Absa & IMD

REIMAGINING BANKING WITH AFRICANACITY
In 2018, the pan-African financial services provider Absa Group Ltd completed its separation from its majority shareholder, Barclays. Entering a new chapter in its history, the bank faced the challenge of articulating a new growth strategy and successfully rebranding itself with existing and new customers across the African continent. Adding to the enormity of Absa’s task was the intensifying competition and digital disruption in the banking industry. Could Absa live up to these challenges and redefine its identity and purpose as a boldly relevant, digital-first and proudly African enterprise?

Absa partnered with IMD to develop an integrated offering, organized into a series of learning journeys that targeted the bank’s young talent, middle managers and senior executives. Through a mix of custom modules, open programs, coaching, pre- and post-workshop learning, and intrapreneurial customer-focused projects in a number of countries, the L&D initiative aimed to accelerate development of a thriving entrepreneurial culture at Absa. One of the goals was to embed new habits and practices traditionally associated with startups – speed, customer-centricity, hands-on learning, agile experimenting and prototyping.

Having emerged with a sense of renewal from the learning journeys, Absa continues to reposition itself as a confident, digitally transforming player. Organizationally, its focus and momentum remain on the customer and front line. Living up to its commitment to fuel growth across the African continent, its managers are spearheading and successfully implementing tech-powered and other innovative projects – country-based as well as pan-African – that create real impact for local communities. The Absa Group is steadily becoming a force to reckon with.