

Case Study: From COO to SVP — Leading Through Influence, Not Just Control

Client: L.C.

Company: A high-growth leader in financial technology.

Transition: From Chief Operating Officer (COO) to Senior Vice President (SVP), Product & Operations.

The Challenge: When a Leader's Strengths Become Their Limitations

In the fast-paced world of a company like the one in this case, operational excellence is key. As COO, L.C. excelled. She was a results-oriented, "impulsive-aggressive-driver-leader" (360 feedback) who knew how to get things done and maintain control over complex processes.

However, her promotion to a dual role as SVP of **Product & Operations** created a new, more complex challenge. The "Product" side of the title required a completely different leadership style. It demanded less top-down control and more empathy, active listening, and the ability to facilitate discussions and empower creative teams.

The core problem was a classic leadership paradox: **How does a highly effective "driver" learn to become an influential "facilitator" without losing their edge for execution?** L.C. needed to evolve her leadership style to inspire innovation in her product teams while still ensuring operational rigor.

The Solution: A Targeted Blueprint for Behavioral Evolution

Through the EgoLeadership program, we created a practical roadmap focused on tangible behavioral shifts. We didn't try to change who L.C. was; we worked to expand her leadership toolkit.

Based on confidential feedback from her 13 stakeholders involved in the program and our initial diagnostics, we targeted three critical areas for development:

1. **Delegate and Prioritize:** Move from owning every important task to empowering her team. A key first step was creating a shared operational dashboard to give her visibility without needing to be involved in every detail.
2. **Develop Interpersonal Influence:** Consciously shift from being the "driver" of every conversation to a "facilitator" who actively and patiently listens, making others feel heard and valued.
3. **Manage the Drive for Control:** Evolve from the instinct to control everything to a place of trust, focusing her energy only on the most critical strategic priorities and giving her teams the autonomy to deliver.

The Transformation: Measured Change, Not Just Good Intentions

This was a journey of conscious practice. Over 6 months, L.C. worked on these new behaviors while her team provided regular, anonymous feedback through our measurement platform.

The data showed a clear and positive trend. Her team's perception of her leadership style began to shift. They noted that she was listening more actively, was more receptive to their ideas, and was delegating more effectively.

She was successfully navigating the transition from being the person who had all the answers to being the leader who could draw the best answers from her team—a critical skill for anyone leading both product and operations.

The Result: A More Versatile and Influential Leader

By embracing this journey, L.C. transformed her leadership approach to meet the dual demands of her new role. She learned to balance her innate drive for results with a more empathetic, facilitative style, unlocking greater potential in her team.

This evolution allows her to effectively lead the operational engine of the business while simultaneously creating the psychological safety and empowerment necessary for a world-class product organization to innovate and thrive.

In her own words:

“I have worked with George for a full year, during what I can call my most difficult moment so far, both on a personal and professional level. Under his guidance, I have grown into what I am today - much more aware of my value, my strengths and my weaknesses, but most importantly, of the impact I can have on others. George helped me go beyond understanding the importance of collaboration and communication, but also made it work at its best for me and the others.

We always achieve great things when we have the courage to step outside our comfort zones, and this is what George encouraged and facilitated for me: stepping out of my comfort zone and evolving as an individual and as a professional. Thank you, George, for the amazing experience, for your absolute professionalism, empathy, and patience!”