

# Sanofi Global's Leadership Training Supports Culture Change and Drives Business Success

## SANOFI GLOBAL CUSTOMER PROFILE

Sanofi Global, which has more than 90,000 employees in 10 countries on several continents, researches, develops, manufactures and distributes biopharmaceuticals.

### Challenges:

- Shift to new Play to Win culture
- Meet ambitious sales targets with 20% less staff
- Maintain & improve engagement scores

### Solution:

**TripleGoal's Vertical Growth Program**

### Results:

- 01** 2,000 employees embrace "Play to Win" culture
- 02** Met and exceeded sales targets with 20% less staff
- 03** 8.2 from 8 engagement scores despite staff reductions (exceeds the external benchmark)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Sanofi Global's senior leaders needed to model Sanofi's new Play to Win culture to inspire the innovation and actions required to meet ambitious sales targets with 20% less staff.

To open 150 direct reports' minds to Play to Win, 15 senior executives in 10 countries turned to TripleGoal's Vertical Growth program to build a safe environment and inspire their teams to even better performance while supporting and empowering them.

To make that happen, the senior executives had to identify the red zone attitudes that block and diminish the green zone behaviours that support Play to Win's four pillars: Stretch, Take Action, Act for Patients/Customers, Think as One Sanofi.

**Vertical Growth helped leaders role model their top values and behavioural changes.** Leaders, then their direct reports and finally the entire team also learned to listen, share information and be 200% accountable for their decisions and actions.

The senior leaders led by example to motivate their direct reports who in turn shared Play to Win attitudes and behaviours with 2,000 team members to improve engagement and deliver business success.



## CASE STUDY

In 18 months, 15 Sanofi Global senior leaders in 10 countries used TripleGoal's Vertical Growth program to help 2,000 employees embrace the new Play to Win culture to inspire innovation and accountability and deliver business success.

"Our team, which owns \$3 billion in sales, needed to deliver better growth with fewer resources and that required a commitment to our new Play to Win culture," says Tarja Stenvall, senior vice president, region head, Europe, General Medicines, Sanofi France. "On our own, we didn't think our leadership team could change our culture and old-fashioned ways of working fast enough to meet such big objectives."

At Sanofi, the curiosity, innovation, initiative and risk-taking tended to stop the moment the senior leaders and their teams reached their goals. Once senior leaders had earned the approval and kudos they craved, they rarely felt the need to do more, or do anything differently.

Senior leaders knew that this legacy culture and attitudes were firmly entrenched.

"We needed Vertical Growth because we really needed to dig into topics that were not going well and have a curious mindset to find new solutions while continuing to recognize and celebrate what was going well," says Anna Kuusinen, Global People Business Partner, GenMed Key Markets, Sanofi.

Vertical Growth, which is based on brain science and behavioural research, helped senior leaders model the Play to Win attitudes and behaviours they wanted to see in others. The program's 6 modules offer 40 hours of development over 7 to 9 months. Participants learn online and at their own pace as well as in coach-guided, facilitator-led group meetings.

The program helps leaders identify and understand their professional and personal values. It also shows them the blind spots and limiting beliefs they need to change.

## BREAKING RED ZONE HABITS, EMBEDDING GREEN

Breaking old habits and committing to new ones requires commitment and consistent, repetitive practice over months and even years. Top down, Sanofi employees had to be fully responsible for green zone attitudes and behaviours like taking the initiative and being innovative while allowing their teams to evolve and grow.

To do that, 15 leaders had to show 150 team members a more direct, honest way to communicate, which includes listening and being truly receptive to others' ideas and suggestions. But first, they had to identify and let go of the red zone behaviours that were keeping them from Play to Win.

Vertical Growth's 360 assessments play a critical role in identifying red and green zone attitudes and behaviours. Senior leaders got direct, often surprisingly honest feedback when their peers and direct reports stepped away from image management to share their true feelings rather than saying only what they thought was expected of them.

## UNEXPECTED 360 FEEDBACK

"All of the leaders had a chance to have very open and transparent feedback sessions, which some might do anyways, but not all of them," says Anna. "Part of the journey was making sure all of the leaders had a session with their direct reports who gave them constructive developmental feedback alongside positive reinforcing feedback."

To the senior executives' surprise, colleagues and direct reports often saw them quite differently than they saw themselves. Based on that feedback, leaders learned to relinquish control and be more open and curious about others' ideas rather than pushing their own.

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"Vertical Growth has a very good methodology and gives you an extremely engaging roadmap to help you properly change and define your culture to improve your performance and business results, but it also has a positive impact on your personal life," says Tarja.

For example, while Tarja prided herself on green behaviours that included being “caring” and “curious”, others told her they got the impression she believed she was smarter than they were and tuned them out. Her red zone behaviour didn’t support the new Play to Win culture or allow her direct reports to grow to their full potential because they felt their ideas didn’t count.



“Unless everybody changes themselves, our culture is not going to change because we’re just pointing fingers at everyone but ourselves,” says Tarja. “I just had to listen and it was very difficult in the beginning but we created a safe space for my own team to talk about me in a way they felt they were helping me.”

Fernando Sampaio, general manager, and country lead, Brazil, is one of Tarja’s direct reports and he loves working with her. But he needed to feel his feedback was acceptable to Tarja, and that she might welcome it. Once she’d created a safe environment, he felt comfortable enough to tell her she tended to stop listening and go into a tunnel.

Tarja believed that caring meant telling people what to do and presenting herself at her most professional. With Vertical Growth, she learned caring is helping them face their fears and supporting them while they do that and being vulnerable.

“Being courageous isn’t about always knowing what to do and having the answer. It’s being able to tell people that I really don’t know what to do but I’m still trying,” says Tarja.



“The big learning was that when I listened, I felt better and actually saved my time because people came up with new ideas and new solutions and the meetings were better.”

Tarja hadn’t expected the feedback she received any more than Fernando was ready to hear a colleague say: “You made me feel useless.” Fernando’s 20 direct reports soon made it clear they needed more respect and more autonomy.

“I thought I was a good, people-oriented leader that acted with integrity and curiosity, but I was so focused on controlling things and keeping them in the box that I was hurting people and blocking them from evolving and performing,” says Fernando. “I was the exact opposite of what I thought I was.”

## PROCESSES, SYSTEMS & PRACTICE

With Vertical Growth, leaders decide which red zone attitudes and behaviours they’ll address first. They know red zone has become a habit and that the shift to green will take time.

To change, senior leaders have to watch and listen for the red zones and develop processes and systems that works for them.

For example, Fernando partnered with a colleague he trusts and relies on his “buddy” to raise his hand or blink when Fernando is getting into the red zone. With time, Fernando and his entire team became one another’s buddies.

To keep it all top of mind, Fernando regularly reads his red and green zone matrix and keeps a list that he reviews before each meeting. If he says or does the wrong thing, he now stops and apologizes rather than forging ahead and compensating which only made it worse.

**“Vertical Growth has the same impact as 10 years of psychological therapy,” says Fernando. “I feel blessed for the opportunity, because at the end of the day, it’s something that I will carry for the rest of my life.”**

Once senior leaders had created an environment where employees felt psychologically safe enough to communicate honestly and manage their red and green zones attitudes and behaviors, engagement increased to 8.2 from 8 and sales increased with 20% fewer employees.

“It really has a ripple down effect to the business performance when our leaders and teams have open curious minds that focus on finding better solutions and Playing to Win for the business,” say Anna.

