

Giving a CEO perspective to middle managers

Adecco uses Celemi Tango™ to bring together the essentials of corporate leadership for 250 Japanese branch managers.

A training that lasts for years

Yoshihiko Hisada, Country HR Director at Adecco Japan, first experienced Celemi Tango™ back in 2000, prior to joining Adecco. “At the time, I didn’t know anything about the simulation,” Mr. Hisada admits. “The Head Office had simply decided for us to run it. We did – and I loved it! The engaging format, the hands-on materials, and the learning points all made a profound impression on me. After joining Adecco several years later, I still remembered Tango and I soon realized it would fit our business perfectly. “

Mr. Hisada sought out the facilitator from his first Tango experience, James Hayase from One Associates, and together they rolled out a Tango program targeting all branch managers at Adecco Japan. “The simulation allows for our people to practice matching the right projects with the right people. Through the program, participants gain a deep understanding of what the company as a whole needs and expects of them,” Mr. Hisada explains.

A program to simulate company leadership



“Participants enjoy the program so much they don’t even notice that night comes! In some seminars participants play until late at night, and meet up before the next day starts to have strategy meetings!”

— Yoshihiko Hisada, Country Hr Director, Adecco Japan

Running Celemi Tango

In the seminar, teams of four people run a simulated company in competition with three to five other teams for customers and clients in a dynamic market. To win, teams must deliver excellent service to their customers with good profitability, while at the same time keeping their employees happy. This means ambitious employees want challenging tasks in order to develop their skills, and will not be satisfied by high salaries alone.

Adecco runs Celemi Tango as a three-day course in which two days of simulation are followed by one day of leadership discussions and connecting the simulation to their business. The physical, board-based materials used in the simulation create a clear image of the company processes and make abstract concepts tangible, measurable and easy to discuss.

Engaged participants, great learning

The Tango sessions at Adecco were run by James Hayase, with Mr. Hisada occasionally appearing to provide feedback and monitor the progression of the teams. “When I join the seminars, the participants are always deeply concentrated. They actually enjoy the program so much that they don’t even notice that night comes! Sometimes, participants play until late at night and meet up before the next simulation day starts to have company strategy meetings before the simulation continues!”, Mr. Hisada laughs.

Although Adecco did not distribute any detailed information about the program, the rumor of the engaging simulation spread quickly. “Participants arrive with high expectations, so the energy in the room is great from the beginning,” Mr. Hisada smiles. “The program has been very well received and is consistently rated ‘Excellent!’ in our evaluations”.

Engaging as it may be, the simulation is not easy, Mr. Hisada assures: “It happens sometimes that a team goes bankrupt. At first, the team members of course get very distressed, but then they start investigating to find out exactly what mistakes they made, and how they could have been prevented. The perceived failure is just another learning opportunity in disguise!”

Positive changes at Adecco

Mr. Hisada credits Celemi Tango for positive cultural changes at Adecco: “The program helps us change traditional attitudes and ideas of how a manager should run the organization, focusing not only on the short-term profits, but also on the long-term development of the employees. Celemi Tango, in short, gives our managers a valuable experience how you run the entire company as the president. “

Mr. Hisada mentions another notable improvement: “Our HQ finance team demands the Profit & Loss statements from each branch every month, but before the program only a few branch managers made it a priority. Using the P&L’s in the simulation has helped our managers see how important these numbers are, and now they actually submit them.”



Photo courtesy of Adecco

Future plans

“Since Tango has been so well-received, we are now evaluating the Celemi portfolio to see what other simulations we can use at Adecco, and we plan to expand the existing Tango program to include even more management levels. I also try to directly influence my colleagues in other countries,” Mr. Hisada says. “I’ve shown several Adecco managers our results from running Tango, and they have been quite impressed!”

About Adecco

Adecco Group is the world’s largest provider of HR solutions, with over 31,000 employees and 5,100 branches in 60 countries around the world. Through its network, Adecco connects more than 650,000 associates with 100,000 clients every day.