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DTR0CKs – Forming a New Company Culture at Daimler Truck

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A company's success is closely tied to its employees. A positive work culture plays a decisive role in creating a motivating and productive environment where employees can thrive and contribute to the company's long-term success. One of the key aspects of fostering a positive work culture is for leaders to actively demonstrate desired behaviours and company values on a daily basis.

New company, new corporate culture

In December 2021, Daimler Truck AG reached a significant milestone in its history by becoming an independent entity listed on the stock exchange. As the world's largest manufacturer of commercial vehicles with a global scale, the company aims to maintain its leadership in emissions-free transportation in the years to come. To achieve this goal, the Board of Management and the Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler Truck Holding AG, Martin Daum, devised a clear plan, but there were several challenges ahead.

Daimler Truck now employs over 100,000 people from 125 nations and operates in various production sites across all continents. What keeps these employees united? What motivates them to contribute each day? How does a sense of identity deepen within the company?

At the start of 2022, Daimler Truck faced an unprecedented situation. They needed to realign their corporate culture, leveraging the momentum of a new entrepreneurial beginning. It was crucial to recognise that people shape the company and play a vital role in its success. The challenge was not only to establish new corporate goals but also to bridge the existing work culture at Daimler with a new one at Daimler Truck – and to do so swiftly.

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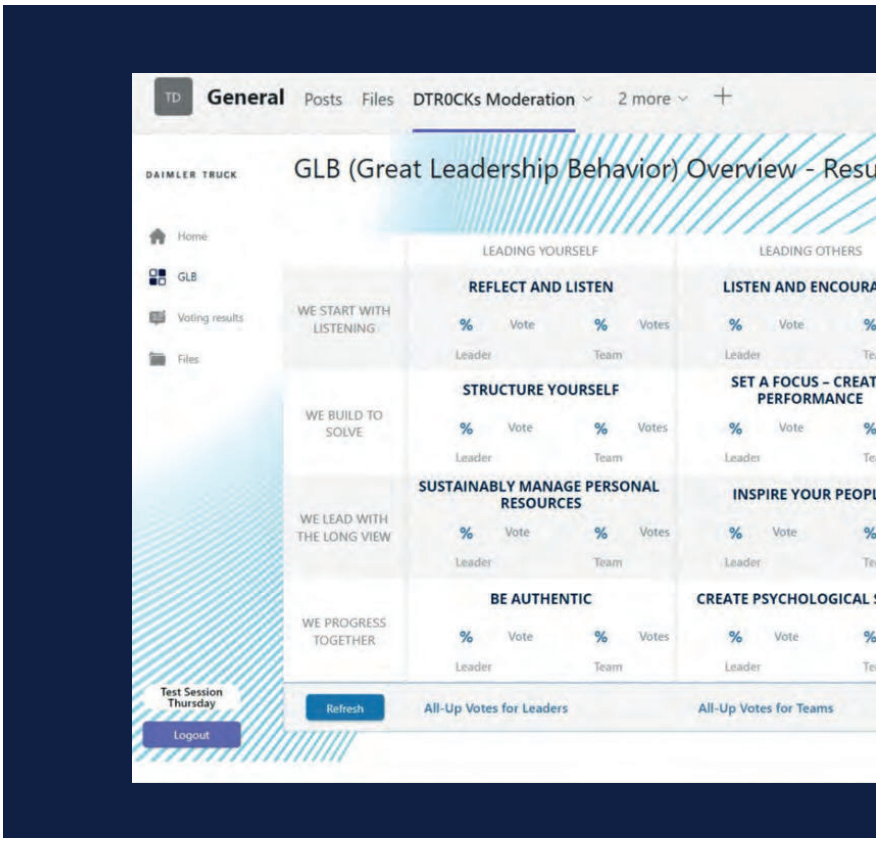
"...they developed the foundation for effective leadership at Daimler Truck known as the 'Great Leadership Behaviour' (GLB)



Following their purpose principle of 'for those who keep the world moving', the Board of Management began outlining the desired behaviour for employee engagement, working alongside a group of 50 employees from different levels, regions, and functions. Together, they developed the foundation for effective leadership at Daimler Truck known as the 'Great Leadership Behaviour' (GLB). This formed the core of the new potential and performance system, called the Impact Compass, as well as other initiatives related to employees.

The question was how to quickly ensure that leaders across different locations within Daimler Truck understood and embraced this new concept. How could they stimulate engagement and strengthen accountability among all leaders? And how could Daimler Truck make this understanding tangible and measurable? The need for an initiative to activate the Great Leadership Behaviour emerged.

The initiative DTR0CKs was born.

The name of the initiative is inspired by the name of the Daimler Truck share 'DTR0CK'.

The initiative DTR0CKs aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Engage and inspire all Daimler Truck leaders across units and organisational entities
- Establish an understanding of the intent, effort, and impact of the GLB on employee engagement and future initiatives
- Make the GLB the foundation for daily leadership work, encouraging leaders to reflect on their personal strengths
- Drive sustainable impact within the organisation through an action plan and a movement supported by the social intranet
- Ensure that the initiative is relevant, inspiring, and enjoyable

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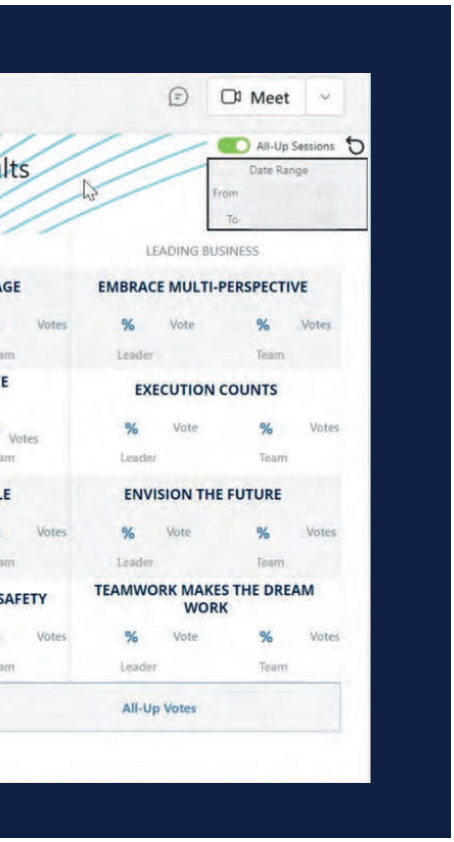

IMAGE COURTESY DAIMLER TRUCK

A global network of 5,500 leaders were involved in the initiative.

The Board of Management was convinced that fostering a shared understanding of the company's culture was crucial to uniting employees and promoting global collaboration, which would result in a high level of engagement and outstanding performance. The Daimler Truck Learning Academy's interdisciplinary team, in collaboration with Coverdale Germany, leveraged its experience in designing large-scale initiatives and innovative learning concepts to develop this dynamic and multidimensional initiative. The team has been working together successfully for several years, as evidenced by a previous EFMD Award win.

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The DTR0CKs initiative faced the challenge of harnessing momentum within a limited timeframe while involving a global network of up to 5,500 leaders. Ensuring measurability, relevance, and sustainability were also key concerns. To address these challenges, Daimler Truck Learning Academy developed a project plan and adopted a unique approach to make the initiative accessible and relatable to all leaders.

The concept was shaped by feedback from representatives and the larger community. The kick-start of the initiative was the Truck Leadership Conference, an internal format reaching leaders worldwide. The participants personally reflected on their leadership behaviour based on the Great Leadership Behaviour objectives during a 90-minute session where they received positive feedback. Following on from this, the initiative was then successfully rolled out, with 281 online workshops held, via a Power App. Following participation, leaders gained a clear understanding of the intent, effort, and impact of the Great Leadership Behaviour and implemented action plans to engage colleagues and reflect on their own leadership behaviours.

DTR0CK's objectives were to involve, inspire and establish an understanding of the Great Leadership Behaviour's impact, making it the foundation of daily leadership, to create sustainable impact, and enable meaningful connections and preparedness. Beyond the workshops, an individual action plan translated the measures into everyday work-life, focusing on personalised communication, keeping it concise, inspiring, and enjoyable, making the Great Leadership Behaviour personal and relatable, taking into account different time zones to facilitate interactions among participants. The initiative utilised the Microsoft Power App, which offered adaptability, impact, and support. The workshops consisted of nine key activities that built upon each other. With this, DTR0CKs became a self-directed programme conducted digitally through Microsoft Teams, offering accessible media, live workshops, and individual support.

5,500

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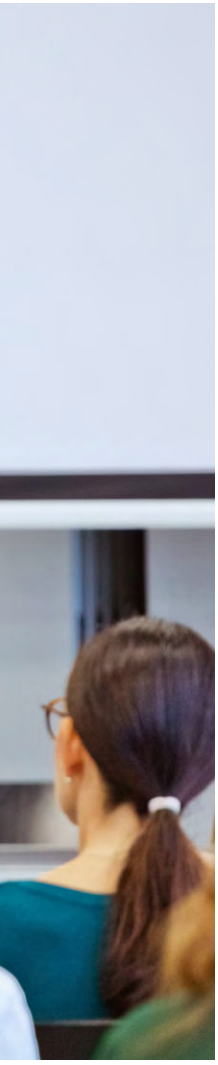

IMAGE COURTESY DAIMLER TRUCK

Data-driven assessments and surveys provided valuable insights into workshop quality and leader strengths. The social intranet page of DTR0CKs serves as a hub for workshops, content, and learning opportunities. The so-called Facilitator Club was an important building block in the process: the facilitators supported leaders, generated enthusiasm, and shared best practices. DTR0CKs democratised learning, allowing leaders from diverse backgrounds to participate in workshops conducted in multiple languages. Its aim was to create a social, emotional, and interactive learning experience. The Board of Management continuously supported the initiative by attending meetings and providing the valuable space to ensure global implementation – laying the cultural foundation for Daimler Trucks new corporate culture and aligned subsequent initiatives with it. The Great Leadership formed the core of the work culture, with the Impact Compass enhancing its sustainable impact. The effectiveness of the initiative was demonstrated by its significant following on the social intranet channel, high participation rates, low dropout rates, and positive evaluations. It encouraged a sense of contribution and received an overall score of 8.2 out of 10, while the Net Promoter Score was +42%. The data-driven approach facilitated targeted support and individualised learning opportunities. The digital infrastructure and expanded use of Microsoft Teams improved the management team's understanding of the digital landscape. DTR0CKs laid the foundation for the future work culture and strengthened the Daimler Truck ecosystem.

The DTR0CKs initiative successfully tackled challenges through a comprehensive approach. Online workshops, action plans, and digital tools facilitated broad participation and reflection. The Great Leadership Behaviour became the guiding principle for leadership, fostering conversations and personal growth. DTR0CKs has created a community of continuous learning, contributing to the further success of Daimler Truck.