



Bringing a performance ethos to Portugal's public sector

Industry

Government

Business Issue

Embedding a best-practice, performance management culture across the Portuguese public sector through hands-on training of top managers and executives.

Solution

The Portuguese government used SAS® Strategic Performance Management as training solution to help managers understand the framework methodology and provide executives with new skills, insights and hands-on experience to use in their organizations.

Benefits

Making the public sector focus on performance by setting and achieving goals, appreciating risks, improving efficiency and controlling costs.

Portugal's Instituto Nacional de Administração (INA) is dedicated to training public-sector managers and executives to meet legislative requirements aimed at transforming public administration and ensuring managers follow best practices in performance management.

INA is receiving training in SAS Strategic Performance Management in order to understand the business processes and technology required to support a performance management initiative. This training has helped the organization with the cultural change and skill development needed to manage the organization's strategy effectively.

In less than four years, over 5,000 public-sector managers have received training and have taken the knowledge gained back to their organizations. The newly acquired information has fueled a performance management revolution in areas ranging from leadership, finance and criminal justice to health and local government.

"In recent years government reforms have driven a massive change," says Cristina Steiger, Head of Department – Top Management Training, INA. "Our challenge was to deliver new competencies."

The speed of transformation is startling and, with performance management in public services now mandatory and training obligatory, INA moved quickly to relieve stressed-out managers. INA already used SAS for management reporting, so bringing in SAS Strategic Performance Management seemed

natural – and proved to be the most powerful and flexible approach.

"We didn't want to offer a purely academic view," says Steiger. "We wanted managers to have the theory and the practical application, so they could succeed back in their organizations and implement what they'd learned."

SAS is specifically designed to help managers achieve strategic goals by focusing an entire organization on initiatives and indicators (KPIs). This approach enables collaboration by delivering KPIs through a standard Web browser, calling employees to action when performance is not meeting targets, and driving corrective action.

Intuitive, flexible, easy to use

"Throughout their professional lives, these managers hadn't been evaluated on performance," Steiger says. "The game changed overnight. SAS is intuitive and easy to use. And it's flexible, supporting methodologies ranging from balanced scorecards to Six Sigma."

She says it was important for managers and executives, who are legally required to use performance management and balanced scorecards, to appreciate the bigger picture and see how different areas are linked. "Our employees have to take an active role in setting and fully understanding their organization's mission, goals and objectives, and then developing their own indicators," Steiger explains. "This is why our use of SAS is structured around taking managers on a journey. By the time they reach the working group, they know what

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Cristina Steiger
Head of Department - Top Management Training

they have to do to measure and understand performance.”

Ease of use was vital. “When we first ran the one-year course, a group installed and used SAS within a month – managers from the police force, the Guarda Nacional Republicana,” Steiger says. “Previously, they knew nothing about performance management or SAS. A huge strength of SAS is that it simplifies workplace complexities. It gives employees a model of what they need to achieve.”

“We are enabling senior managers across the public sector to speak the same lan-

guage in terms of performance management. We’ve already trained over 5,000 managers, which is more than half of our total number of managers,” she adds. “This is a big change of culture in public administration and we’re bringing up to speed a very demanding group of C-level professionals – bright, educated people. When they return to their organizations, they have an appetite to do more, to take what they have learned and apply it by helping take forward an astonishingly fast root-and-branch transformation of the Portuguese public sector.”



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