned presentations to executives—and often, their time was cut short and the attention of senior leaders was very limited. We implemented a stakeholder engagement interview process and a tailored *Executive Communication and Presentation Skills* program with specific coaching for several of the Project Leaders. Project Leaders now use data from stakeholder engagement to address specific needs of executives and engage team members to implement policy and other initiatives.

Contact us for more information on how we can support the building of influence skills in your organization.

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