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Worldline / Hult EF Corporate Education

One Worldline Academy - Reimagining the Future

Worldline is a global leader in the payments industry and the technology partner of choice for merchants, banks and acquirers. With around 18,000 employees in more than 40 countries, Worldline provides its clients with sustainable, trusted and innovative solutions fostering their growth.

In 2019, Worldline had recently separated from its parent organisation and was keen to shape its own purpose, own values and new behaviours with an inspiring new growth strategy envisioned by their CEO Gilles Grapinet. At the heart of Worldline's plan to grow and create change for its people, Worldline, in partnership with Hult EF Corporate Education, set up the One Worldline Academy.

The academy, created with the purpose to amplify Worldline's values and drive innovation within the workforce, consists of three executive education streams for their top talent population, through both the lens of great culture and leadership mindsets, together with the lens of business innovation and growth. The intention was for leaders at emerging, senior, and expert levels to enhance their leadership skills, increase engagement, and co-shape innovation growth together across their workforce.

The One Worldline Academy has had a substantial impact on the behaviour of participants and their teams, at a time of financial growth and organisational change. Since the programme's inception in 2020, employee sentiment, innovation activities, and commitment to Worldline as the employer of choice has increased steadily. Financial results have also improved with company revenue growing from €2,748bn to €4,364bn since 2020.

"There is nothing more important for a CEO than attracting, developing and retaining top talents as this is the fundamental pillar on which you can really build the long-lasting success of your organisation. At the One Worldline Academy, we teach our future leaders how to lead from the head, and most importantly from the heart." - Gilles Grapinet, CEO Worldline

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Programme aims

To ensure the academy would be a success, the Worldline Hult EF partnership defined three primary learning objectives across all three streams:

1. Deepen participants' understanding of themselves, their own authentic leadership style and how to fuel even more leadership agility
2. Cascading Worldline values across the organisation and enhancing their mastery of collaboration and influencing strategies
3. Accelerating a culture of creativity and continuous innovation by enabling a climate of psychological safety and inclusivity

Each stream boasts a highly customised set of tailored learning interventions, uniquely developed for each stream. The interventions have been created for specific learning needs for participants' roles and are designed to offer opportunities to focus on real-life problems to accelerate participant real-life learning.

The 12-month programme builds upon the organisation's new values and behaviours through tailored and aggregate assessments and data approaches. Qualitative and quantitative surveys are taken during and after the programme to measure impact through both a leadership lens and business innovation lens to ensure desired results are created for participants.

"The One Worldline Academy Talent programme with Hult EF makes a significant contribution to prepare our top talents to be highly effective in future roles.

The programme aims to prepare them to become better leaders – for leading oneself, for leading teams and for leading our business and organisation – becoming even better at boosting teamwork and collaboration, and making innovation thrive across markets and across business units to better serve our customers and wider stakeholders." - Marc-Henri Desportes, Deputy CEO Worldline

Sparking curiosity and driving innovation

Each stream begins with a highly engaging launch webinar focusing on purpose and values to ensure clarity of expectations and to build trust.

The first module at the academy is dedicated exclusively to the development of key leadership skills with each stream addressing different learning objectives relevant to the requirements of the roles of emerging leaders, senior leaders, and expert leaders.

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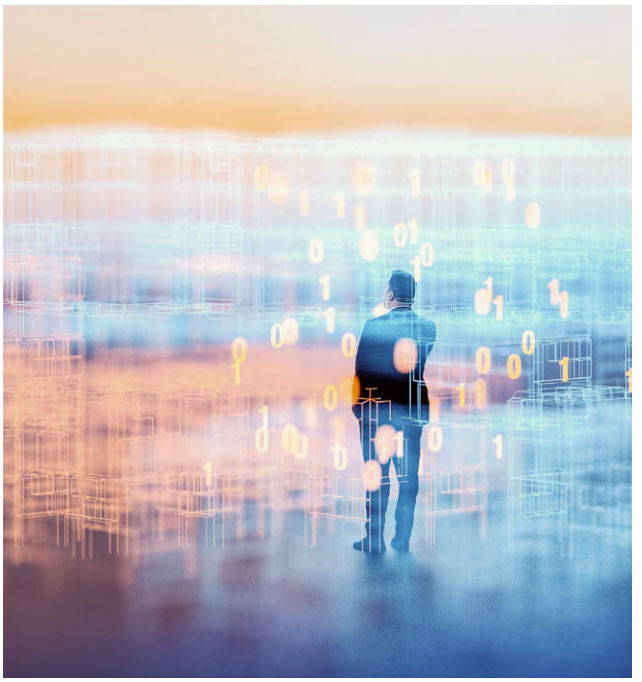

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The Innovation Hackathon is the shining star of the programme. Emerging leaders, senior leaders and expert leaders come together in a psychologically safe and inclusive environment to be curious and to experiment, to fail fast, and most importantly to re-imagine the future of Worldline with bold ideas. Here, leaders come together to solve real-life challenges faced by Worldline.

This intensive three-day module is facilitated by eight innovation and leadership faculty who reinforce innovation principles, provide guidance, and offer feedback to participants throughout the immersive experience. The Hackathon encourages innovation, sparking curiosity and driving creativity to new levels. Sessions include a jazz improvisation simulation where participants communicate and collaborate through the means of music, enabling them to bring new innovation ideas into their Hackathon projects.

> *During the Academy we had full immersion in a hackathon with live meetings with senior leaders. The key takeaway was that innovation is everywhere and it starts from our behaviour. Each of us can look for small ideas in our daily work that might be innovative.*
>
> ***One Worldline Academy Participant***

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90%

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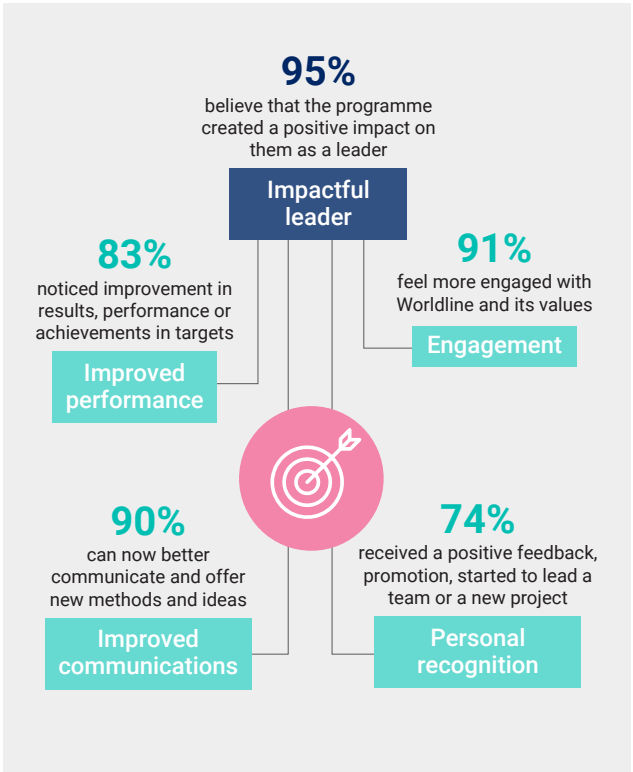
90% of survey respondents have noted enhanced self-confidence and willingness to not only 'speak truth to power' but also to 'listen-up' to better understand others' perspectives, leading to a willingness to offer new ideas and methods – crucial components of 21st century leadership and the underpinnings of innovative behaviours.

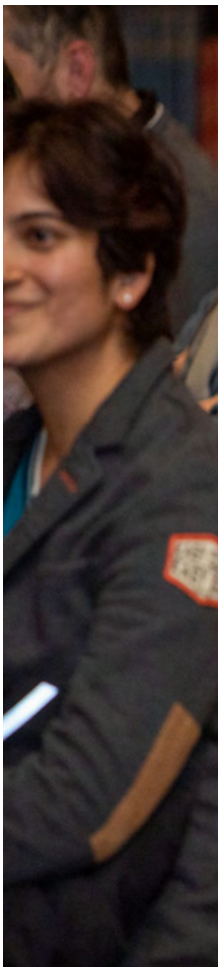
Similarly, 80% of respondents believe the programme has had a positive impact on diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging, while over 90% say that they feel a greater sense of belonging as a result.

Focusing on culture and leadership, 95% of participants say they are now impactful leaders with a higher sense of belonging, improved communication skills, and have since been promoted or recognised internally – with post-programme surveys indicating strong impact at individual, team, and organisational levels.

95% of survey respondents also noted they felt better equipped as leaders, and 92% of participants pointed to their augmented communication skills as a key ingredient creating positive impact on their teams and the organisation as a whole.

The programme has helped participants initiate and support new innovation projects within areas of the Metaverse, sustainability and various process optimisations that carry millions of dollars of revenue and cost savings.





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Individual and organisational growth

Participants continue to attribute their augmented leadership skills, dedication to continuous learning and curiosity, and commitment to Worldline values to their participation in the Worldline Academy Programme. And it is these enhanced leadership skills that have brought new energy, passion, and innovative behaviours to the organisation, enabling it to flourish.

An overarching goal of the One Worldline Academy was to create psychological safety for participants, thereby building a foundation of inclusivity, collaboration, and trust. By building a climate of agile learning and growth mindset in the classroom, the programme has demonstrated how lifelong curiosity can feed creativity and innovation. Having fostered these behaviours through real-life learning, the One Worldline Academy has imbued participants with Worldline's values, enhanced engagement and supported teams to reach impressive goals.

The programme has grown by 40% and is now set to continue and expand for at least three more years, promising a healthy future for the One Worldline Academy and the business as a whole.

Worldline is changing rapidly. As a result of this programme, I perceive more collaboration and exchange across units, a thriving feedback culture and clear steps to the new ways of working. Talent Development Programme themes like psychological safety, inclusive leadership and agile working are making a powerful contribution to these changes.

Thomas Zimmermann, Senior Specialist Global HR People Development & Engagement