

Building Marketing Capabilities

The Muller Marketing Academy

Executive summary

From no training for its marketing team to the creation of a Muller Marketing Academy now rolled out globally.

From being rated 5th for marketing by retailers in the Advantage survey in 2012 to being now recognised as number 1 and being voted brand of the year by the Grocer.

How creating the Muller marketing academy delivered confidence, credibility and improved business results.

How creating stepchanging marketing capabilities created a more engaged team with scores on satisfaction to work for Muller up +22%pt, pride of the brand +19%pt.

This is the story of the creation of the Muller Marketing Academy.

Full entry

Back in 2012, Muller's brand was at its lowest. Its people even lower. The Muller brand team was bruised by failures and hit by the loss of credibility internally. Externally Muller was voted by retailers in the advantage survey as only the 5th best supplier for marketing in its category.

In 2014 Muller was voted brand of the year by the Grocer. Internally the marketing team became a role model for high performance at the annual conference. Externally in the advantage survey, retailers voted Muller the best supplier for marketing.

What happened? The Muller marketing team went on a journey. A journey towards high performance behind a vision "to be and love being the ELITE" supported by the creation of first ever Muller academy and an ELITE training program.

The success of this capability building program is such that it has now been extended to be Muller group worldwide

Context

In 2012 there was no marketing training program at Muller despite being the 5th biggest grocery brand in the UK.

It is important to know that the marketing roles at Muller are "full mix" from insight to product development to ads to commercialisation. Therefore the portfolio of skills and methods needed by each member to deliver great plans is wide. The absence of methods and of a training programme was a key restraining factor for a business that was logically losing in the marketplace.

Organisational insight: The Muller way

Muller is a young company at 22 year old. Whilst being very successful in this time period and becoming the number 1 brand in yogurts, the way to deliver success was never crystallised and taught. Too busy to grow the company the marketing team did not invest in building marketing capabilities. The Muller way was not crystallised and therefore not taught.

In 2012 the growth cycle hit a big bump and with no book, training and beliefs the marketing department lost its way.

The action plan

1. Embraced a vision: the team embraced the rallying cry to "be and love being the ELITE". This symbolised the desire to raise the bar and to "make every day a training day"

2. Created a "brand building the Muller way": we crystallised the learnings from the past, from our recent successes and failures. We added external best in class practises and developed the "Muller way" called brand building blueprint. All members of the team were trained on it. It became so popular that it was extended to other countries and divisions of the Muller group

3. Created an ELITE training program. This is a plan with learning sessions organised around 1/lunch & learn sessions 2/external speakers 3/deep-dive into topics. We run c.24 sessions a year. This seeks to develop ELITE knowledge on key topics. For instance we have lecturers from Universities or members of the UK board teaching, not just doing generic talks.

4. Created an "invest back in your team's training" mentality. All members of the team are asked to capture successes and learnings to turn them into a training session for their peers or the full department.

As a result

Internally:

- the team was used as a role model for high performance at the annual conference. The journey was recognised as a best in class transformation.
- the Muller marketing academy was extended to other geographies.
- A more engaged team with scores on satisfaction to work for Muller up +22%pt, pride of the brand +19%pt.

Externally

- voted number 1 for marketing by retailers in the advantage survey in 2014 and 2013 vs number 5 in 2012.
- the team delivered more than 100 npds in 2014 (vs 20 in 2012).
- the NPD success rate was transformed with the latest bliss and fruitopolis ranked 6th and 7th in Kantars best innovations ranking in food and drink 2014

Approved by Michael Inpong, Muller group CMO

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