

# THE CLIENT

AB InBev is a Belgian multinational beverage and brewing company, headquartered in Leuven, with regional offices worldwide. Formed by InBev's acquisition of Anheuser-Busch, it's the world's largest brewer with 630 brands in 150 countries. It's publicly listed primarily on Euronext Brussels, with secondary listings in Mexico City, Johannesburg and New York.



# SUCCESS STORY

How a story-based leadership journey inspired a multinational leadership team.

## THE HIRE: QUEST FOR A UNIFIED LEADERSHIP IDENTITY

In December 2020, AB InBev Africa found themselves facing a significant objective: creating a distinct leadership identity within their organisation – one that would be defined by leaders who are open to learning more about themselves, are willing to develop new habits, and use their strengths to bring out the best in themselves and their teams. And, in creating a distinct leadership identity, create an opportunity to ignite the passion and purpose to deliver on their legacy as individuals, but also as a Zone Leadership Team by 'making AB InBev Africa better than we found it' .... and so iLEAD Africa was born!

## THE CHALLENGES

The company identified the need for more than just a traditional training programme; they sought a transformative leadership journey which would instil new leadership habits, promote innovation, and foster a shared understanding of leadership responsibilities within the organisation.

They also recognised the requirement for a solution that not only engaged leaders, but also equipped them to cascade their learnings to their teams. The leaders had to take charge, implement their learnings in their work environment, and ensure the leadership development was sustainable and capable of evolution.

The leadership journey was to be an avenue that inspired change and created a solid foundation for AB InBev's future.

This challenge demanded a revolutionary solution, one that went beyond textbook training programmes to deliver a comprehensive leadership transformation experience.

## VALUE DELIVERED

**92%** completion of the iLead journey by the most senior leaders in 2021



A significant shift in the culture, promoting conversation, idea sharing, and collaboration among the leaders



# THE SOLUTION: STORYTELLING, COACHING AND COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

In response to these challenges, AB InBev and LRMG designed and launched the first of its kind: a two-year transformational leadership journey called iLead Africa. This initiative invited 450 leaders across Africa to embark on an immersive journey of self-discovery, and would revolve around experiential learning, encouraging leaders not just to absorb the content but also to live it.

LRMG introduced a unique methodology to deliver the training, utilising storytelling and coaching, and creating a safe space for courageous conversations. Leaders were grouped into pods, promoting a culture of conversation and idea sharing.

Stories related to leadership themes such as fanatical ownership, team engagement, high performance, diversity and inclusion, and innovative mindsets were tied to inspirational case studies including the Springboks, U2, the Boys in the Boat, Virginia Hall, Rosa Parks, and Netflix.

A vital part of the iLead journey was the creation of identity-based habits to initiate behavioural shifts. The leaders worked on developing these new habits, which were reinforced through ongoing reflections and feedback, and implemented them in their day-to-day work environment using workplace toolkits.

This learning process was supported by a dedicated team of storytellers, moderators and conversation coaches, who guided the leaders on their transformative journey.

The implementation of the iLead programme was not a one-time exercise. It was developed in the flow of the learning journey, with each session based on improvements identified in previous sessions. The journey evolved organically, pushing boundaries and challenging traditional training methods.

## IMPACT: A REINVENTION OF LEADERSHIP

- The iLead journey was undertaken and completed by 92% of the most senior leaders in 2021.
- The innovative approach led to a significant shift in the culture, promoting conversation, idea sharing and collaboration among the leaders.
- The programme led to the development of identity-based habits among leaders, signalling a change in behavioural patterns aligned with the transformational journey's objectives.
- The programme successfully instilled a clear leadership identity within AB InBev, providing a uniform and effective guideline for leadership roles.
- The programme, including the Netflix case study, received high ratings from leaders, indicating its success and impact.
- The iLead journey fostered a significant increase in team engagement, feedback exchange, collaboration and best-practice sharing.
- AB InBev achieved its objective of igniting passion and purpose in its leaders for the creation of a lasting organisational legacy.

## iLead Africa Participant FEEDBACK

"This journey has contributed to building self-belief. I'm ready to inspire my team."



"It completely exceeded my expectations – incredibly sad that it has ended."



"The best leadership journey I have ever been on."



"Brilliant, life-changing, transformational journey."

