

CONSUMER GOODS

# Global Consumer Goods Company Reverses a Talent Drought while Generating Millions

CASE STUDY



## CLIENT PROFILE & CHALLENGE

Mars has grown rapidly through acquisitions and organic growth. But its success threatened to outstrip the company's ability to supply the senior leaders needed to manage the multi-billion-dollar enterprise. General managers across the organization had also noticed that their middle managers weren't ready to take on senior positions.

As the company grew, Mars needed mission-ready leaders who understood the firm's culture and values. It needed to double its senior leader pipeline, from 400 to 800, to keep up with the growth.

**CLIENT:** Mars Inc., global food, pet care, and consumer products company

**LOCATION:** Operates in more than 80 countries

**SIZE:** Over 125,000 associates

*These mission-critical roles were positions that we couldn't afford to leave open. We needed to prepare high-potential leaders more quickly for senior management positions that required successfully leading others and driving organizational change initiatives.*

—Kristin Colber-Baker  
Global Director of Leadership Development, Mars Inc.



The company's hiring strategy brought in a steady supply of high-potentials, but the talent management pipeline encouraged leaders to stay in their roles for 3 years. To maintain an 80% internal promotion rate, Mars needed to prepare mid-level leaders faster for senior roles.

## SOLUTION & RESULTS

To meet the demand for ready-to-go leaders, CCL and Mars University Leadership College created the Accelerated Leadership Program (ALP). The program is highly selective, with just 4% of high-potential, mid-level leaders selected to attend.

Each cohort of ALP participants go through a 9-month experience that encompasses 4 stages:

- **Classify:** Leaders map their change ecosystem by doing ethnographic research and conducting experiments.
- **Cultivate:** Participants prepare to impact their environment by learning their strengths and weaknesses in leading change.
- **Convert:** Participants multiply their impact by implementing a change initiative in their business units and influencing key stakeholders across the organization.
- **Cascade:** Participants use storytelling to spread their changes system wide and accomplish a significant goal.

The Transformational Change Plan is at the heart of the ALP experience. The plan is a vehicle for participants to learn through the experience of leading an organizational change initiative over a 9-month period.

During the creation of the ALP, CCL conducted research that shed light on how Mars drives change in its business. That work informed specific elements of the program, including:

- **Emphasis on the 70-20-10 rule.** 70% of knowledge is from job-related experiences, 20% from interactions with others, and 10% from formal educational events.
- **Tapping the power of a transformational change initiative.** This solves a significant problem in the business while preparing participants to move to the next level.
- **Aligning all players involved.** The ALP is structured so that interacting with everyone involved — Mars, mentors, CCL trainers, and coaches — is seamless for the participants.

### By the Numbers

- **20% increase** in leaders ready for senior positions
- **2x the rate** of promotions to senior positions
- **4.88** — average rating of program outcomes (on a 1-5 scale)
- **7.1** — payback ratio from profit generated by transformational change initiatives
- **\$15 million** — incremental earnings to Mars over 3 years of the program

The initial training engagement not only produced 348 mission-ready senior leaders for Mars' growing businesses, it also produced a tangible, short-term return on investment. **The Transformational Change Plans participants developed and implemented resulted in \$300,000 in incremental earnings per participant.**

## PARTICIPANTS SAY

*ALP truly accelerates our high-potentials' readiness and capacity to take on senior leader positions. The rate of change is now faster than it was 5 years ago. ALP provides the platform for our top 4% of high-potentials to not only learn to drive change effectively across our global system, but also prepare themselves to take on senior positions more rapidly.*

—Juan Martin  
President of Multisales, Mars Inc.

*One of the keys to success is the alignment between CCL's core values and our Five Principles. That level of alignment has ensured that every leadership initiative not only helps us develop great leaders, but also makes a significant impact to our business.*

—Antoine Mangin  
Chief Learning Officer, Mars Inc.

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