

## UNITE AND CONQUER: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PAYS DIVIDENDS FOR WASHINGTON MUTUAL

**W**ashington Mutual, a Fortune 500 company, is the largest savings institution in the country. It is also growing fast. Over the last 24 months, the bank has absorbed American S&L, Coast FS&L, Great Western Bank, and Home Savings of America. While Washington Mutual's aggressive acquisition program is good for its business, rapid growth challenges the managers responsible for the smooth post-merger integration of the new executives who support the bottom line.

Washington Mutual's loan servicing division is a case in point. In November 1999, Senior Vice-President Dave Imig found himself organizing a new steering committee comprising eight executives from four banks. These former competitors came from varied corporate cultures and did not know each other well. It was no surprise that uniting as a team posed challenges. With additional bank acquisitions on the horizon

(Washington Mutual has since purchased a mortgage company and another bank), successful team building was Imig's top priority. "Once the consolidation was complete," says Imig, "the question was how to improve performance and service."

### **ASSESSMENT: "A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE"**

In January 2000, Brett Miles of Milestones, Inc. was brought in to help develop Imig's steering committee. The first step was to interview each committee member and perform assessments of his or her styles, motivators, and drivers. First Vice President Arlene Scavone had been assessed before and had not found it helpful. Brett's approach changed her mind. "It was a positive experience this time," said Scavone. "Brett took the time to show us how our styles affect the way others see us."

### **Milestones Performance Management System**

1. Assess
2. Recommend
3. Implement
4. Reinforce

#### **Services**

- Coaching
- Team Building
- Strategic Planning
- Sales Management Consulting
- Training in
  - Leadership
  - Communication
  - Customer Service
  - Sales

### Milestones



Brett Miles



Madelon Miles

**I**n January Milestones, Inc. will receive its fourth consecutive President's Award for outstanding contribution to the human resources profession. The annual award is presented by TTI Performance Systems Ltd. of Scottsdale, Arizona.

Brett then began individual coaching of the team members. This initiative concentrated on resolving interpersonal issues and building trust. It was supplemented by a team-building day that included a review of the individual assessments, an analysis of how the team members might work together, and a discussion of what makes a great team.

Brett also employed the "DNA" evaluation tool to define the key competencies required of steering committee members. So named because it detects the "genetic code" of core competencies that defines a job or task, the DNA evaluation revealed 28 competencies. From the 28, the committee chose the five

*Continued over*

**mile·stone** \ mī(ə)l -stōn \ **1:** a stone set to measure distance, indicating progress toward desired goals.

# Milestones, Inc.

*Developing individuals and organizations one milestone at a time*

*#12 December-January, 2001*

## UNITE & CONQUER...

*Continued from front page*

key competencies in which they would evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.

### **"WE'RE MORE UNITED, PRODUCTIVE, AND EFFICIENT"**

A "360 survey" assessment was then performed to determine how well the steering committee was performing the top five competencies. This process uses peer comments and scores to evaluate qualities that most people believe are unmeasurable. Brett Miles and Madelon Miles then began coaching the committee members to improve performance in the competencies that received the lowest ratings in the 360 survey. (For more on the DNA and 360 assessment tools, please see our August/September 2000 issue. It's posted on [milestonesinc.com](http://milestonesinc.com).)

The team-building sessions revealed that the steering committee needed a well-defined goal, so strategic planning was added to Brett's mission. He responded with three strategic planning sessions, with team members doing homework between sessions. The process developed such critical elements as a mission statement, goals, and action plans. Working together on the strategic plan also helped the team

*The New Year is a time for goal setting. Consult the Coach's Clipboard for a tip on setting performance goals.*

members get to know each other better. The plan will be refined over the next two years, providing the committee with an effective, ongoing team-building process.

For Washington Mutual, creating a strong, well-integrated group required a range of Milestones, Inc.'s services.

Assessment, strategic planning, team building, and individual coaching all played important roles. It was well worth the effort, according to Imig. "We have come a long, long way as a team," he says. "We're now more united, productive, and efficient."

Based on the positive results, Washington Mutual has asked Milestones, Inc. to provide coaching for employees at the next level down. While that program will not be as elaborate, the goal remains the same—effective, focused teams that can help a growing company perform at its best.

## Coach's Clipboard

**Tip:** When setting performance goals, focus on development of skills, not just results. Certain skills will help individuals achieve goals. Consider setting goals to develop skills in the areas of time-management, teaming, listening, presenting, coaching, planning, and assertiveness. Help each employee set goals in an area that needs improvement. If an employee believes the skill is one that will help build her career, she is more likely to buy into the goal. You also show the employee that you are "for her," building the foundation for buy-in to future goals.

**Example:** Kelsey has superior technical skills but she is shy. She consistently declines to make presentations to key customers on behalf of her team. Tell her you want her to succeed and encourage her to focus on developing her presentation and public speaking skills. Support her by locating development resources, such as a local Toastmasters International group, a speech coach, or a course. Suggest that she set a goal of giving a presentation to a key customer by the second quarter. She'll be pleased that you've endorsed her potential and provided tools to help her attain her goal.

*Coaches help athletes achieve top performance. Today, more and more managers and professionals rely on coaching skills to get top performance from their teams. In each issue, the Coach's Clipboard brings you valuable coaching insights.*

## PROGRAM CHOICES

For a list of Milestones, Inc.'s program choices, please visit our Web site or request our brochure by phone, fax, or email. Of course, programs may be combined to suit your needs based on assessment results.

[www.MilestonesInc.com](http://www.MilestonesInc.com)