



Not-for-Profit Tackles the Downturn Head-on

Embracing change in support of the mission

Case Study
Government

Implementing a strategy to help an organization reach its goals and ensure future growth

Company Name: Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Location: Alexandria, VA, USA

Sector: Celerant Government Services, Inc. Government/ Non-Profit

Function: Membership, Sales & Marketing, Product Rationalization, Revenue Enhancement

Client Quote: *"Rather than simply bringing a cookie-cutter approach, Celerant worked with us to first learn our business and our culture. This resulted in solutions that were much more quickly incorporated into the way we managed our business."*

Mr. Steve Miranda, SHRM Chief HR and Content Integration Officer

Situation

As the world's largest Human Resource (HR) professional association, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) made its mark by engaging with more than 250,000 members. In fact, SHRM's membership grew consistently over the past decade as it came together around education/certification programs, public policy outreach, and publications. However, the economic downturn in late 2008 and early 2009 demanded something more than business as usual – and provided an opportunity to take a look at the future.

SHRM saw several situations it felt must be addressed to ensure growth:

- **Annual Conference:** The reduced propensity to travel and the emergence of alternatives to large conferences required SHRM to take a hard look at its staple event. The organization sought to leverage emerging technologies to help drive revenue, enhance the conference experience, and produce possible opportunities to improve margins.
- **Membership Growth:** SHRM saw an increasing need to engage new segments in membership.
- **Technology:** SHRM wanted to fully leverage technology to engage its membership, including mobile applications, social media, virtual conference, e-media, and internet advertising.

In each of these areas, SHRM saw opportunity. The evolution of emerging markets such as India and

China offered new avenues to grow membership and bring the message to a more global audience.

SHRM selected Celerant to enable implementation of a strategy that would help the organization achieve its vision of being recognized as the authority on human capital challenges facing companies, governments, and non-profit organizations around the world. Celerant's hands-on approach, known as Closework[®], truly resonated with SHRM as consultants became an integral part of the team.

Together, SHRM and Celerant set ambitious targets for 2010. Programs would be set in motion to pursue a 25 percent growth in annual conference paid registration, a renewal rate over 80 percent, double revenue from corporate sales, a new product development process, and an organization-wide operations reporting system.

Approach & Delivery

Celerant joined SHRM with the goal of assisting in areas that demanded expertise not only in efficiency challenges often seen in commercial businesses, but also in outreach processes that are unique to the non-profit and government sector. Celerant answered the call by tailoring its Closework[®] approach to SHRM's specific situation. Consultants entered SHRM's environment and spent critical time listening, coaching, training, and engaging SHRM staff. Together they developed team charters, team member selection criteria, and established milestones to ensure organizational success.

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The team conducted analysis, market research, idea generation, and brainstorming sessions that provided not only technical solutions. They also worked closely with the SHRM Human Resources team to assist with staff buy-in and engagement. This led to a framework for controls in the form of regular follow up meetings, weekly status updates, reviews with business unit owners and executive sponsors.

Celerant also provided SHRM staff with the tools they needed to take ownership and ensure sustainable behavior change. For example, utilizing MCERS® (Management Control and Reporting System), Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were developed for all measures and reported for performance through operating reports. KPIs included Corporate Sales, total acquisition of professional members, Annual Conference Paid registration, technology project status, and the paid circulation of SHRM's official publication.

Results

With Celerant's support SHRM was able to get back on track and, in fact, well exceeded its initial goals. The organization benefited from:

- Approximately 70% higher registration for its 2010 annual conference compared to 2009
- Grew US professional membership renewal rate by 4% during the downturn
- A new product development process, which enabled product rationalization of membership bundle and resulted in recommendations to change over 50% of the bundle offering

A number of resources and systems were put in place that will help to carry forward continuous improvement, such as:

- A playbook which details the Conference Planning Process, giving SHRM a roadmap to strong performance for its annual conference
- Operating reports across all business units that are used by both the Operating Team and Global Leadership Team to review performance each week
- A framework and coaching that facilitated the technology team reorganization
- A framework and process to document and rationalize technology goals which paved the way for the first mobile applications
- Member marketing and engagement efforts for acquisition and renewal

By proactively engaging Celerant in this strategic business initiative, SHRM ensured stability and sustainability of its mission.

Client Satisfaction

As a result of this strategic business initiative, SHRM has become a more results-oriented, data-driven organization focused on achieving our organizational goals. Through Closework®, Celerant consultants seamlessly transferred expertise and encouraged a culture of continuous improvement within SHRM.

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“Rather than simply completing the task at hand, the Celerant team ensured that real-time knowledge transfer was occurring between the Celerant consultants and our own staff.”

Mr. Steve Miranda, SHRM Chief HR and Content Integration Officer