



## **RGF Search and Selection Academies:**

### **High Performance Learning with 70-20®**

**Situation:** RGF (short for Recruit Global Family) is the permanent recruitment arm of Recruit Holdings in Asia. RGF is a leading recruitment services provider, with more than 1,300 employees in 46 owned and operated offices across Asia. In line with the Group's ambitious expansion plans and "20/20 Vision" of becoming the #1 Recruitment Firm in the World by 2020, learning and development (L&D) has been identified as an increasingly important priority.

Simon Childs, Managing Director and Strategic Advisor to the RGF Board, took the lead role in sponsoring strategic L&D initiatives for the group, the centerpiece of which is hosting a series of high-level Academies focused on advanced sales management and leadership/management master classes for the Executive Search, Management Search and Selection businesses. Working with external training partners, and with the support of Ryan Maniago, the Asia-Pacific L&D Manager, a total of 6 Academies were held between 2014 and 2015, including 4 Search Academies, 1 Selection Academy and 1 Leadership Academy.

**Challenge:** When Sarah Yamagata joined RGF as Head of Learning & Development in early 2016, the Academies had been garnering very positive feedback from participants and Business Unit (BU) Heads alike. However, the general consensus was that the Academies, in their current format, had to be reviewed in line with changing business priorities and growing interest among BU Heads to see more concrete Return on Investment (ROI).

Sarah found that there was no reliable mechanism to effectively measure ROI and support the learning application phase of the Academies once participants returned to their offices in different countries. Historically, surveys had been sent to gather some indication of how new skills were applied, but there was no effective way to keep the group connected virtually to continue their shared learning, or to hold people accountable for effective practice and performance improvement. Business leaders in the different RGF offices were asking for impact and ROI data, and it was difficult to gather these and share with the sponsors.

**Solution:** In early 2016, Sarah decided to implement the 70-20® learning activation platform with cohorts across the region. Her objectives addressed the formal, social and informal learning aspects (the 10-20-70) of the program:

- Increase participant accountability for applying learning on the job (70%) and documenting progress and results;
- Support continued social learning (20%) among participants as they practice new skills on the job and share their experiential learning through the 70-20 challenge feed;
- Facilitate virtual feedback and coaching for participants provided by their managers, mentors, and peers;
- Accelerate performance improvement and sharing of results with BU Heads across the group.

Academy participants worked on four sequential challenges in the four months following the instructor-led residential program. The first two challenges focused on Client Mastery/Business Development and the final two challenges related to Leadership, Coaching and Time Management.

**Results:** For the RGF Selection Leadership Academy, participant engagement and validated results were outstanding:

- 90% of participants were engaged in one or more of the four program challenges.

- The average Learning Outcomes Index® (LOI) on the four challenges was 80%, 91%, 90% and 62% (participants scored their progress posts on a 0 to 100-point scale).
- Completed challenges were validated by the participants' managers as showing improved job performance on 42 out of 43 challenges that reached 100 points on the LOI.
- Positive impact from participants' achievements were reported in: Customer Satisfaction, My Own Performance, Improved Efficiency, Service Quality, Team Effectiveness, and Colleague Performance.

For the RGF Search Leadership Academy, participant engagement and validated results were also exceptional (although the group was much smaller):

- 100% of participants were engaged in working on and posting progress made on the two program challenges.
- The average Learning Outcomes Index (LOI) on the two challenges was 100% and 87% (participants scored their progress posts on a 0 to 100-point scale).
- Completed challenges were validated by the participants' managers as showing improved job performance on 100% of challenges that reached 100 points on the LOI.
- Positive impact from the participants' achievements were reported in: My Own Performance, Improved Efficiency, and Colleague and Direct Report Performance.

70-20 activates experiential learning on the job as well as supports social learning as participants collaborate with each other in the virtual Challenge Feed space. RGF participants cited the following most frequent sources of social and informal learning help: Talking with Others, Project Planning, Recognizing an Opportunity, Teaching Someone a New Skill, Problem Solving, Taking Personal Initiative, Feedback from Others and My Manager.

After each challenge, Sarah extracted highlights from her Sponsor View of Challenge Analytics and shared them with the business leaders concerned. With the individual data available on her 70-20 Dashboard, she was able to recognize the participants who demonstrated high levels of engagement, progress and results. These people are the Emerging Managers who are learning agile - taking responsibility for their performance and career development at RGF.

According to Sarah: "While I was hoping participants would take the 70-20 Learning Transfer System and post Academy program seriously, admittedly, I was completely taken by surprise with the level of engagement from both groups. Having come from a sales background myself, I understand and appreciate just how difficult it can be to implement learning back in the work environment, given that reaching sales targets always tends to be first priority.

It was encouraging to see participants take their own development seriously and participate in the sequence of challenges. What was also revealing was that the minute I made the last challenge "Optional", the engagement rate dropped significantly. What this taught me was that as a learning professional, I need to continue to support and encourage participants every step of the way and not take my foot off the pedal. Accountability is always a two-way street and leaders need to be actively involved in the learning process along with the participants to ensure that there is a significant ROI for all parties involved."

With Ryan's longer involvement in the RGF Academies, his perspective reflected the process improvements the L&D team wanted to implement: "If there's one thing the Academies have shown us – it's that the Group is capable of organizing and delivering world-class programs at the highest levels. But formal training is not enough. We had to assume a more active role in supporting learners on the more critical aspects of the learning process, i.e. on-the-job learning (70%) and social learning (20%), and the **70-20**® platform is a great enabler in helping us fulfill that role."