DTROCKs
Submission to the EFMD Excellence in Practice Awards.
2023
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
DAIMLER TRUCK “DTR0CKs” – FORMING OF A NEW COMPANY “GREENFIELD ON BROWNFIELD”

On December 10, 2021, when it was listed on the stock exchange as the independent Daimler Truck Group, the company faced a combination of challenges and opportunities that had the potential to make industry history:

1. The truck industry was in the midst of the biggest upheaval in its history – the conversion of drive systems to electric and hydrogen propulsion systems
2. The associated revolution in talent, skills, and workforce around the world
3. The still-smoldering consequences of Covid in production chains, and serious bottlenecks in the supply chain, especially for semiconductors
4. Daimler Truck going public and becoming an independent company with more than 100,000 employees

In order to be able to respond more quickly to changing customer needs, complex market dynamics, and the expectations of the capital markets, Daimler AG1 optimized its organizational structure. In this context of a new corporate realignment, the leadership development played a key role. The Daimler Truck Learning Academy, together with partners, developed an innovative global initiative called DTR0CKs, which enables Daimler Truck leaders worldwide to manifest the new work culture at Daimler Truck in the shortest possible time, and to reflect, develop, and operationalize their individual skills to successfully lead themselves, their teams, and the business.

“DTR0CKs” is a global learning experience designed to reach leaders at all levels, business units, and locations around the world. The program involves all leaders of Daimler Truck across the company in a hybrid format: live in a digital environment combined with decentralized workshops (“intact teams”).

DTR0CKs introduces several innovations:

- A technological facility that connects geographically dispersed facilitators and thousands of participants around the world in the shortest possible time and provides content support and guidance – even beyond the workshops
- A concept that creates a high level of participation throughout the group combined with an application-oriented focus (the Great Leadership Behavior)
- An interlocking setting of intact team interventions that is sustainable

The DTR0CKs initiative is the catalyst for Daimler Truck Group’s new corporate culture and is strongly supported by the Board of Management of Daimler Truck, which stands united in its ambition to ensure leadership excellence within the company for the future.

On December 10, 2021, Daimler Truck was facing a combination of challenges and opportunities that had the potential to shape industry history:

1. The truck industry was in the middle of the biggest transformation in its history – the change of propulsion systems to electric and hydrogen
2. The related talent, skill, and workforce revolution globally
3. The still-smoldering consequences of Covid in the production chains and serious shortfalls in the supply chain, especially for semiconductors
4. Daimler Truck went public and became an independent company, with more than 100,000 employees
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To be able to react faster to changing customer needs, complex market dynamics, and capital market expectations, Daimler AG optimized its organizational structure in a radical move toward more divisional independence. The organizational transformation led to the complete separation of the two main business units and thus the spin-off of Daimler Truck.

December 10, 2021: Daimler Truck is at a turning point in its history. It is listed on the stock exchange as an independent company: the Daimler Truck Group (hereinafter called Daimler Truck). The company is the world’s biggest manufacturer of commercial vehicles with a global reach. It has maintained a position at the top of its industry for decades and is committed to LEADING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION for the coming decades, technically and economically.

Daimler Truck CEO Martin Daum has put together a very clear plan to be the global leader in zero-emission driving for goods transport. By 2040, the company wants to produce only zero-emission vehicles. Therefore, Daimler Truck is pursuing a dual strategy and planning to use battery-electric drives and fuel cells.

The first year – 2022: it’s all about creating and sharpening a new company – greenfield on brownfield.

To get there, a few major challenges had to be overcome: Daimler Truck is now an independent global company with more than 100,000 employees and...
plants on all continents – what keeps them all together? What motivates them to create an impact every day? What creates identity within the company?

So, the beginning of 2022 presented an unprecedented situation for Daimler Truck. Facing the need to realign itself and using the momentum of a new entrepreneurial beginning to develop a new corporate culture – knowing well that the people are the ones who shape the company culture and bring about its success. The challenge was not only to give a new framework to the company’s aspirations, but also to build a bridge from the established Daimler work culture to a new Daimler Truck work culture – and to do it quickly.

The Board followed their strong Purpose “For all those who keep the world moving” and the associated Purpose Principles that will become the guardrails of the shared culture that strengthens bridges:

- **We start with listening.**
- **We build to solve.**
- **We lead with the long view.**
- **We progress together.**

In keeping with the Purpose Principle “we progress together,” the Board started to describe the behavior that would result in human engagement, and further explored, honed, changed, sharpened, condensed, and added many other perspectives. Together with a group of 50 selected employees from all levels, regions, and functions, they further developed the foundation of Great Leadership at Daimler Truck: the so-called Great Leadership Behavior (GLB).
GREAT LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR (GLB)

WE START WITH LISTENING
- Reflect and Listen

WE BUILD TO SOLVE
- Structure Yourself

WE LEAD WITH A LONG VIEW
- Sustainably Manage Personal Resources

WE PROGRESS TOGETHER
- Be Authentic

LEADING YOURSELF

LEADING OTHERS
- Listen and Encourage
- Set a Focus -Generate Performance
- Inspire Your People
- Create Psychological Safety

LEADING BUSINESS
- Embrace Multiperspectivity
- Execution Counts
- Envision the Future
- Teamwork Makes the Dream Work
The GLB is the center stage in the new potential and performance process and all other people-related initiatives.

But how does Daimler Truck get so many far-flung individual leaders to understand and internalize this new concept quickly? How does it stimulate the engagement of all leaders and drive their accountability? And how does Daimler Truck make its understanding tangible and measurable? How is impact created?

The need for an initiative that activates the GLB was becoming clearer and resulted in the following goals, which had to be developed for the initiative:

The key objectives of the initiative:

- Establish understanding of the intention, usage, and impact of the GLB on people’s engagement and all future people initiatives
- Anchor the GLB as a foundation for personal daily leadership work and reflect and share one’s personal strengths
- Achieve a sustainable impact in the organization by means of an action plan and movement supported by the social intranet
- Become relevant, as well as inspirational and joyful!

- A spark to engage and ignite all leaders of Daimler Truck across all units and entities
02 THE COMMITMENT

The Board was certain that it needed a common understanding of culture to bring together employees worldwide and create an attractive and contemporary way of working together, to stimulate engagement, and thereby lead to outperformance.

The Daimler Truck Learning Academy’s interdisciplinary team was highly motivated when tasked with developing the first global learning initiative in the company’s recent history. Very early on, the team partnered with Coverdale Germany.

Besides extensive experience in designing large-scale initiatives and innovative learning concepts, Coverdale brought in a network of experienced facilitators; together they embraced the dynamic and multidimensional nature of the initiative they were about to develop.

In summary, the challenges for the team were:

• Capturing the momentum of the new beginning; the team had time restrictions – end of 2022

• Global reach of up to 5,500 executives from the Board of Management down to the first leaderships ranks

• Ensuring impact and effectiveness through measurability of the methods used

• Making this initiative relevant and sustainable for all leaders

• One symbol for that is the name “DTR0CKs”. This isn’t just a nice name; it is also the share name of the newly established Daimler Truck Group
Accordingly, the team worked out a project framework and defined a conceptual core for the initiative:

**THE CONTENT**

- The content (GLB) should be “personalized” to ensure a high level of acceptance

**THE TRANSMITTERS OF THE CONTENT**

Which are aligned to the overarching Purpose Principles

- Start with listening
- Build on strengths
- Resonance and feedback
- Reality kicking in – in your team
- Progress together

**THE EFFECT OF THE CONTENT**

- The post-seminar activities anchor the GLB into daily practices
- The leaders see the initiative as worthwhile and an added value for their individual development and leading their teams toward engagement and success

**THE REQUIREMENTS OF TRANSPORTING THE CONTENT**

- An easily accessible digital platform that can be accessed anytime, anywhere
- A lean, contemporary, and agile project structure
Therefore, the team knew that the concept of the initiative would require a special didactic approach. The initiative not only had to be easy to access and connectable for all leaders in terms of content – it had to introduce the GLB and, at the same time, be applied to all participants so that everyone was able to feel a “personal relationship” with it – what does this GLB mean for me? They understood: who if not the leaders of Daimler Truck themselves would be the drivers and role models for actively living the GLB?

So first, the team put itself in the leaders’ place. They questioned how leaders might respond to this initiative – again, the 50 representatives and the larger Organizational Development community helped as a sounding board for the initial concept and its building blocks: a four-hour facilitated online workshop with groups of 20 leaders across various time zones, levels, and segments to reflect the GLB online. An unprecedented digital learning format was used by deploying a Microsoft Power App on the Microsoft Teams infrastructure that had just been rolled out at Daimler Truck.

In line with the complex requirements, the interaction of the partners was a crucial factor for the success of the initiative. It was a cocreation by the Daimler Truck Learning Academy in cooperation with Coverdale Germany and the agencies Macaw, W52, and Dorten GmbH.

In collaboration with their partners, the Daimler Truck Learning Academy team – newly set up but individually with many years of experience in empowering executives to develop a shared culture – provided the content for the initiative. Coverdale developed the overall learning architecture and designed a four-hour workshop with group activities, while Macaw implemented the technical requirements and created the digital infrastructure.

Because the Power App (MS 365) was a new product, it also presented a particular challenge for the young team of programmers looking to meet the requirements of the Learning Academy concerning the intensity of interaction in the shortest possible time.

Macaw tested and finalized the Power App. W52 and Dorten GmbH took care of the global visual and communicative transfer of the initiative, setting up an intranet presence and a strong visual brand. The team’s cocreation was a great interaction of expertise, courage, trust, and the desire to iteratively create something new that would be sustainable, simple, and fun for the leaders.

In just four months, the Daimler Truck Learning Academy team collaborated and developed “the frigate that navigates our new culture,” as Valeria Gargiulo, Vice President People & Organizational Development at Daimler Truck Group, would later describe the initiative.

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4. Power App is a product from Microsoft – an app that can be customized and easily integrated individually.
03 THE INITIATIVE

The aim of DTR0CKs is to familiarize all leaders with the GLB so as to anchor the GLB as the backbone and catalyst for Daimler Truck Group’s new corporate culture.

In June 2022, the Truck Leadership Conference was the kickoff of the DTR0CKs initiative, where all top leaders from Daimler Truck personally reflected on their leadership behavior in light of the GLB as part of a 90-minute session and engaged in an intensive dialog and feedback with colleagues. The positive feedback from the Truck Leadership Conference amplified the positive, successful launch of the initiative.

In August 2022, the DTR0CKs initiative was rolled out and addressed up to 5,500 Daimler Truck leaders worldwide. In total, 281 workshops, each of four hours’ duration, were held.

After attending DTR0CKs, every leader at Daimler Truck understands the intention, usage, and impact of the GLB and can implement an action plan, including individual learning activities and milestones to engage in a conversation with his/her supervisor, peers, and teams about the impact of the GLB. Reflecting on individual day-to-day leadership behavior will be based on the GLB and should establish exchange and networking beyond the DTR0CKs workshops.
With DTR0CKs, all leaders experience the NEW Daimler Truck GLB as the common foundation for all future people initiatives such as the new performance and potential management, the so-called Impact Compass, Leadership Curricula, the 360 Leadership Feedback, and many other relevant applications.
WHAT DTRocks KEY OBJECTIVES ARE COMMUNICATED TO LEADERS?

• A spark to engage and ignite all leaders of Daimler Truck across all units and entities
• Establish understanding of the intention, usage, and impact of the GLB on people’s engagement and all future people initiatives
• Anchor the GLB as a foundation for personal daily leadership work and reflect and share one’s personal strengths
• Achieve a sustainable impact in the organization by means of an action plan and a movement supported by the social intranet
• Become relevant, as well as inspirational

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE WORKSHOP CONTENT TO BE CONVEYED.

When designing the workshop, the cocreation team pursued the following principles:
The workshop objectives were in strict accordance with the initiative’s mission. Workshops were facilitated and guided by Coverdale facilitators.

• Become more familiar with the GLB
• Reflect on your own leadership behavior
• Apply it to your own business
• Create your own call to action
• Have an in-depth exchange with your peers
• Prepare for the conversation with your peers, your boss, and your team

THE INITIATIVE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS.

The format and tone of communication for the initiative and its workshops – “personalize” the experience:

• Keep it crisp and inspirational, light and joyful
• Make the Daimler Truck GLB personal and tangible
• Online first while acknowledging time zones – five time zones were created, which allowed participants to meet with colleagues from different places and continents within reasonable time frames
The team created an initiative design within the Power App that offered adaptability, impact, and support on each occasion. The DTR0CKs app has two access types: one for the participating leaders and the other for the Coverdale facilitators, who were able to keep track and provide live support as the leaders handled their tasks during the workshops.
THE WORKSHOP FLOW AND ACTIVITIES.

The workshop had nine central activities, the content of which was designed such that these activities built on one another.

1. POWER NUDGE
   **Intention:** to set the scene and bring the leaders into a present, attentive, and contemplative state.

   During a 2.5-minute listening exercise, the participants were exposed to everyday noises. This made it clear from the very beginning that this workshop was different from any other in the past: less talking about the GLB in plenary, more about experiencing and exchanging individual experiences and insights with peers.

2. CONTEXT
   **Intention:** to provide the bigger picture and explain the relevance of the GLB for Daimler Truck.

   In more than 40 workshops, Board members came in and explained the GLB in a 45-min. slot, as well as the why, how, and what, and shared their own experience. For the other workshops, a video from the Board served as a segue into this conversation.

3. REFLECTION – SIGNATURE STRENGTHS
   **Intention:** to focus on the leaders’ strengths.

   Leaders were invited to select three Signature Strengths in the Power App: the behaviors they see in their daily practice – as their particular strengths, USP, distinctive skills.

4. PEER RESONANCE
   **Intention:** to share their selections with their peers and allow echoing. In groups of three, leaders revealed their Signature Strengths and were asked questions by their peers, e.g.

   - Where do your Signature Strengths show up in your daily practice?
   - How do your employees notice your strengths?
   - Where do you see the risk of overusing your strengths?
   - What is your biggest blind spot?
THE WORKSHOP FLOW AND ACTIVITIES.

The workshop had nine central activities, the content of which was designed such that these activities built on one another.

5. CONSOLIDATION – SIGNATURE STRENGTHS HEAT MAP

Intention: to make leaders’ strength visible.

Based on all the contributions, a so-called “Signature Strengths heat map” was generated that provided evidence of where the strengths of the participating leaders lay, and at the same time revealed the flipside – the areas for improvement. The beauty of the heat map was that in the end it allowed an aggregated view over all 281 workshops.
THE WORKSHOP FLOW AND ACTIVITIES.

The workshop had nine central activities, the content of which was designed such that these activities built on one another.

6. REFLECTION – BUSINESS REALITY CANVAS
   Intention: to actively bring the leaders’ business reality into the workshop.

   Leaders were offered a business reality canvas with three zones – business as usual, change and transformation at the boundaries, and a gray zone in between. They were asked to reflect on their current business situation and allocate their main tasks/challenges/agenda items to the different zones.

7. CHANGE PERSPECTIVE
   Intention: to put leaders into the shoes of their team so as to identify their needs.

   Leaders were asked to look at their business reality canvas and to then change their perspective by looking at it through the eyes of their team members: what are the three leadership behaviors they would need to become more effective, more engaged, and to outperform. Their choices are then entered into the digital heat map.

8. MATCHING RESULTS AND CALL TO ACTION
   Intention: to make leaders aware of overlaps and discrepancies so that they can best prepare for their action plan.

   Leaders are invited to evaluate their personal result: how well do my Signature Strengths support the needs of my team members? If there are discrepancies: what is my call to action? In the next step, leaders were asked to commit themselves to the first action items.

9. PEER EXCHANGE – SOUNDING AND CHALLENGING
   Intention: to share individual experiences when matching the results, get feedback on the action plan, and stay in touch.

   In a new group of three, leaders invited each other to share their reactions and feelings when comparing the strengths and needs. Also, they challenged one another’s action plan. To make it a sustainable experience, they agreed on a date in eight weeks’ time for following up on the action plan.
BEYOND THE WORKSHOPS.

This action plan transferred the individual measures directly into the daily work routine. After eight weeks, the peers met again to discuss their experience living their action plans.

DTROCKs is now a program that can be run digitally in a simple and self-determined manner by logging into Teams. All relevant media and live workshops can be accessed, meaning that questions can be viewed and edited individually, regardless of location.

DATA-DRIVEN.

At various checkpoints, the participants evaluated the quality and the practicability of the GLB in the app itself. These surveys provided information on the quality of the workshops and their recommendation rate.

Through the digital survey and tasks to determine the individual strengths of the leaders, a heat map of the performance and potential was created that allows the leader herself or himself, as well as the Learning Academy team, to develop sustainable, targeted, and individual learning offers for the leaders in order to promote and strengthen their behavior.
COMMUNICATION OF DTR0CKs.

Parallel to the workshops, the social intranet site of DTR0CKs was launched. A hub for the initiative, its workshops, content, and other learning opportunities offered via LinkedIn Learning. This platform now has the most followers on the Daimler Truck intranet, with approx. 3,000 followers, one of the biggest reaches and one of the greatest resonances within Daimler Truck.

THE FACILITATOR CLUB.

Its members come from HR, Learning, and Organizational Development, and support leaders in their region on their DTR0CKs journey. The Facilitator Club guides leaders in dealing with the GLB based on the DTR0CKs workshops. The members support leaders in having the conversation about implementing, understanding, and living the GLB. They assist with regional communication activities to get people excited about DTR0CKs, serve as a sounding board in the implementation of DTR0CKs, and contribute their experience in cocreating DTR0CKs.

They continue to push forward according to the regional needs of leaders and share best practices that can be implemented globally.

DEMOCRATIZATION OF LEARNING.

DTR0CKs is an initiative for all. It stands for enabling executives to participate in the workshops regardless of location or mother tongue, hierarchical level, or departmental affiliation. The workshops were held in three languages: Japanese, English, and German, and the digital design of DTR0CKs aimed to provide a fundamentally social, emotional, and interactive learning experience.

DTR0CKs is a Daimler-Truck-wide global Leadership Learning Initiative – a spark to engage and ignite Daimler Truck leaders across all units and entities.
THE IMPACT

“DTR0CKs is more than an initiative – DTR0CKs has become a community.”

DTR0CKs received the support of the Board of Management, who have been strong ambassadors, to make DTR0CKs the springboard for the new overall corporate story. The Board members therefore surprised workshop participants with their own participation in the workshops. The initiative was also centrally funded and globally executed, highlighting the Daimler Truck Board’s commitment to the program’s goals.

The facilitation work of the DTR0CKs initiative was a kind of cultural groundwork for the new corporate culture of Daimler Truck, and it made subsequent initiatives comprehensible and efficiently applicable. With DTR0CKs, Daimler Truck starts with the leaders’ behavior: the way people interact and behave determines the work culture. So, while the GLB is at the heart of the new work culture, its sustainable impact comes through forming the new potential and performance management system around it, like the so-called Impact Compass.

This is all possible because the digital infrastructure of DTR0CKs is built such that evaluations of the results facilitate a heat map of leadership potential and performance opportunities globally. Based on this, the Learning Academy can target and accurately support and empower its colleagues individually and effectively over the long term. With the DTR0CKs initiative

5. Valeria Gargiulo, Vice President People & Organisational Development at Daimler Truck Group
on Teams, the Learning Academy team also took the Microsoft Teams digital experience to the next level, because until then, Microsoft Teams had only been used as a communication tool rather than as an interactive program. This led to another positive side effect for the entire management team. Because the participation in the initiative created a better understanding among the leaders regarding the use of the existing digital infrastructure within Daimler Truck. The program successfully aligned the global context with internal changes at Daimler Truck to provide holistic and deep learning experiences, which are measurable.

THE FIGURES OF SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS.

This is not only shown by the following figures, but also the high number of followers of DTR0CKs’ own social intranet channel, where updates and new support programs are reported around the clock. DTR0CKs is already the biggest community within Daimler Truck and has more followers than any other account. But the initiative’s effectiveness can be described by other factors as well.

As a result, the program was an international and interactive learning experience with high engagement and high participation rates, with a low dropout rate (constant participation rate >85%). The level of contributions was also very high, as shown by a content analysis. Program evaluations were also positive, as expected, ranking at 8.2 on a conventional Likert scale from 1 to 10 (10 being the best). The net promoter score is +40%.
Internal feedback from the leaders makes the effectiveness and sustainability of DTR0CKs visible.

WHAT DO THE LEADERS SAY:

“DTR0CKs is (...) a precise workshop to get closer to the leadership transformation.”

“This leadership program fits all locations and business units, focusing more on behaviors.”

“The self-examination and continuous change of perspective – including stepping into the role of team members – touched the leaders and stimulated a new self-understanding of their behavior.”

“This is a great learning tool on how to better communicate with each other. This is always a critical element of success!”

“This leadership program fits all locations and business units, focusing more on behaviors.”
APPENDIX
BY STARTING WITH THE WORKSHOP DESIGN, THE DAIMLER TRUCK LEARNING ACADEMY WANTED TO CREATE A NEW AND ADAPTABLE LEARNING INITIATIVE, BUT IN THE END, THEY CREATED MORE – THEY CREATED A COMMUNITY, THE BASIS FOR ANY FORM OF FUTURE WORK CULTURE, AND GAVE A PUSH TO THE WHOLE DAIMLER TRUCK ECOSYSTEM.
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