



## Transformation Leadership – Team Coaching Case Study

**Clients:** Shannon Engine Support (SES)  
&  
GE Commercial Aviation Services (GECAS)

**Vertical Sector:** Aviation Services (Engine Leasing).

**Background:** **Shannon Engine Support Limited** is an aircraft engine leasing firm and was founded in 1988 and is based in Shannon, Ireland. The company which is part-owned by the US giant General Electric provides support to 140 airlines around the world. SES was formed to provide cost-effective spare engines to small and start-up airlines. Since its foundation this company has experienced phenomenal growth in the spare engine leasing market and is today, the leading lessor of CFM56 spare engines. The company made a pre-tax profit of €30.1m last year.

**GE Commercial Aviation Services (GECAS)** is a unit of GE Capital, itself also part of the conglomerate General Electric. This company is responsible for the leasing of aircraft and associated equipment to airlines. GECAS buys aircraft from manufacturers like Airbus and Boeing and then leases them back to airlines, typically on three to five year leases.

**The Challenge:** Both of these subsidiaries of GE have experienced major leadership challenges in the past number of years. The aviation market has been subject to rapidly fluctuating internal and external factors characterised by intense change from decreased airlines revenue, extreme sensitivity to price and oscillating oil and fuel costs, whilst undergoing rapid expansion and restructuring. This involved moving from an engineering and task-based leadership style to a process-based team performance culture and learning to introduce innovation and systems-based thinking into their culture in order to remain competitive.

**Xenergie Approach:** Our task involved introducing a leadership and innovation culture to their organisations and assisting with strategic consultancy in developing high performance cultures and teams.

With SES, Xenergie was initially appointed to a leadership succession coaching engagement for the Executive Vice President/CFO and Senior VP Technical Services – two 40 hour transformational leadership coaching engagements which were designed to enhance leadership competencies.

The successful results from these engagements led to a four year coaching consultancy relationship.

Five further 30 hour engagements for the CEO, Senior VP Sales and Marketing, VP Operations and VP Chief Representative China (which was carried out by Xenergie's Beijing based Associate). These coaching engagements addressed issues such as visionary leadership, influencing, team performance strategy and collaboration skills.

Twelve months strategic team leadership development facilitation with leadership workshops to review senior management team culture as a sub-system organisational culture. These sessions focused on developing a culture of innovative thinking, accountability and emphasis on growth.

The implementation of cultural change within teams was brought about by:-

- ❖ Profiling and interviewing employees so we could assess and analyse cultural dynamics and appropriate fit-to-roll requirements using the Belbin methodology followed by a team building event in Connemara (West of Ireland).
- ❖ 2 by Values Development 1-day workshops for senior and middle management teams as bedrock for developing culture.
- ❖ 2 by Team Performance 1-day training programmes for the entire organisation.
- ❖ Consulting, mentoring and leadership development coaching for the HR Business Partner.
- ❖ Various strategic plans for on-going development and analysis for management team and key talent.

Lorna McDowell acted as supervisor on this assignment in order to maintain an overall alignment and analysis of coaching strategy and to report on behavioural themes and challenges of culture to the organisation sponsor, the CEO.

In 2008, GE Commercial Aviation appointed Xenergie to another leadership development coaching engagement of 40 hours for their Senior VP Marketing Europe which led to his promotion reporting directly to the President and CEO of GECAS.

Bernard Chanliau, co-director of Xenergie was appointed Executive Coach involved in this leadership coaching assignment with Monica Ross conducting stakeholder interviews.

**Results:**

The results from the SES assignments included:-

- Raised awareness and development of skill in leadership competencies, resistance to change and accountability – in particular with senior management teams.
- Successful promotion of three coachees to senior management team positions.
- Development of a team performance management culture.
- Introduction of innovation and collaboration processes into management.
- Visionary leadership with senior management led to the doubling of asset portfolio in CFM engines with SES managing its double digit growth business while maintaining a customer focused approach to business.

**References:**

Below are listed some of the testimonials about this L&D project from the senior executives at SES and GECAS:-

“SES has developed a relationship with Lorna McDowell and her team at Xenergie over the past 3 years. Xenergie has provided team profiles, organised team building events, provided one on one coaching and additional coaching during the change of Managing Director. Lorna and her team’s insight on building a cohesive, dynamic and motivated management team is helping and influencing how SES is managing its business with double digit growth while maintaining a customer focused approach. Developing highly competent and cross functional team leaders/senior managers is key to our global success and Xenergie is a key partner in helping us to achieve this.” **Pat Bergin, Managing Director, SES**

“I was very impressed with Bernard’s understanding of some of the problems I would describe and how he could manage to make me look at situations from a different perspective by just putting some questions to me. This change in perspective usually made me feel more comfortable with certain situations.” **Ivan Graydon, Senior VP Technical, SES**

“I completed an executive coaching assignment with Bernard during 2008/2009. I found Bernard and the Xenergie team to be excellent in the field with a wealth of background material and techniques to hand and a very in depth knowledge of the subject matter.” **Declan Hartnett, Senior VP Sales & Marketing EMEA (GECAS)**

“Lorna’s enthusiasm for her subject matter is infectious, a very strong communicator and motivator who makes you believe anything is possible with the right approach, what barriers indeed!” **Susan Keating, Senior Vice President & head of Sales (SES)**