



## A Vital Learning Supervision Series Case Study

### ● The Staples Background

It's 2004 and Staples Contract is Staples' fastest growing business with industry leading double-digit growth and a J. D. Powers award for service quality. Now flash back to 1999 when Staples first broke ground on its state-of-the-art Staples Contract call center in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Within the next 18 months, 750 employees joined Staples as the company aggressively populated its new Halifax facility.

Krista Soucy, Senior HR Manager at Staples, remembers that growth and also some of the growing pains that came with it. "We had high turnover during that first year. And whenever possible we used internal promotions to fill vacancies. Those promotions gave us some business continuity during our startup period but brought with them a clear need for management skills training. We needed that training to establish a process new managers could consistently follow in their evolving roles."

Vital Learning's Supervision Series was chosen because it featured a systematic way to build fundamental management and supervisory skills. According to Krista, "We were looking for a business issue focus because we see managing as a profession that requires specific skills. Vital Learning's management training courses, which center on the essential and critical skills of leadership and communication, were a great fit. "

### ● Staples Results

Krista Soucy tells us, "After we started using Vital's materials we saw our turnover drop by almost one third over the course of a year. Our turnover rate is now about half of what it was in year one and we know from employee feedback and our performance measurement system that Vital's training has a lot to do with our success."

That success continued in May, 2004, when the J.D. Power and Associates Certified Call Center Program(SM) certified Staples Contract call centers for customer satisfaction excellence. Staples is the first in the office products industry, and one of the first companies nationwide, to have its call centers certified by J.D. Power and Associates.

In order to achieve the J.D. Powers certificate, the Staples call centers serving medium and large-sized company customers passed a rigorous audit of quality assurance capabilities, management roles and responsibilities and associate recruiting and training.

### ● Why Vital Learning

According to Krista, Vitals' Supervision Series is a perfect fit in the Staples culture of "Perfect Order." "At Staples our culture drives our focus on the customer. The Vital Learning curriculum matches our corporate values and serves as a strong platform for building skilled leaders at all levels."



## ● The Molex Background

You may not recognize the Molex name, but it's almost a certainty that you use and depend on many products that they make possible. After all, Molex is the world's second-largest manufacturer of electronic, electrical and fiber optic interconnection products and systems.

In product development centers, manufacturing facilities and sales offices on six continents, the more than 16,241 people of Molex are 100 percent customer driven. Molex supports their customer-driven culture with help from Vital Learning's Supervision Series.

## ● Why Vital Learning

Molex discovered Vital's Supervision Series (SS) just as they were about to build the curriculum they needed from scratch. From the top down, Molex knew that their supervisors needed management skills.

Molex also knew (after combing the marketplace for the right solution) that most management training was too "theoretical" and not "hands-on" enough to really work for their front-line supervisors. (Molex had been using DDI with their front-line supervisors before they brought Vital's SS in.)

## ● Molex Results

Molex has now been a SS user for over 3 years and trained over 300 employees. During that time their use of the Supervision Series has spread beyond the Americas-based supervisor population the program initially served. That spread is remarkable because it's been the result of internal word-of-mouth about the quality of the training and its clear impact on job performance. That word-of-mouth campaign is responsible for the use of the training in Ireland, its translation by Molex into German and Slovak, and its likely translation into Polish and Italian.

Not only has the program spread beyond North America, its also moving up the ranks of management at Molex. Managers well above the supervisory level were intrigued by what they heard about the Supervision Series from their Supervisors, and many of those managers have now gone through the training.

As Supervisors and Managers have been through the course with consistent, positive feedback, it's now clear that the skills taught in the SS, and the methodology used to train those skills, are of value to leaders at all levels within Molex.

The person responsible for the ongoing successful implementation of the SS at Molex is Joe Misurac, Manager of Training and Development. Joe's heard many positive comments from supervisors and managers alike about the on-the-job effectiveness of the training, but one conversation really stands out for him. As Joe says, "the most rewarding comment was from someone who said that the training had a positive impact on their job *and* on their marriage. In other words, they took to heart some of the communications skills, took those skills outside of the workplace, and improved their family life."

Joe's next challenge is to find ways to continually reinforce skill use at Molex and weave the skills into the corporate culture. He's already moving towards those goals by offering SS skills follow-up training sessions. Those 45-minute sessions, run by managers themselves, address specific management challenges through application of the SS skills.

As described above the Molex experience is a snapshot of the power of the Supervision Series. Thanks to Joe's efforts and Vital's comprehensive, practical and effective training solutions, Molex continues to excel in its commitment to its customers and its employees.



## Carolina Turkey A Vital Learning Testimonial

### The Carolina Turkeys Background

Carolina Turkeys based in Mt. Olive, North Carolina has the world's largest turkey processing plant. With more than 2,500 employees and 200 managers, production runs around the clock, with more than 550 million pounds of turkey processed each year for distribution throughout the United States.

Like many organizations Carolina Turkeys had some turnover problems, and some teams that weren't as effective as they should be. So Carolina Turkeys established standards for hiring and performance evaluation – but realized they had not provided the training the managers needed to be effective leaders. In 2004 a Leadership Development curriculum was designed to teach the many and varied skills that managers need to lead effectively

### Developing Leaders at Carolina Turkeys

Jessica McVicker, in Training and Organizational Development, worked with many people throughout the company to make sure the training curriculum, consisting of 80-hours of training, was consistent with the corporate objectives used in hiring and evaluating employee performance. Jessica along with a number of instructors were responsible for teaching these courses that cover the critical skills that Carolina Turkeys managers need today to be effective.

Jessica reports that she was extremely impressed with the feedback she received from Vital Learning's **Solving Workplace Problems** course, which is part of Vital Learning's Leadership Essentials curriculum. Jessica stated, "The participants absolutely love this class! What's even more impressive is that these managers and supervisors have been attending a different class every other week for over a year and I'm sure they were starting to get 'all trained out' –but this class brought a lot of energy back to them and they found themselves actively engaged and learning. The skills and the process for teaching these skills are very engaging – and it enabled participants to use actual problems to practice the skills and learn how to solve them."

### What Participants Say

Jessica shared the comments and feedback she received from the managers themselves. She feels it reflects how much they got out of the course. Comments in class and on workshop evaluations included:

- "It was great to get a problem-solving class that wasn't too basic or too advanced –it offered us concrete steps that can be applied to problems..."
- "This class was very practical and the tools that can be used by anyone."
- "This is the best class yet – very hands-on and engaging."
- "These skills can be used anywhere when faced with difficult decisions – at work, at home everywhere."
- "Best class so far."

Vital Learning is proud to be a part of the Leadership Development program at Carolina Turkeys.

To discover how **Solving Workplace Problems** and Vital Learning's Leadership Essentials curriculum can help your managers lead more effectively --- call 800-243-5858 Ext. 201 or go to [www.vital-learning.com](http://www.vital-learning.com)