



BARRETT VALUES CENTRE

ING BANKING ASIA

Understanding Employee Engagement through Values

THE SITUATION

ING introduced a management tool to measure employee engagement. At that time, one of the strategic pillars of the company was to establish a high performing organisation. After defining a strategy and organising the structure, culture became the most important aspect to make the difference.

Since Asia's participation in the global annual engagement survey, although engagement scores could be benchmarked with other financials, the outcomes of the survey always needed further clarification. They decided to conduct a separate cultural assessment. As a region with multiple countries and multiple functions, the main question became: "How can we make the most out of our different entities and work towards a common identity?"

THE PROCESS

ING Asia Banking evaluated various providers of cultural analysis and determined Barrett Values Centre's Cultural Transformation Tools® (CTT) were the best fit for their needs to measure culture and deepen the understanding of the engagement results.

- 785 people were asked to participate in the value assessment.
- 592 responded (75% response rate).

A tutorial for reading the report was designed, and the CTT results were separately discussed with the functional and country managers to help them understand the reports and the impact for their business. In addition, twenty reports were developed which combined the employee engagement survey results with the CTT results.

A two-day off-site program was initiated for all country and functional managers which focused on building a value-driven organisation. Prior to the off-site, a small group assessment was taken by the leadership team.

In one-to-one discussions with the regional and functional managers, the data gave the company a way to specifically determine what to focus on with their teams. In a way, the combination of these two results provided a clear picture of where to empower people to prepare for the future. These conversations were highly appreciated. The results also helped senior leaders to transfer the 'lingo' into something meaningful and more important: they could start taking action with their teams.

Industry:
Financial

of Employees:
100,000

Annual Revenue:
\$3.675 million

Country:
Netherlands, Australia &
Pacific, Asia, Central &
Eastern Europe, Northern
America

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From the evaluation, it was learned that follow up was needed with the senior management team in order to help them connect working on culture with realising business priorities.

The follow up was five months later. A two-day off-site, initiated and strongly supported by the CEO of the region, focused on how to build a value-driven organisation in the region.

The value assessment results were combined with the 'Walking the Talk' approach (be-do-have). The CVA shed light on the current 'be-level' that could be easily connected to behaviours and outcomes. This enabled a meaningful discussion on what this management team needed to be in order to change their behaviour and increase their business results at a regional level.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The overall level of entropy in the company was 15%, reflecting the impact of the financial crisis. Frustrations with operational inefficiencies and concern for financial viability were countered by the desire to move away from survival (fear-driven values) towards creativity, internal cohesion and empowerment (growth-driven values).

The entropy level would have been higher (19%) if "cost reduction" had been designated a potential limiting value. It was the top value in the Current Culture. From examples, we learned this value is often perceived as limiting. In many cases, cost reduction limits innovation and investments in people.

The overall value assessment results were strongly connected to the three business priorities identified by head office:

1. Customer centricity: the CVA showed desire to increase working in unity to serve customer needs in the region;
2. Operational excellence: the CVA showed a desired shift from "cost reduction" and "control" towards "efficiency";
3. Top employer: the CVA showed desire to have more focus on "leadership development" and "employee recognition".

Linking the local and functional value assessment results to the outcomes of the corresponding engagement surveys helped create a clear picture of how people perceived the current culture (valuing strategy, leadership, career opportunities, recognition, etc.) and what they wanted most (strong leadership, plans for the future, streamlining systems and processes, being acknowledged for what they do).

The results of the senior leadership small group assessment showed similar entropy (16%, including "cost reduction" as potential limiting) and a strong desire to start working as a team with a shared vision. At the off-site, a common vision was developed and agreed upon, including a common approach towards cross-regional operations. Each leader also pledged how they would be accountable for taking the lead on implementation.

QUOTES FROM SENIOR LEADERS

"I always knew engagement didn't equal culture but I never realised culture is that much about what people perceive as being valued."

"We discussed 'accountability' as our most important value and the bridge towards creating our future. It was an eye-opener to see we generally refer to accountability as something others have to take. The assessment, however, showed changing the culture is up to us."

