PORTAGE COLLEGE

vivo team development

CASE STUDY

Executive Team Development helps college weather the 2020 storm.

"The skills facilitated by Vivo Team are invaluable to us now that we are conducting the majority of our business online and at home."

- Carrie Froehler
VP People, Planning & Public Relations, Portage College

Brandon Hall GROUP HCM EXCELLENCE AWARDS BRONZE EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING 2020

PORTAGE COLLEGE

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Portage College is a public, board-governed college operating under the Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Act and has been serving the region for 50 years. Portage College boasts seven campus locations, which are strategically located throughout the region.

INDUSTRY:

Government Education

SOLUTIONS:

People Analytics: Vital Statistics Report™
Team Development Program
Coaching Sessions

CHALLENGES

Portage College was in the midst of change and turmoil with a conflicted management team who had a history of poor communication and accountability.

Other challenges included:

- Many departments, both academic and administrative, are spread out geographically across seven campus locations.
- There had been significant shifts in executive leadership over the past two years including the resignation of both the CEO and CFO.
- Significant budget cuts for 2020 were looming on the horizon resulting in turbulence over which programs would get cut.

In 2019 a new President and CEO was appointed, inheriting a complicated situation amongst the management team of department deans, associate deans, and college administrative managers. The team was fractured, exhibited low morale, and had little motivation to collaborate.

The President and CEO has been with the college for about 28 years and was promoted from within. The consensus opinion of the executive team is that she was the right person to tackle the challenges facing Portage College in the coming years.

"The executive team is utilizing the strategies provided in the training on a daily basis for communicating and providing feedback. Additionally, leadership is ensuring that we communicate with our own teams in a similar way. Feedback that is both reinforcing and corrective has increased. We are able to "put the moose on the table" and have open conversations when addressing difficult situations."

- Guy Gervais, Vice President Academics, Portage College

APPROACH

In 2019, Portage College engaged with Vivo Team to deploy a Team Development Program for their executive team. The President and CEO formed a learning cohort consisting of all deans and department heads.

In consultation and partnership with the CEO and VP People, Vivo Team set out a course of action based on the process of people analytics in learning and development. Namely collecting, measuring, analyzing, predicting, prescribing, delivering solutions, and reporting data with the aim to optimize and improve the executive team's behaviorally-based performance, and ROI in dollars.

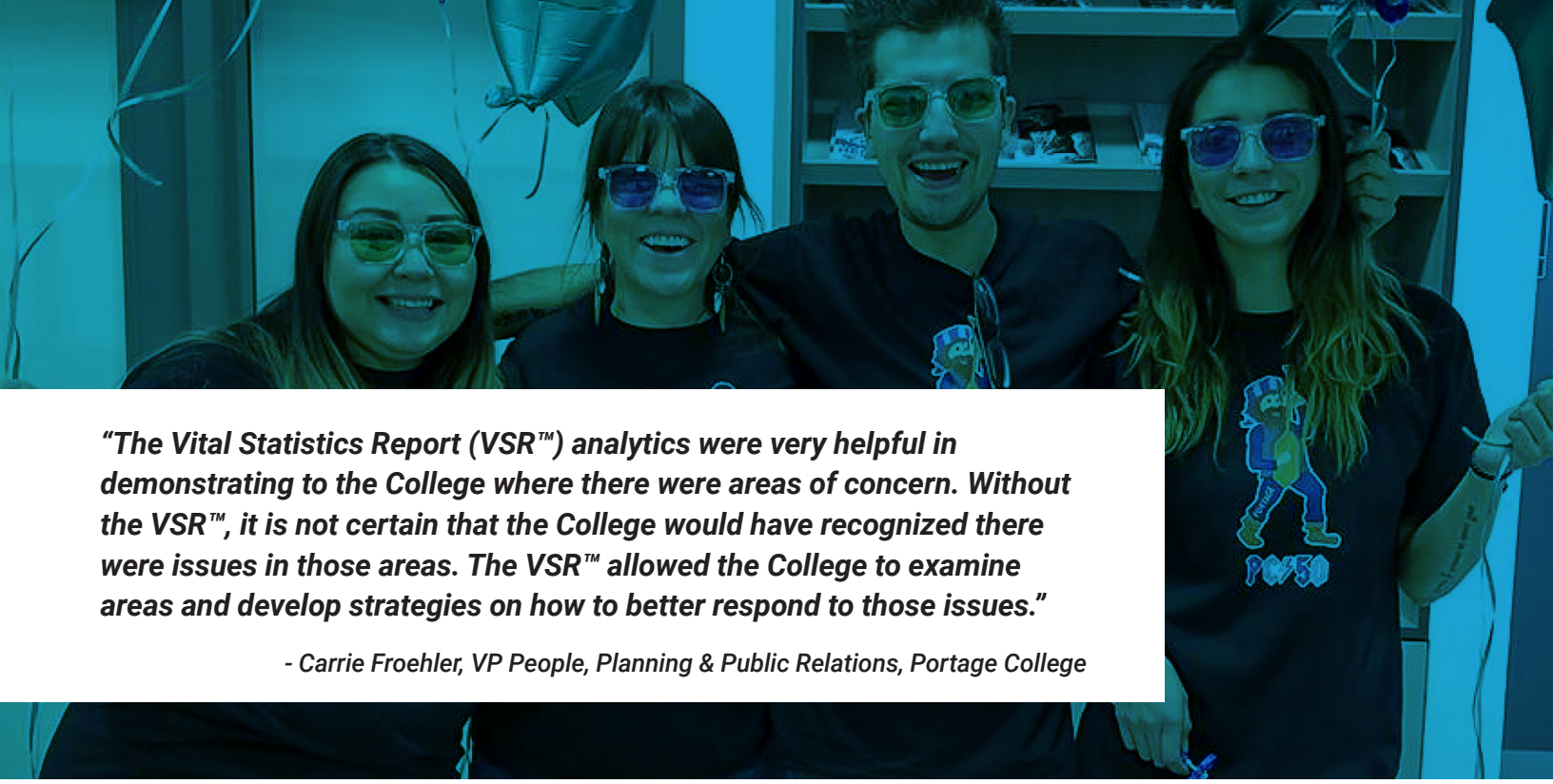
The following benchmarks and outcomes were established for success:

- Create a behavioral norms for executive team leaders to align to.
- Develop leaders to enable them to better manage discussions, drive effective outcomes, collaborate more effectively and focus on execution versus meetings for the sake of meetings.
- Improve accountability and re-align the team as they execute on a new strategic direction.

VITAL STATISTICS REPORT™ (VSR™)

Vivo Team deployed the proprietary Vital Statistics Report™ (VSR™) to the entire executive team, the CEO, and the deans (29 people in total). The VSR™ illustrates the cost of lost productivity and pinpoints specific strengths, weaknesses, leader gap, and other contributing factors. The initial VSR™ results were analyzed and findings were reported based on the six key indicators of high performance.

On a scale from 1 to 100, the executive team rated itself in the six key indicators: Communication - 64, Accountability - 66, Feedback & Feedforward - 61, Emotional Intelligence - 64, Structures - 66, and Cohesion - 72. Scores in the range of 80-100 signifies a skilled team.



"The Vital Statistics Report (VSR™) analytics were very helpful in demonstrating to the College where there were areas of concern. Without the VSR™, it is not certain that the College would have recognized there were issues in those areas. The VSR™ allowed the College to examine areas and develop strategies on how to better respond to those issues."

- Carrie Froehler, VP People, Planning & Public Relations, Portage College

TEAM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Team Development Program featured Communication and Feedback & Feedforward, two of the lowest scoring of the six key indicators. Live, virtual instructor-led training (Live-VILT) sessions were delivered in interleaving segments of 60-minutes per session. Sessions are recorded and sent to participants for review afterwards. Team members receive a Play of the Day handout that summarizes the key points presented for each Live-VILT session.

Team members had 24/7 access to Vivo Teams proprietary learning experience platform that offers participants additional learning content to support their in-session training. They use this platform to send questions to coaches who respond with video tips, participate in polls, watch additional videos, and complete follow-up tasks. This creates a custom library of learning resources for ongoing access.

GROUP COACHING SESSIONS

The executive team was divided cross-functionally into groups of four with a Vivo Team executive coach. The objectives were to, in smaller groups, increase people's confidence in knowing how to lead, manage, and work well with their fellow executives. Cohorts learned a specific set of competencies to support their day-to-day assessment of expectations and methods to keep team members on track with continuous interactions and behavioral feedback, feedforward, and follow-up.

"Vivo Team training has highlighted the importance of internal collaboration and provided tools to support effectiveness. The managers involved have seen that the Senior Executives are serious about raising the bar on team accountability and leadership development. This was such a great experience and will pay dividends as we work together to roll out new cultural expectations defined in Portage's newly minted strategic plan. The values of our college were so well reflected in the training – accountability, collaboration, inclusion, and success."

- Nancy Broadbent, President and CEO, Portage College

RESULTS

After completing the program a VSR™ was again deployed to participants. In reviewing the second VSR™ results leaders can see the behaviorally-based changes and the ROI in dollars as a result of the training as well as areas that continue to need more improvement.

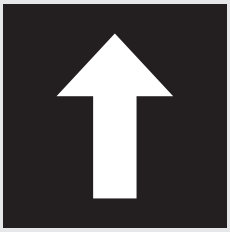
The second VSR™ was deployed in the last week of February 2020 when:

- The Alberta government severely cut the college's budget resulting in "turf wars" due to program cuts;
- Within that constraint all department heads had to rejig their draft budgets to be in line with the cuts;
- Classes moved online in the wake of COVID-19 concerns and instructors were straining to learn how to teach online;
- The executive team and staff had to work remotely and meet via Skype.

All team leaders participating in training had a combined aggregate change of +3 in Communication and +2 in Feedback & Feedforward.

The results across teams were not equal. Some teams improved more than others and one team reported worse results. The beauty of Vivo Team's people analytics is that Portage College was able to flag teams who are high priority for development so leadership can support and develop them.

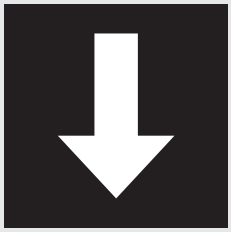
3 of 4 showed a DECREASE in the Cost of Lost Productivity



$85,056
RECLAIMED

ROI = 228%

1 team showed an INCREASE



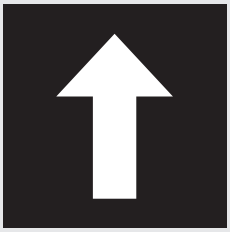
$51,617
Cost of Lost Productivity

OVERALL ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

Based on Vivo Team's algorithm within the VSR™, the Cost of Lost Productivity in October 2019 was $1,298,939. Executive team members rated their team effectiveness at 65%, with a score of 80% or above indicating a highly-effective team.

Despite the additional challenges and under performing team, in VSR™ 2 the executive team members rated their team effectiveness at 67%, yielding a Cost of Lost Productivity of $1,258,971. This is a decrease in the Cost of Lost Productivity of $39,967.

Cost of Lost Productivity:	First Report	Second Report
	$1,298,939	$1,258,971



$39,967
RECLAIMED

ROI = 54%

"The VSR™ data was essential in measuring our progress as a team. Prior to the program, communication and accountability did not have a structure. Since completing the program, there has been noticeable differences in the communication styles of our leaders, particularly when handling difficult discussions."

- Nancy Broadbent, President and CEO, Portage College

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS

The team met the benchmarks through the training which included skill practice and self-reflection. Portage College has seen behaviorally-based improvements in meeting management. Leaders are now enabled to navigate difficult discussions, drive effective meeting outcomes, and are intentional about their feedback. There is still room to grow as they continue to practice the learned skills. The team will continue with bi-weekly check-ins to encourage the new behaviors. Portage is continuing to develop their skills in a continuous learning process with Vivo Team.

NEXT STEPS

Portage College has committed to continuous learning and development with Vivo Team over the next two years with a focus on team development and group coaching sessions.