

DuPont runs several training sessions around the world to increase its managers' awareness of the importance of internal cooperation and leadership. One key component of these five-day sessions is business game The Fresh Connection, which helps the chemical company to combat 'silo thinking'.

DUPONT TAKES EMPLOYEES OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE

Vivek Sharma and Alec Yan are just two of the large group of DuPont managers from Asia and Australia who recently spent four days playing The Fresh Connection. The business game has changed the way they interact with their supply chain colleagues. "I've learned that transparency, openness and an understanding of other people's perspectives are key to business success. I'm convinced that teams who take this approach can tackle any problem effectively," says Sharma, who as Business Leader of DuPont Protection Technologies in India is predominantly involved in sales and marketing. Meanwhile, for his colleague Alec Yan, Global Marketing Manager of DuPont Chemicals & Fluoroproducts, the game served to reinforce the importance of a shared strategy, good cross-functional communication and teamwork. "We were already working like that, but The Fresh Connection has made me more aware of it," he explains.

Both Sharma and Yan were on the winning team: Sharma assumed the role of operations manager and Yan acted as supply chain manager. Sharma de-

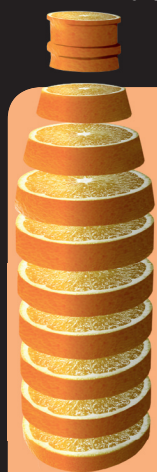
scribes the game as dynamic and informative, while Yan calls it a well-designed game which is very realistic, saying: "All the team members had significant influence on the way the game progressed, and were immediately able to see the impact of their decisions." Both regard the game as the perfect complement to the other methods used during the week of training. "Its' set-up is unique, completely different from all the other intensive sessions with experts, business leaders and consultants," states Yan, and Sharma agrees: "This game helped us to learn the fundamentals of value chain management and to gain a better understanding of the consequences of our actions, for both ourselves and others. Practicing in this kind of setting also makes it easier to apply what we've learned in training."

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A DIFFERENT WAY OF LEARNING

For DuPont, The Fresh Connection represents a new training method which is being used all over the world. "Integrated Business Management is a relatively new concept for us. We could choose to focus on explaining this concept to our managers face-to-face, but we think that the practical aspect of The Fresh Connection adds a valuable extra dimension," says Dean White, Talent Manager at DuPont Asia Pacific.

However, The Fresh Connection is more than just a different way of learning. "It's also a way

of helping people of different nationalities to learn to cooperate, and of allowing them to experience what it's like to work in a role other than their own: a sales manager can be a supply chain manager, or an operations manager can step into a purchaser's shoes," explains White, whose decision it was to spread The Fresh Connection out over four days. "That way, participants have more time for reflection in between each individual round of the business game," he continues. White is more than satisfied with the results. "The game is a very close representation of reality. Just like in their day-to-day work, our

managers have to scan information and make quick decisions. In addition, I'm in no doubt that having to fulfil different roles opens people's eyes. A sales manager who has previously had no contact with purchasing or manufacturing now understands that everything's not only about sales. This game takes our employees out of their comfort zone."



THE FRESH CONNECTION
the ultimate value chain experience

