

BERNER **Group** Case Study



Next Step Leadership Initiative Programs **Core and Move**

Global training solution powered by
BERNER Group and Human Skills



About the BERNER Group

We are the leading specialist for B2B chemical products in Europe," says Andrea Schneider, Head of Talent and Leadership at the BERNER Group. "Furthermore, we deliver over 100,000 premium products for repair, care, and maintenance to our customers in the mobility, construction, and industrial sectors to keep their businesses successful and running. With our strong brands BERNER, BTI by BERNER, and CCS, we also offer industry-leading services that enable our customers to further drive their business forward. For us, trust is personal. That's why we are close to our customers and committed to personal sales. With five sales channels, we are there for our customers 24/7.



About Human Skills

Human Skills is an international training company with a rich project history and a team with 30+ years of design and delivery experience in the training and development industry.

Leading global organisations choose Human Skills as their strategic partner for holistic programmes in the areas of leadership and sales, personal growth, communication, presentation, and transformation management. Measuring training impact is an integral part of all learning journeys that Human Skills designs and implements.

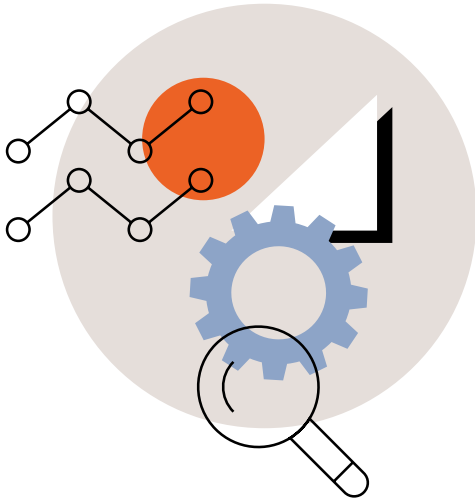
About the project

Core and Move are an integral driver of the BERNER Group's leadership development strategies and are aligned with the six corporate values, the corporate talent framework and strategic pillars that are driving performance.

Through this alignment, **Core and Move** have a strong impact on the execution of the corporate strategy of the BERNER Group. The target group for the Core programme includes all employees as the content focus is on self-leadership. The target group for the Move programme includes emerging leaders, first time leaders, expert and project career paths (with emerging lateral team lead responsibilities).



Challenges and programme goals



The BERNER Group is striving for exponential business growth and thus requires strong leadership that drives change and innovation. Moreover, a regional matrix structure has been established for all BERNER Group countries. It has increased leadership complexity for functional and regional steering of the business strategy. The matrix relationships between Berner Omnichannel Trading Holding as the strategic center, regions and countries require leaders to successfully navigate this matrix and engage their teams on the growth path of the BERNER Group.

The overarching corporate goals of the programmes are:

- to foster a sense of belonging – “One BERNER”
- to drive cross-country, cross-regional and group-wide collaboration
- to establish a culture of continuous learning
- to support long term business goals and outcomes
- to provide a structured talent pipeline
- to create an aligned, global leadership approach

Solution

The BERNER Group and Human Skills developed a blended learning journey for each of the programmes with a duration of 5–6 months including the following elements:



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- Pre-training activities including individual conversations with direct manager and trainer
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- Involvement of direct managers through pre-defined touch points (Manager Check-in)
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- Definition of individual, smart business projects aligned with a direct impact on the corporate strategic pillars
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- Self-directed learning on BERNER Campus before, between and after training modules
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- Two main training modules focusing on key behavior changes that needed to happen
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- A focus on practical application and business results
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- Transfer activities and peer group coaching
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- Final presentation event (Report-out Session) focusing on individual results in skill development and business successes.
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Next Step Leadership Initiative

Core Learning journey

Pre-Training

Week 1		
Kickoff 90 min Group Live-online	Pre-work 30 min Individual Self-paced Online	Trainer Check-in 60 min Individual Live-online
Manager Check-in 60 min Individual F2F or live-online		

Training

Week 3	Week 6	Week 9
Module 1 2 days Group F2F	Transfer Coaching 60 min Peer groups Live-online	Module 2 2 days Group F2F
	Manager Check-in	

Post-Training

Week 10	Week 15	Week 20
Skillbooster 2–3 hours Individual Self-paced Online	Manager Check-out and Career-evolution Process Individual F2F or live-online	Trainer Check-out and Skill evolution Process 60 min Individual Live-online
	Report out 90 min Group Live-online	Peer network Alumni interview

The solution was implemented on a European level with a total of 6 groups and 78 participants.

Next Step Leadership Initiative

Move Learning journey

Pre-Training

Week 1		
Kickoff 90 min Group Live-online	Pre-work 30 min Individual Self-paced Online	Trainer Check-in 60 min Individual Live-online
Manager Check-in 60 min Individual F2F or live-online		

Training

Week 3	Week 6	Week 9
Module 1 3 days Group F2F	Transfer Coaching 60 min Peer groups Live-online	Module 2 2 days Group F2F
	Manager Check-in	

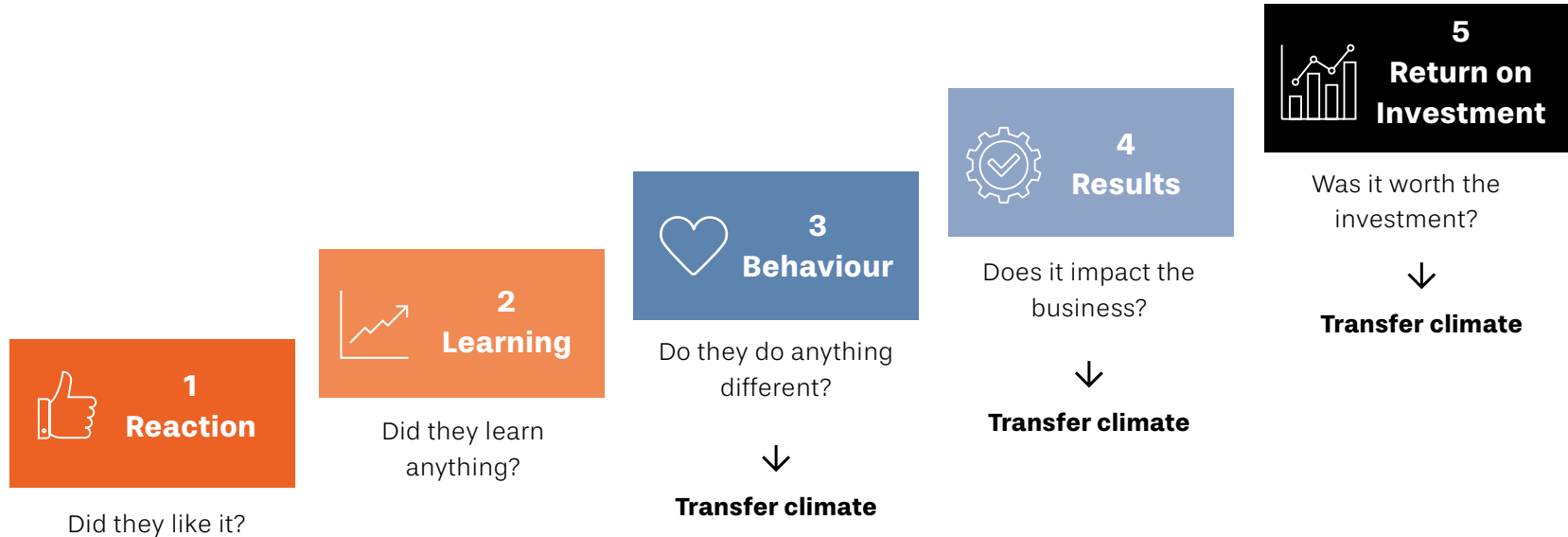
Post-Training

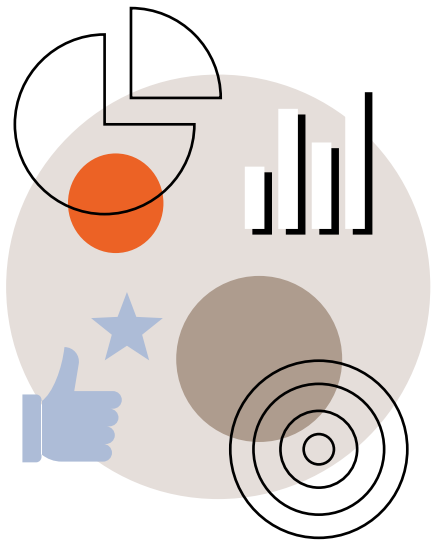
Week 10	Week 15	Week 20
Skillbooster 2–3 hours Individual Self-paced Online	Manager Check-out and Career-evolution Process Individual F2F or live-online	Trainer Check-out and Skill evolution Process 60 min Individual Live-online
	Report out 90 min Group Live-Online	Peer network Alumni interview

The solution was implemented on a European level with a total of 4 groups and 51 participants.

Evaluation

Based on the renowned evaluation system of Donald Kirkpatrick and Dr. Paul Leone, project results were measured on Levels 1–4:



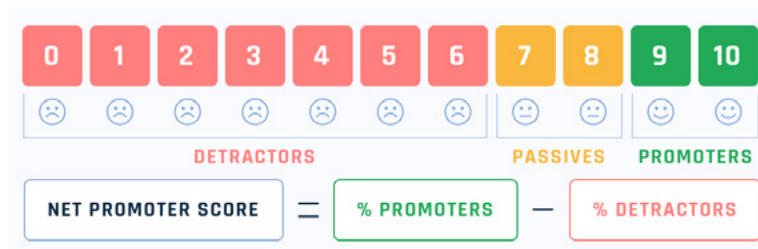


Results

Levels 1–2

Level 1 evaluations provide an overall impression of the participant experience and serve as an opportunity to collect initial feedback on what's working or not working in terms of design, duration, and facilitator effectiveness. Level 2 measures the amount of learning that occurred because of the training.

The evaluation was consolidated through a **Net Promoter Score**. Net promoter score (NPS®) is a proven market research metric for measuring satisfaction through first-hand feedback. It is based on a single survey question asking respondents to rate the likelihood that they would recommend a service to a friend or colleague.



Based on the NPS system,

- **Core** has achieved an average rating of **9.13**
- **Move** scored an average NPS rating of **9.14**

The results are confirmed by positive comments from the participants.

Please find specific testimonials from page 15 onwards.

Results

Level 3

Level 3 describes the amount of observable behaviour changes demonstrated by employees because of training.

The evaluation was conducted through a **level of improvement survey** distributed to all participants in the post-training phase. The following key behaviours were rated as most important improvement areas:

Results **Core**

The percentages below represent participants who experienced some, significant, or exceptional improvements in the skills listed.

1. **Set right priorities** (97 %)
2. **Communicate and organise effectively** (95 %)
3. **Build trusted relationships** (92 %)
4. **Approach situations with a positive attitude** (89 %)
5. **Gain cooperation and deal with stress** (85 %)

Results **Move**

The percentages below represent participants who experienced some, significant, or exceptional improvements in the skills listed.

1. **Delegate, promote teamwork and cooperation** (92 %)
2. **Awareness for own strengths and weaknesses** (85 %)
3. **Build trust** (85 %)
4. **Give and receive effective feedback** (85 %)
5. **Coach individuals** (85 %)
6. **Manage performance effectively** (85 %)

Results

Level 4

A level 4 evaluation assesses business results that participants reached throughout the learning journey.

Core and Move were designed to have a direct impact on the execution of the strategic pillars. Each participant conducted a SMART business project paying into the corporate strategy. The business project has been aligned and reviewed with direct manager through several touch points along the learning journey. Results have been evaluated in a **Report-out Session** with the following, documented results:

Business results **Core**

- Positioning as second supplier secured
- Market share growth
- Sales increase of 10%
- Increased number of followers and traffic on BERNER online shop
- Increased sales revenue
- Adding 55 new products to my customers
- Adding 3 new A/B category prio customers to my customer platform
- Sales target exceeded
- Achievement of the annual sales plan
- Expansion of product mix at customer

Business results **Move**

- Number of contacts per day: increased from 10.3 to 14.2
- Number of orders per day: increased from 3.4 to 3.9
- Average positions per order: increased from 5.2 to 6.7
- Move as a driver of 4 Mio savings project: develop an effective team, create common direction and improve results, increased engagement
- Good progress towards the targeted sales increase of 30% in the multi-oil category
- Increased sales efficiency: higher sales in district, increased number of buying customers
- Increased share of chemicals, increased amount of product demonstrations
- Increased proportion of e-commerce

On the following pages you will find testimonials of participants, direct managers and HR from all regions.



Testimonials

On the following pages you will find testimonials of participants, direct managers and HR from all regions.



Maike Walter

Manager Corporate Communications
BERNER Group

"The Core programme was a great opportunity to learn more about myself, my strengths and my development potential. I can apply many of the skills I have learnt through Core in my day-to-day work. The programme also gives you the opportunity to get to know colleagues from other subsidiaries and departments that you wouldn't otherwise come into contact with. This has helped me to gain an even deeper insight into the projects and processes of other departments and to understand their challenges. I would recommend the programme at any time."



Alina Penz

Communication Manager
BERNER Austria

"In the third year of my work in corporate communications at BERNER Austria, I was given the opportunity to participate in the international 'Core' programme 2023 in Cologne – an experience that has greatly advanced me both professionally and personally. In advance, I analysed my development potential together with my supervisor to maximise the benefits from the programme. At the beginning, each participant received a Skill Matrix in which we

could self-assess our competencies in various areas. My focus was on the topics 'Planning and conducting effective meetings', 'Relativising stress', 'Approaching situations with a positive mindset' and 'Dealing with other opinions'. I consciously chose these focus areas because I knew from previous experiences that this is where my greatest development potential lay – an assessment that was confirmed by my supervisor's opinion."

Alina Penz

Communication Manager, BERNER Austria

Valuable insights and personal growth

The Core programme was enriching for me in many ways: On the one hand, through the coach who knew how to address individual personalities and develop them in a targeted manner. On the other hand, through the exchange with international colleagues who opened up new perspectives and a new approach to my self-image through their valuable feedback and their own experiences.

The training on two days each repeatedly challenged us to leave our comfort zone. Especially through group work and various exercises, I became aware that I am capable of much more than I would have given myself credit for. During the programme, we also received concrete tasks for implementation with the instruction to set up our own project in coordination with our supervisors. I have not yet been able to realise this project due to a lack of necessary resources – nevertheless, I used the time and started a pilot phase. Here, the definite goal is for me to implement my project for our social media channels.

My most important learning: approaching situations with a positive mindset

For a long time, new, unfamiliar challenges meant that I had to leave my comfort zone. Through the Core programme, however, I realised that the idea is often worse than the reality. It may take some effort at first, but as soon as this first step is taken, the realisation grows that many tasks are far less daunting than they initially appeared. Regardless of the concrete result, one thing counts above all: You have faced the challenge – and that is already a success, at least for me.

Dealing with other opinions

In the past, I found it difficult to deal with opposing opinions, especially in sensitive discussions. I quickly became emotional and often took criticism personally. Core helped me to take a more objective perspective and to express my own opinion clearly but respectfully – without appearing defensive or intrusive.

Relativising stress

I tend to feel stressed quickly – so as soon as the workload increased, my stress level intensified. Through Core, I learned about the 'Circle of Influence':

I actively change things I can influence; things that are outside my sphere of influence, I no longer let affect me so intensely. This helps me today to remain calmer and focus on the essentials.

Conducting effective meetings

Organising and leading meetings is not part of my daily tasks, which is why I have had only limited experience in this area so far. In smaller groups, however, I noticed that conversations often deviated from the actual topic and I found it difficult to restore focus. I have now developed a better awareness of this, but I still see further potential to improve my skills in this area.

My conclusion

Anyone who has the opportunity to participate in the Core programme should definitely take advantage of this chance. It has advanced me not only professionally, but especially in my personal development. Our coach took the time, and it's precisely this intensive support that makes the difference. I am grateful for the valuable insights and can unreservedly recommend the programme.



Erling Bruun

Managing Director
BERNER Norway

"We had three participants in 'Move': two district managers and the head of our contact center. These three individuals represent a wide range of experiences and backgrounds, and they face very different challenges in their leadership roles. They manage different teams and have varying levels of leadership experience, which made it especially interesting to observe the programme's impact on them. It was exciting to see that the Move programme has delivered significantly better results than previous trainings. I can clearly observe that the participants

actively apply the insights and tools they gained through the programme in their daily work. It is inspiring to witness their development, particularly in how they approach and solve challenges in a more structured and effective way, which has had a positive impact on their teams and work environment. Based on this experience, I strongly recommend that other companies in the group consider sending participants to the programme. How the programme is designed makes it very relevant and effective. It is a valuable investment for many leaders."



Andrea Schneider

Head of Talent & Leadership
BERNER Group

The Next Step Programs help our employees to not only reflect themselves and their behaviour but to better understand how they are interacting with others and how to increase their personal impact regarding their position and input to the overall business strategy. The trainers make sure that whilst respecting the participants' comfort zone, they are providing multiple opportunities to step out of it and experience real growth moments during the time of the programme

and beyond. A definite plus is the networking experience – since participants join from across the organisation and in some programmes internationally, they learn from each other, gain a better understanding of the company's DNA and feel connected with each other. Human Skills did a great job at developing a programme that fits our content and culture requirements and selecting trainers who bring it to life for our participants.

Points of contact



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for your department or business unit.



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Let's get in touch!
... and discover how we can
collaborate for real change.