

Excellence in Practice 2019



Santander / Opinno / Mind the Gap
/ Fraile y Blanco / Open Waters

How to accelerate the transformation of a financial giant

Santander a Group is a Spanish multinational commercial bank and financial services company founded in Santander, Spain, and whose HQ is located in Madrid.

The bank looks after 144 million customers worldwide and has a proud 161-year history of success. But past glory does not guarantee future success.

In 2015, under its new executive chairman Ana Botin, Santander identified the need to adapt and remain agile against a backdrop of shifting customer experience expectations, a challenging peer and competitor landscape, and the need to attract, retain and develop top talent who could work positively and collaboratively across boundaries.

The result? Santander introduced a new balanced stakeholder model and three core values: Simple, Personal and Fair, underpinned by eight key behaviours to live and work by: Show Respect, Truly Listen, Talk Straight, Actively Collaborate, Bring Passion, Support People and Embrace Change.

The ultimate goal was to help the organisation, "To be the best retail and commercial bank by earning the lasting loyalty of people, customers, shareholders and communities".

To achieve this ambitious objective Santander had to ensure its leadership group could embrace and drive the change, developing and reinforcing new critical skills, including a strong digital attitude.

The solution was the "The Leaders Academy Experience" initiative that introduced a new way of learning, inviting participants to continually develop themselves anywhere, at any time, and included different pathways to transform both business and culture, achieving outstanding results.

The challenge

The challenge was to embed this new approach throughout Santander, to instil a new behavioural set based on the continuous learning approach and to break a historical taboo: failure is part of any innovation process and it should be considered as an opportunity to learn and improve.

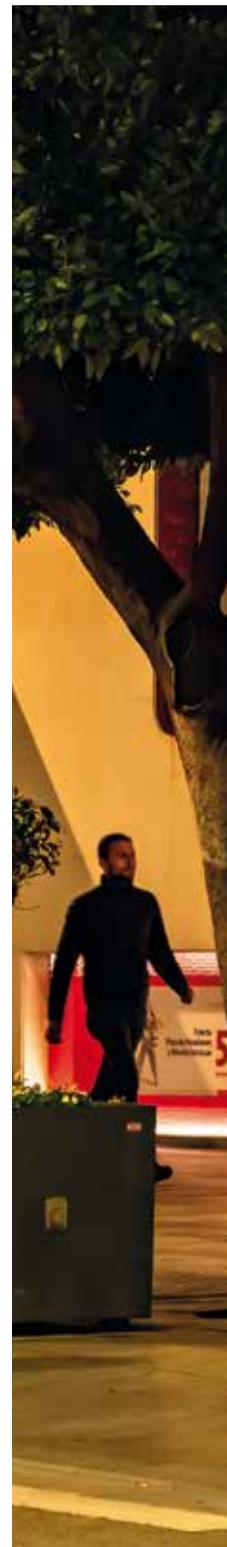
Santander needed leaders to drive a significant shift in business and in people, so that "Simple, Personal and Fair" became a "new normal" that transcended what had gone before; building loyalty by making their customers' lives easier, understanding individual needs and acting in an honest, collaborative and innovative way.

Embedding into HR and business processes

The group went to great lengths to embed the changes in existing processes and practices and deploy them throughout the business. Santander introduced a new digital division to anticipate fundamental changes that digitalisation will bring about, and also reconfigured the segmentation of our Corporate Leadership, moving from two to three populations:

Promontorio (top leaders, in charge of defining the corporate vision, values and strategy) *Faro* (senior management who are a guide and essential benchmark for colleagues and groups across countries and divisions); and *Solaruco* (middle managers with a key role in implementing the strategy and objectives associated with a country or corporate/global entity).

This means putting under the spotlight the leadership collectives who occupy the most





Excellence in Practice 2019

★
SILVERSantander / Opinno / Mind the Gap / Fraile y Blanco / Open Waters
How to accelerate the transformation of a financial giant

“”

This has been a continuous learning approach. Monthly touch points, either face-to-face or virtual, exposed participants to high-quality interventions about the major trends that shape the bank's markets and businesses

critical, influential positions within the Group.

Later on, in 2017, the Global Knowledge and Development function defined a new Global Learning Strategy that places our employees at the centre and applies a “never stop learning” approach, focusing on continuous development across three axes: leadership, business and cultural transformation.

Taking action

Santander's business performance showed that they were already highly-effective and focused on results. However, they were in the middle of a thorough business and cultural transformation which meant their HR strategy had to change too in order to be aligned with and enable the company strategic agenda. So they started to build from scratch what was needed to make of Santander a future-proof organisation.

The main changes to achieve were embedding the eight corporate behaviours into day-to-day life, having employees and managers taking accountability for this change, collaborating and breaking down silos. All of that had to be cascaded from the top down.

They looked both inside and outside the group to find the best of what was new and innovative to develop the teams. Our external partners were Opinno, Mind the Gap and Fraile y Blanco, all of them consultancy firms based in Spain, and Open Waters from the UK.

The result was “The Leaders Academy Experience” initiative. It invites participants to continually develop themselves anywhere, at any time and includes different pathways to transform both business and culture.



83%

The ultimate impact has been felt across all four stakeholder groups: 83% of employees are motivated to contribute to building a bank that is simple, personal, and fair

6.3m

There's also been a 15% increase in loyal customers, 18% increase in profits and a staggering 6.3 million people have been supported in the wider community





The L&D function under the spotlight

This initiative shone a spotlight on Learning and Development. The L&D function became the catalyst for transformational change – for business and culture. It was a completely new way of consuming training, moving from a “push” to a “pull” approach, with the L&D function being ahead of the trends and driving a completely new transformational agenda.

Santander worked with external providers from all over the world, to help fine tune the programme design and provide insight and fresh inputs from the best in class, which would elevate this programme to something truly memorable, sustainable and well-balanced.

For example, Oppino helped to bring in excellent speakers and thought leaders to run business transformation workshops, Mind the Gap supported the design and delivery of the business transformation experience, Fraile y Blanco provided digital innovation and technical support, and Open Waters helped design and deliver the cultural transformation piece. However, the design was Santander’s, created on an agile basis and owned in-house.

Learning methods and environment

This has been a continuous learning approach. Monthly touch points, either face-to-face or virtual, exposed participants to high-quality interventions about the major trends that shape the bank’s markets and businesses. Events included the participation of renowned speakers such as Tao Tao, Director of Business Development EMEA at AliPay; Salim Ismail, Founding Executive Director of Singularity University; and Brett King, Australian futurist, author and co-founder and CEO of Moven, a New York-based mobile banking start-up.

Impact

The Leaders Academy Experience is about changing the mind-set of the people at the top of the house. The Bank is already seeing the positive impact of people being more aligned with the changing business, doing things in a more collaborative, innovative, accountable way.

“

LAEx has given me the possibility of breathing deeply and reflect on those aspects I should improve or do otherwise (personal and professional ones, a real interior reflection). Without a doubt it reinforced my belief that people come first. And it has allowed me to be up-to-date with new technologies and what it is happening in the world (and provoked me to adapt and use as soon as possible)

LAEx Participant

Santander is proud to have delivered a ground-breaking, transformative programme, using a new approach to continuous learning, which has exceeded expectations in all key performance metrics. This has resulted in 84% participation in the programme and tangible differences throughout the Santander Group, with senior managers asking for it to be rolled out to their teams.

Thanks to the Leaders Academy Experience our leaders are more comfortable in a fast-changing business environment, while running their business in a more collaborative, innovative and accountable way.

The ultimate impact has been felt across all four stakeholder groups: 83% of employees are motivated to contribute to building a bank that is simple, personal, and fair. There’s also been a 15% increase in loyal customers, 18% increase in profits and a staggering 6.3 million people have been supported in the wider community.

In summary, the Leaders Academy Experience has had a significant and lasting impact as an effective transformation tool that will carry Santander through to a positive future.

It has paved the way towards the implementation of a Learning Experience Platform representing a critical step to transform the whole Santander Group into a Continuous Learning Organisation.

gf

