

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant. The central part of the image shows a cluster of thick, pointed leaves in grayscale, covered in numerous small, clear water droplets. To the right, a vertical strip shows the same leaves in vibrant green, also with water droplets. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

# HOW TO LEAD PEOPLE IN A VUCA WORLD:

LESSONS FROM  
SIEMENS HEALTHINEERS



**Paul Stillman, Ph.D.**  
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# HOW TO LEAD PEOPLE IN A VUCA WORLD: LESSONS FROM SIEMENS HEALTHINEERS



**(VUCA)**  
A CONTEXT OF  
**VOLATILITY,**  
**UNCERTAINTY,**  
**COMPLEXITY, &**  
**AMBIGUITY**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rapid changes, economic and political upheaval, and intense pressure creates a context of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). Siemens Healthineers leadership team in Brazil recognized these factors undermining team performance and old techniques were not working. They were, said one team member, “Managing problems instead of managing people.” The team determined to confront the emotional side of these issues head on through a project with Kronberg, Brazil’s experts in emotional intelligence for business. In the course of a six-month intervention, the team created a 139% increase in the number of highly engaged managers, and

a 46% increase in engagement scores overall. By carefully assessing the drivers of individual and team performance, the team created clarity and then worked to develop and apply emotional intelligence skills. The result is committed leaders working together as an increasingly vital team, still challenged by a difficult social and business environment, but equipped and mutually supported to lead anyway.



**ENGAGEMENT  
BEATING THE  
BENCHMARK  
FOR WORLD-  
CLASS TEAMS.**



**OVERALL  
ENGAGEMENT  
46% increase  
IN EIGHT MONTH INTERVENTION**



# 139% increase

IN HIGHLY ENGAGED LEADERS



# BACKGROUND: SILOS, BLAME & VOLATILITY IN A CONTEXT OF DISTRESS

Working in silos, transferring blame, thinking only about personal interests, and wasting time using email instead of making a phone call to speak with someone directly were among the typical challenges facing the team. The results were instability, not acting as a cohesive team, a lack of interpersonal trust and failure to deliver on promises. Siemens Healthineers leadership team, based in Brazil, decided it was time to “do what we say” and “think beyond departmental responsibilities, strengthen the spirit of ownership in our respective teams.”

Given the intense emotional component of the business challenges, Siemens Healthineers considered emotional intelligence could be a key to the solution. They brought in Kronberg, a consulting group based in São Paulo and



a Six Seconds Preferred Partner, dedicated to aligning clients' engagement and performance to brand promise, to help identify the issues and facilitate change.

The Healthineers leadership team at Siemens comprised senior management, with the CEO for Brazil, the Chief Financial and Chief Medical Officers for Latin America, and the compliance, service, and sales direc-

tors among the 32 professionals. In these regions, economic, political, and environmental instability have intensified business challenges and threaten personal wellbeing. The leaders acutely felt the impact of the surrounding VUCA world on their operations, and company culture and spirit. They were dedicated to finding solutions, but needed assistance to determine the best path forward.

# THE ACCELERATION OF INNOVATION

HOW WE LOST THE RACE TO KEEP PACE



**HUMAN GROWTH &  
ADAPTABILITY ARE  
INCREMENTAL**



**TECHNOLOGY  
GROWTH IS  
EXPONENTIAL**



# BUILDING THE CASE FOR BUILDING A VITAL TEAM

The objective of the first part of the initiative was to demonstrate that technical competency is an insufficient dimension for a) companies to earn the trust of their market agents and b) leaders to attract, develop, and retain talent. In the team's experience, the traditional focus on technical expertise resulted in low levels of engagement at work.

They developed a premise that core values such as belonging, purpose, teamwork, and integrity, are indispensable dimensions to earn the trust of all stakeholders. Technology grows exponentially and human adaptability and professional development incrementally. This gap explains the inequalities in the global reality and

the anxieties and stress so many experience. In a context of rising complexity, stress mounts as we find ourselves incapable of accelerating our development at the necessary speed to keep pace with technological innovation and its social and emotional impact.

Kronberg, with input from Siemens Healthineers' leadership, developed a timeline with critical implementation milestones for communication,

core values such as **belonging, purpose, teamwork, & integrity,** are indispensable dimensions to earn the trust of all stakeholders

# MEASURING FOR SUCCESS

assessment, coaching/debriefing, and collaborative education. Kronberg's use of assessment tools from Six Seconds, a global pioneer in emotional intelligence (EQ), was a key element of the engagement. As a Six Seconds' Preferred Partner, Kronberg was in an

ideal position to apply these individual EQ, leadership, and team assessments. The project timeline is shown in Figure 1: All members of the leadership team took the Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence (SEI) assessment, as well as the Leadership Vital Signs

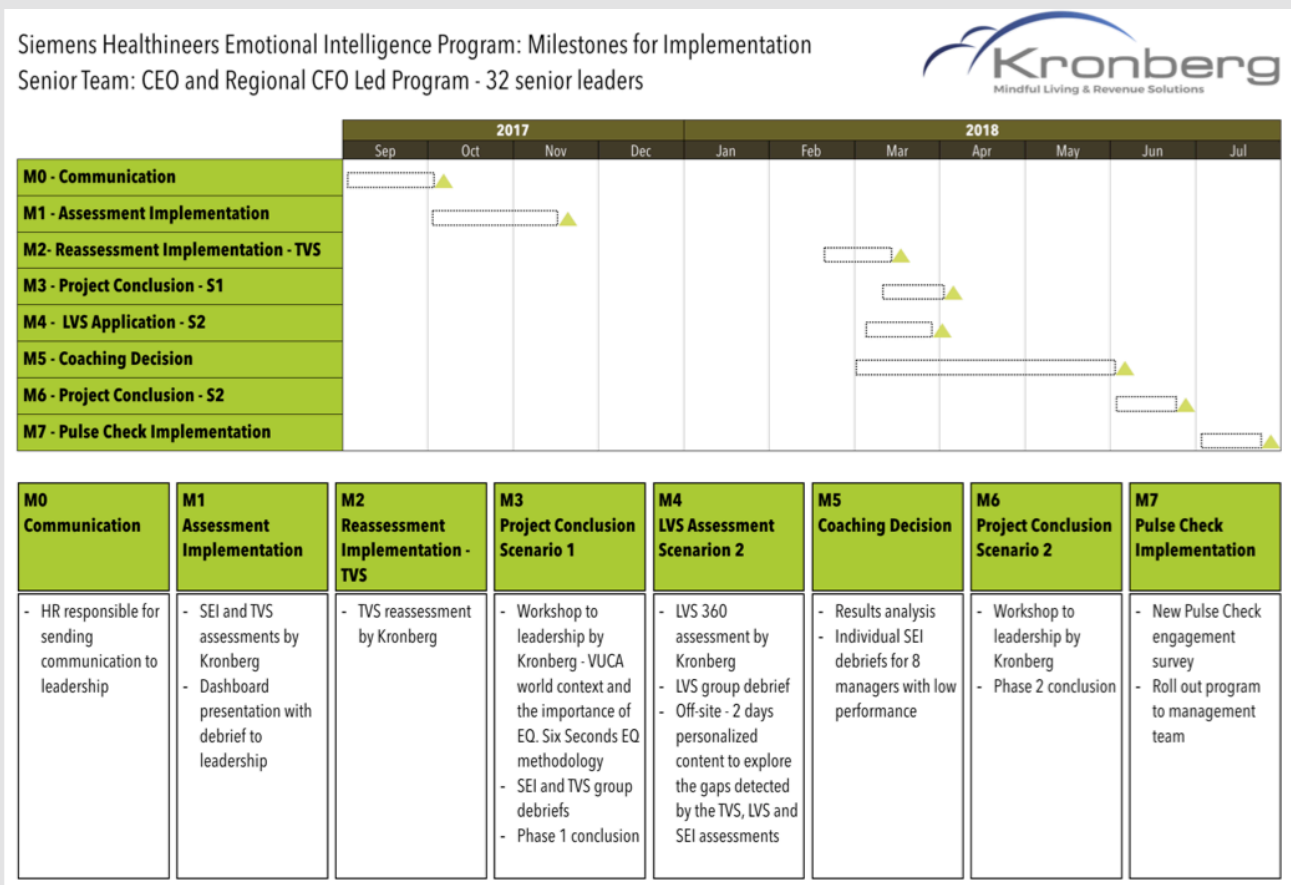


Figure 1. Project Implementation Timeline and Key Milestones

(LVS) and Team Vital Signs (TVS) assessments (6sec.org/vs). The LVS is a 360° multi-rater tool and the TVS measures key climate drivers and team outcomes. All participants received individual coaching sessions on how to use their assessment feedback and they produced individual development roadmaps based on those insights. Kronberg consultants reviewed the team results with the leadership during the first of four workshops. The LVS and TVS share the same five core drivers, which integrate the results, but have leadership- and team-specific outcomes, lending power and specificity. The LVS and TVS models, with the climate drivers in blue and the outcomes in orange, are shown in Figure 2:

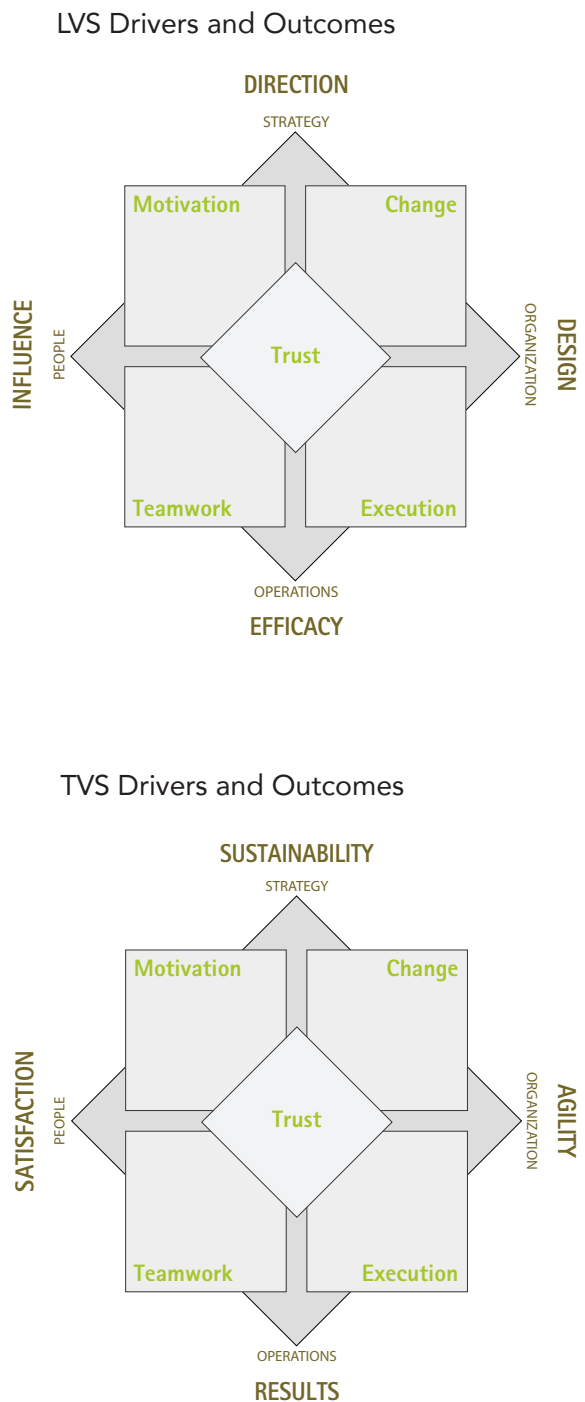


Figure 2. Six Seconds Leadership Vital Signs (LVS) and Team Vital Signs (TVS) Models.



# ACTIONABLE SKILLS FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

What are the skills that people need to improve leadership and team effectiveness? What internal capacities must a leader develop to build more connected, effective, high-trust teams? Many of the skills are captured in the SEI, Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence assessment ([6sec.org/sei](http://6sec.org/sei)).

The SEI yields normed scores for 8 EQ competencies divided into three pursuits of know yourself, choose yourself, and give yourself, as well as results for four success factors, as shown in the sample reports in Figures 3 and 4:

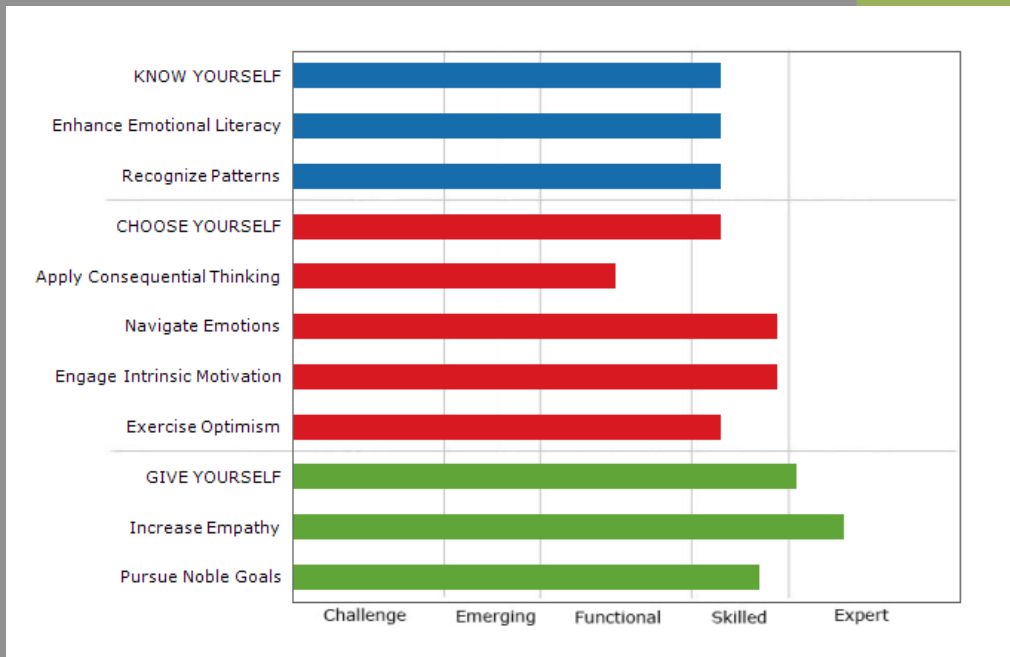


Figure 3. Pursuits and Competencies from Sample Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence (SEI) report.

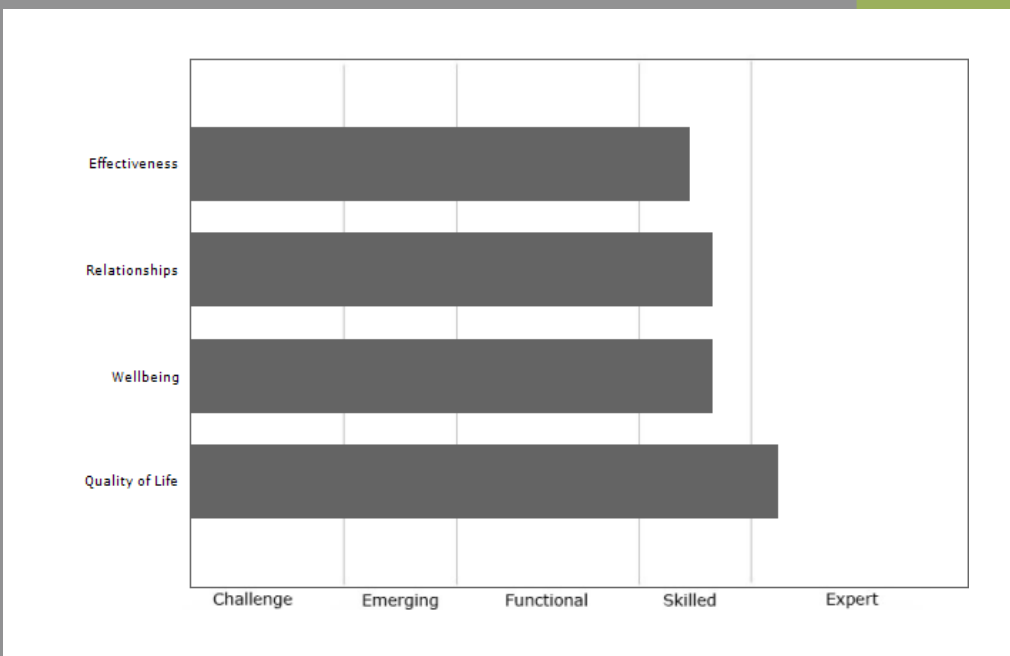


Figure 4. Success Factors from Sample Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence (SEI) report.

# MEANING FROM DIALOGUE

The individual and team metrics helped clarify the problem and get team members “on the same page” about their priorities. This is essential before moving to solution.

The next step was to develop new skills that people could use to work on their individual and shared goals. This upskilling was planned through in-person experiential workshops plus continued coaching.

The series of workshops facilitated by Kronberg formed the heart of the intervention, driven by actionable data from the EQ, leadership, and team assessments. The first workshop focused on defining organizational and personal context, with people describing the VUCA environment in which they found themselves. A debrief and open discussion of

the TVS results identified two key factors for development, **Trust and Teamwork**. The team followed this emergent process, based on dialogue around shared meaning, throughout the engagement.

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IS A POWERFUL, UNIFYING APPROACH TO ENHANCING PERSONAL, LEADERSHIP, AND TEAM PERFORMANCE.**

Kronberg introduced emotional intelligence as a powerful, unifying approach to enhancing personal, leadership, and team performance. Based on the Six Seconds Model and the work of Antonio Damasio, the Portuguese-American neuroscientist, the EQ “toolkit” helped make the accelerated reality faced by team members as atraumatic as possible. The program also acknowledged the needs of Generations Y and Z for work benefits that emphasized learning and development in a framework of purpose and flexibility. This

reality imposed tremendous pressure on people in leadership to shift the priority from technical to emotional ability.

Damasio's somatic marker hypothesis, which links emotions to decision-making and social cognition, and his exploration of the neural basis for feelings and such phenomena as amygdala hijacking informed the dialogue.

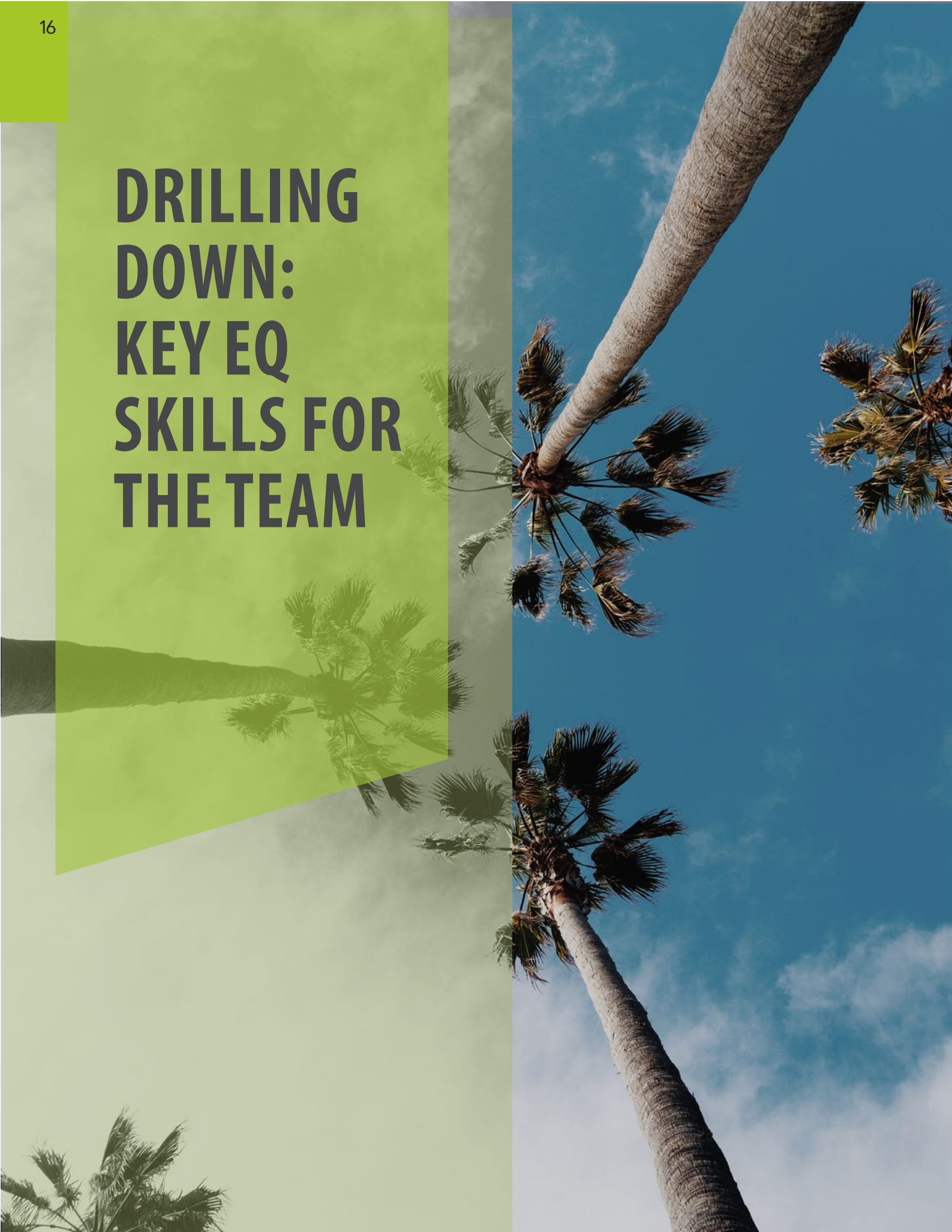
Key scientific findings about neurogenesis and neuroplasticity helped support the possibility of change on both personal and relational levels. Kronberg utilized Six Second' learning philosophy and methodology to

highlight the change process and foster development of emotional intelligence skills and competencies. Finally, they debriefed the team on the group SEI report, a composite of individual EQ competency and outcome scores, and the Dashboard, a measure based on the SEI questionnaire that shows collective EQ, the distribution of group Brain Styles, the hierarchy of Brain Talents, and key performance indicators.

Antonio Damasio is a Portuguese-American neuroscientist. He is currently the David Dornsife Professor of Neuroscience, Psychology and Philosophy at USC and an adjunct professor at the Salk Institute. Damasio heads the Brain and Creativity Institute, and research in neuroscience has shown that emotions play a central role in social cognition and decision-making.



# DRILLING DOWN: KEY EQ SKILLS FOR THE TEAM





The shared information and dialogue at the first workshop established the foundation for the two workshops that followed. The second workshop was an in-depth exploration of the four EQ competencies that the team identified as key for their growth: Applying Consequential Thinking, Exercising Optimism, Increasing Empathy, and Pursuing Noble Goals. The 4-hour workshop included detailed information on each of the targeted competencies and emphasized in-class exercises to practice utilizing the skills. Participants took turns telling stories about how the lack of each competency led to poor results and how they would act differently going forward to

create more positive outcomes. They created a team “Triarch,” a Six Seconds’ exercise to identify key areas for growth using drawings, symbols, and text in three columns to capture where they would like to be in 12 months, what was missing, and what they needed to do to get there. They also examined collective Leadership Vital Signs results to look at common strengths and opportunities.

The third workshop was held at a beautiful beach resort 2 hours from São Paulo and focused on the theme of trust. The off-site setting was de-

signed to release oxytocin and promote higher levels of trust in the group. The event started with a blindfolded dinner in which the group was distributed, with the help of the Director of Human Resources, into tables of two according to their lowest level of acquaintance and, in some cases, relationship difficulties. They were instructed to simply get to know each other as much as possible in ten minutes. To their surprise, one of the pair was then blindfolded while the other colleague was instructed to get the appetizers.

## WHAT'S MISSING AND WHAT'S NEEDED TO GET THERE?

Attendees then debriefed in another area of the ballroom, had the main course, and then returned to their tables in pairs once more. They then switched responsibility to choose the dessert, debriefed again, and ended the night.

The next morning was dedicated to discussing the experience of the dinner and sharing the five dysfunctions of a team by Patrick Lencioni, as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Model of Team Dysfunction. Adapted from *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, by P. Lencioni, 2002, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Copyright 2002 by Patrick Lencioni. Adapted with permission.

The next segment focused on the EQ competency of Pursue Noble Goals (6sec.org/png) and the link between shared purpose and trust. Team members were asked to go the beach or pool to reflect about the importance of Siemens Healthineers to themselves personally; they were assigned to capture this meaning in a symbol they drew and a personal statement. The group reconvened in the main meeting room and 10 people were asked randomly to share their work while the others commented. Highly emotional moments followed, with personal revelations such as, "I met my wife thanks to Siemens," and, "I am what I am professionally and personally thanks to Siemens." The day was successful in generating oxytocin and promoting higher levels of trust in the team, as reflected in the follow-up TVS assessment. Those results were presented at the fourth and final workshop and the group constructed a roadmap identifying what was still needed to increase engagement levels further. One key decision was to utilize Siemens' Pulse Check assessment, a tool very similar to the LVS.

## EXPLORING THE LINK

## BETWEEN SHARED

## PURPOSE AND TRUST



# GUIDING PERFORMANCE GROWTH THROUGH DATA

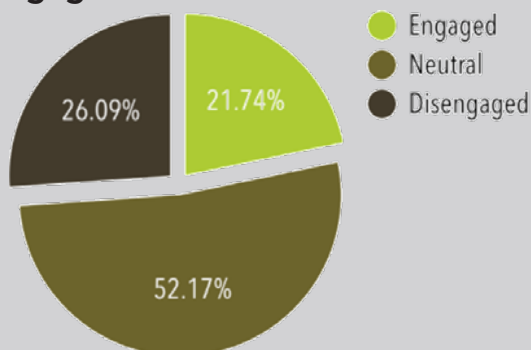
Siemens Healthineers leaders are data driven and the use of a variety of assessment tools fit perfectly with their orientation and knowledge preferences. This became very important because the initial TVS results showed sobering results on engagement levels, climate scores, and outcomes. At the start, the percentage of team members in the engaged category was below the 25% standard, almost 5 points less than

the disengaged percentage. Overall the team was very far from the target for world-class teams of 67% engagement. The overall Engagement Index, calculated from the engaged-neutral-disengaged ratio, was less than the international median of 50.

The follow-up TVS, presented at the fourth workshop, offered a very different profile and clearly demonstrated the progress that had

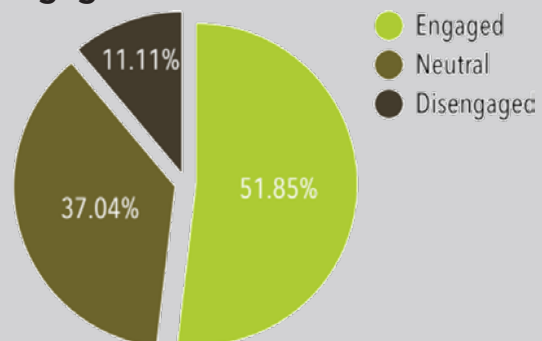
been achieved to improve engagement. The percentages of engaged team members increased to over 50% and those who were disengaged decreased by more than half. The Engagement Index jumped to 70, a 46% improvement over the 8-month period – and beating the benchmark for world-class teams. Comparative results for the Siemens Healthineers leadership team are shown in Figure 6:

## Engagement Index: 48



Team Vital Signs survey conducted in January 2017 with input from 23 members.

## Engagement Index: 70



Team Vital Signs survey conducted in September 2017 with input from 27 members.

Figure 6. Pre- and Post-Program Team Vital Signs (TVS) Engagement Index and Percentages.



# TVS RESULTS DEPTH FROM DETAILS

More detailed Team Vital Signs climate scores painted a somewhat more positive initial picture, with teamwork and execution below the mean, but motivation and change above. Trust, central to the Vital Signs model, was at the mean, but considerably below the team's desired level. None of the drivers was in the upper or lower quartiles (these are indicated by the left-hand and right-hand grey bars on Figure 7). Over the course of the program, TVS climate scores increased dramatically, with four out of the five drivers rising to the top quartile. Teamwork remained slightly below that level, but still showed a 9% increase, second highest among the climate scores.

On the outcomes side of the Vital Signs model, initial TVS results showed results and agility well below the mean and approaching the bottom quartile,

with satisfaction and sustainability slightly above the normed average. Post-program outcomes scores also exhibited substantial increases, with satisfaction, results, and sustainability entering the top quartile. Agility, which had the lowest initial score, did not reach the top rank, but still showed a 9.7% improvement. For the

combined drivers and outcomes, at the initial assessment 5 out of 9 were below average, with none in the top quartile, while all were above average in the post-program assessment, with 7 of 9 in the top 25% of the database. The comparative TVS results are given in Figure 7:

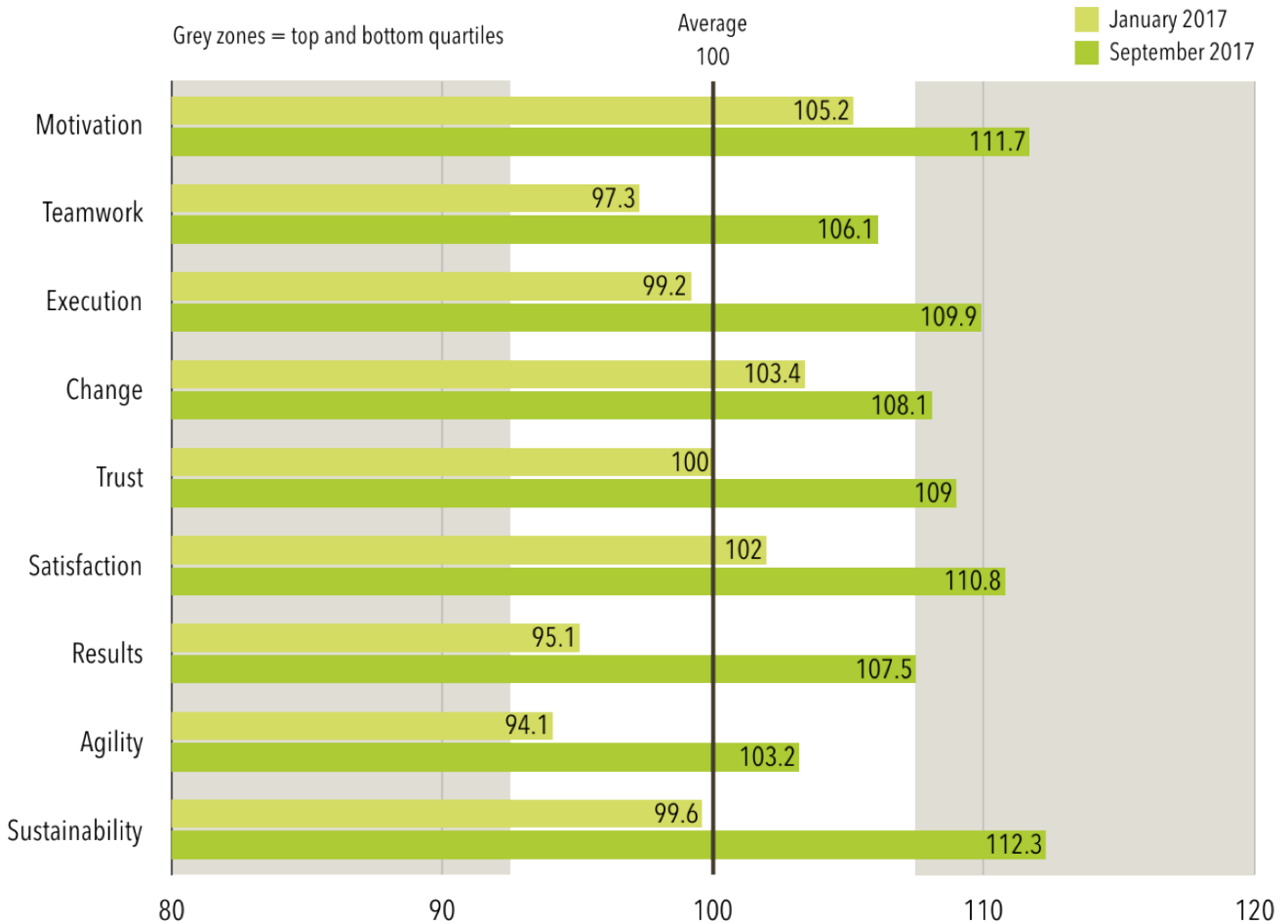


Figure 7. Pre- and Post-Program Team Vital Signs (TVS) Climate and Outcomes Scores.

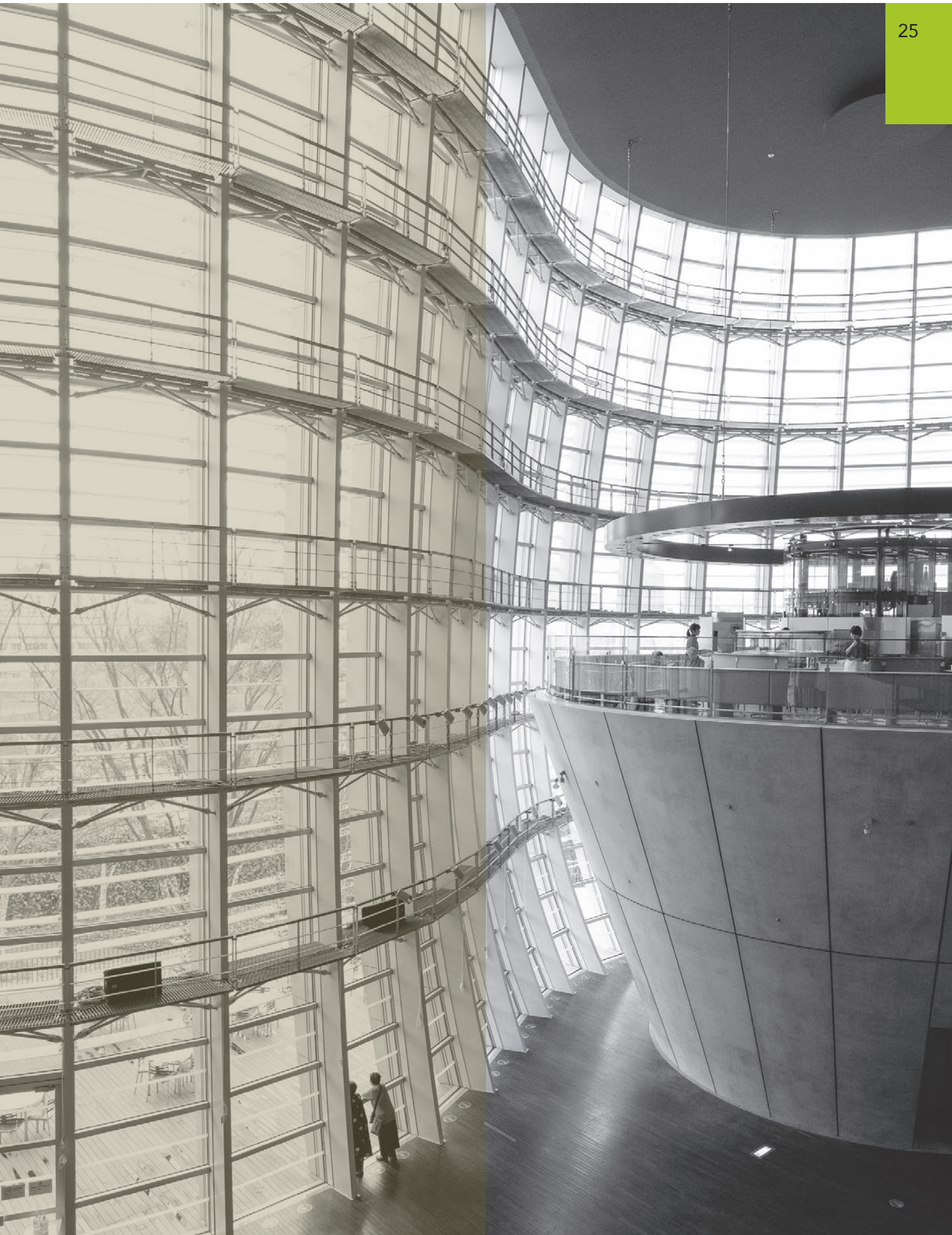
The TVS calculates standard deviations for climate and outcomes scores, with a normed average of 15 and lower scores indicating increased coherence and higher ones reflecting a wider distribution of responses. The initial TVS revealed group coherence slightly tighter than average, but uniformly above the threshold of 12 for

highly-aligned teams. In the follow-up TVS, with the exception of change, all climate and outcomes standard deviations fell within the highly-aligned range, indicating that the process resulted in more consistent perspectives among team members. The comparative results for standard deviation are given in Figure 8:

Factor	January 2017		September 2017	
	Average Score	Standard Deviation	Average Score	Standard Deviation
Motivation	105.2	12.1	111.7	9.0
Teamwork	97.3	12.5	106.1	10.0
Execution	99.2	14.3	109.9	10.1
Change	103.4	13.3	108.1	12.1
Trust	100.0	13.5	109.0	10.7
Satisfaction	102.0	13.7	110.8	10.7
Results	95.1	15.5	107.5	11.4
Agility	94.1	13.7	103.2	9.0
Sustainability	99.6	14.2	112.3	10.5

Figure 8. Pre- and Post-Program Team Vital Signs (TVS) Climate and Outcomes Scores and Standard Deviations.





# PRERESULTS

Across-the-board increases in climate driver and outcomes scores, averaging 9.2% and ranging from 4.5% to 13.0%, and a shift from moderate to high team alignment, echo the positive experience and increased optimism reported by program participants.

The changes in climate scores were reflective of the day-to-day experience on the team. As one team member noted in comments from the follow-up TVS, "Today, I feel that we no longer have the problems that we had in the

past. I feel that our team is more mature and cohesive to solve the day to day problems and issues." Another said, "Our trust as a team has improved considerably."

The TVS report also highlights critical items showing the highest and lowest scored questions. These can help focus attention on strengths that can be leveraged and areas to target for improvement. The results from the initial team assessment demonstrated very positive regard for the work that they do, an openness to

change, and strong commitment to goals. At the bottom, team members expressed doubts about caring for each other, their level of motivational energy, and responsiveness to the market forces. Mobilizing work value, ability to change, and team goal commitment to enhance care, drive, and agility became a focus for collaborative education and team interactions. The pre-program results from January 2017 are shown in Figure 9:

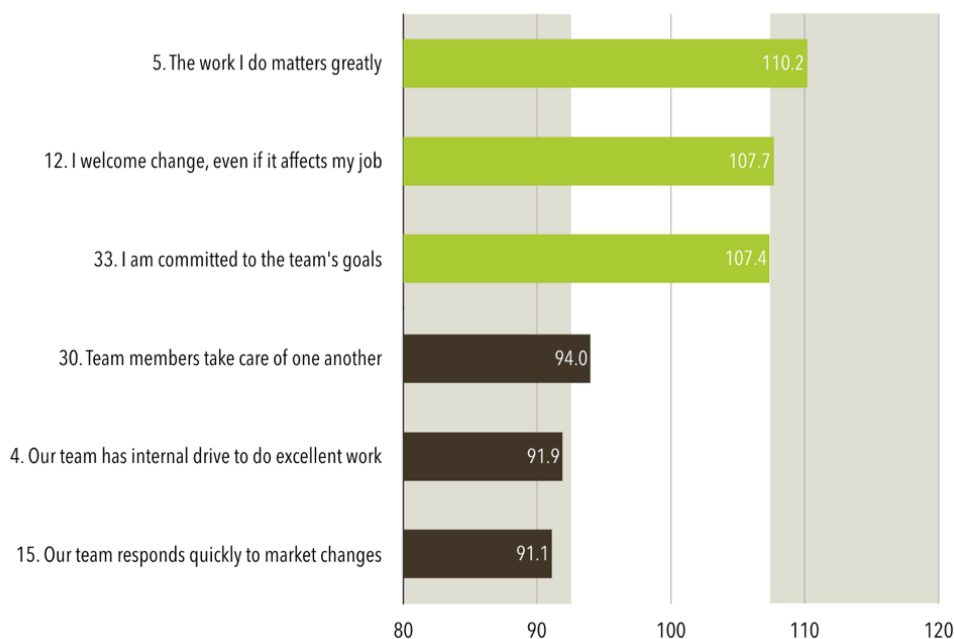


Figure 9. Pre-Program Team Vital Signs (TVS) Critical Items.

# PRERESULTS

# POST RESULTS

Post-program results from September 2017 captured several of the same critical items, but new ones appeared as well. Believing in the value of their work remained on top, with the addition of liking their jobs and standing up for decisions, a sign of empowerment. The high critical items were scored higher than those on the pre-program assessment, consistent with the general improvement in results. On the low end, the items remained the same, although the order

changed. Scores for those items went from well below the mean to above the normed average, confirming that, while still critical to address, the team had made considerable progress. The average increase for these 3 matched critical items was 10.4%. These results also demonstrate that, following the program, participants rated all questionnaire items above average. Critical items identified in the post-program TVS assessment are presented in Figure 10:

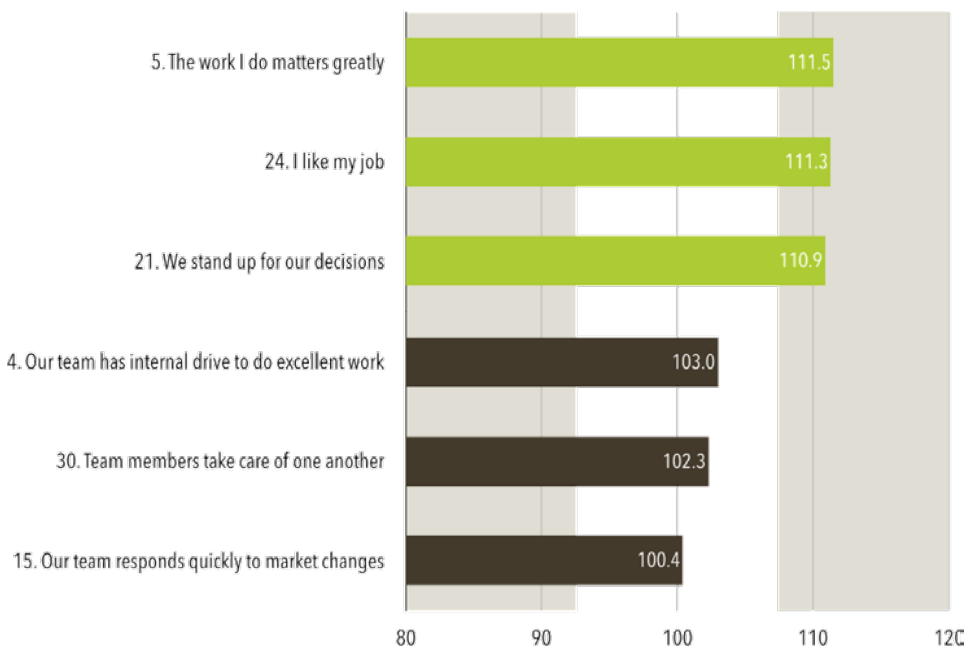


Figure 10. Post-Program Team Vital Signs (TVS) Critical Items.

# POST RESULTS

# BRAIN STYLES & PREFERENCES

Individual SEI results were used to generate a group Dashboard report that provided a different perspective that highlights brain styles and preferences. The Dashboard yielded a cumulative EQ score of 99, very close to the database average of 100. Emotional intelligence scores for the 24 team members showed a medium level of variance in distribution.

## MORE ABOUT BRAIN STYLES

Brain Styles are a simplified way to understand learned preferences in using emotional intelligence based on 3 scales:



### FOCUS

What kind of data does a person's brain prefer to collect?



### DECISIONS

What way does a person prefer to assess information?



### DRIVE

What energizes the person's brain?



Brain Styles are a simplified way to understand learned preferences in using emotional intelligence. There are three scales: Focus (the kind of data a person's brain prefers to collect), Decisions (the way a person prefers to assess information), and Drive (what energizes the person's brain). Brain Styles within the group revealed that a majority preferred to focus on rational and quantitative data rather than emotional or relational information. Brain Styles preferring innovative or adventurous decisions slightly outnumbered those that preferred an evalua-

tive or protective approach. For Drive, Brain Styles favoring motivation using concrete, practical appeals slightly dominated those preferring idealistic or abstract calls to action. Overall, the team was well balanced, with the most pronounced shift toward Brain Styles favoring more rational communication techniques. The acknowledged Brain Style preference for a rational, as opposed to an emotional, focus helped inform the subsequent approach to learning, but also highlighted the need to cultivate feelings and personal interaction.

# THE DASHBOARD TOOL



The Dashboard also gives the group's 18 Brain Talents in descending order. These talents represent capabilities that can be leveraged to create results and invent the future. The top talents were examined to consider whether these capabilities were being well utilized to optimize results. The level of team EQ determines the power of the talents. For this team, moving collective EQ from the yellow to the green zone, a key goal of the program initiative, would strengthen the effect of the top talents. Finally, the Dashboard offers insight into a variety of performance indicators largely driven by EQ and talent capabilities. As with EQ, all outcomes for the team fell into the yellow zone and the group explored how enhancing emotional intelligence and mobilizing talents could improve performance. The Dashboard from the start of the program is shown in Figure 11:

**TEAM EQ DETERMINES THE  
POWER OF THE TALENTS**

**DASHBOARD** INSIGHTS ON PERFORMANCE

PROJECT: Siemens Healthineers | Group Size: 24 | Date: Feb 2, 2017

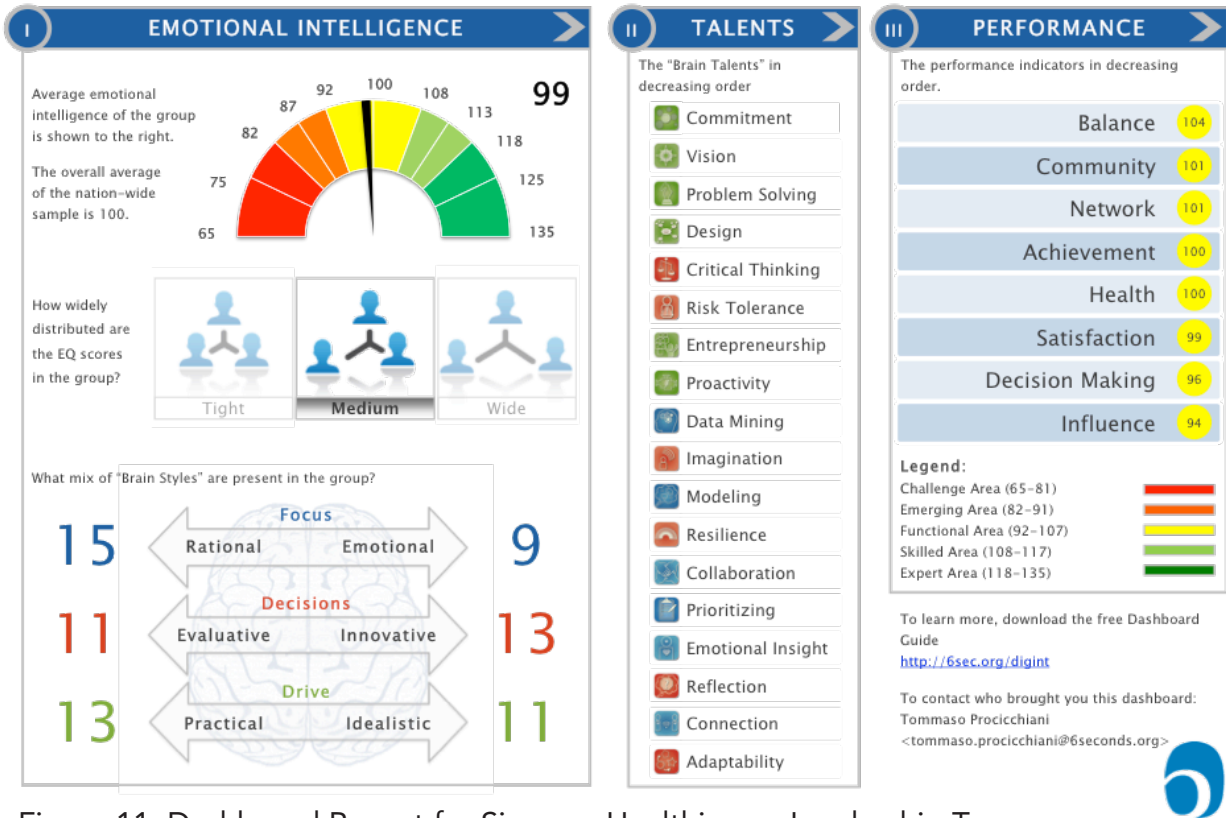


Figure 11. Dashboard Report for Siemens Healthineers Leadership Team.

**THE DASHBOARD OFFERS INSIGHT INTO A VARIETY OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS LARGELY DRIVEN BY EQ AND TALENT CAPABILITIES.**

# A REVITALIZATION STORY

While team members still felt the stress of living in a VUCA environment, after this program they also talked about their “commitment and motivation” to “bring new ideas” forward. The post-program TVS captures team member comments that add narrative context to the quantitative data and

help identify  
The standard  
tions ask par-  
what should be  
and contin-  
Team members  
the practice  
training and  
employees with  
in the compa-  
be part of this  
team member.

**I FEEL PRIDE  
TO BE PART OF  
THIS TEAM.**

emergent themes.  
open-ended ques-  
ticipants to say  
started, stopped,  
ued for the team.  
also applauded  
to bring “more  
orientation to the  
less than two years  
ny.” I feel “pride to  
team,” said one

“Empathy can be increased,” said one leader, showing new insight about caring for others. We must absolutely “start to take the spirit of empathy and trust to other levels of the company,” noted another. We need “more direct feedback” and to “create more opportunities for informal activities with the objective of strengthening the level of trust in the team.”

Leaders learned that emotional intelligence was critical. “We must,” said one team member, “stop allowing the amygdala to be hijacked” (a state of reactivity based on perceived threat) “and not recognizing it or admitting it.” Another saw the effect on collaboration, saying, “The team presents, in my opinion, a more cooperative spirit after the introduction of EQ in our company.” Progress on



relationships was clearly made, with one person saying, "There has been a noticeable change in the level of interaction amongst the team." But more work remained to be done. "I start to see a real evolution, but we still need to resolve pending themes without exposing one another to criticism," a leader commented.

The future looked brighter, a team member felt, saying, "I hope the team will continue to improve our EQ level. The impact and results are visible in the organization. I feel that there has been a considerable positive impact in the level of sincerity and trust in the team." Other team members shared that experience, with one noting, "Our trust levels have improved considerably." This person went on to say, "I had the opportunity to witness in events such as our Breakfast Meetings the testimonials recognizing how much we have changed, the leaders attitude and behaviors."

These palpable changes made team members optimistic about the future. The project set the stage for extending the initiative more broadly, to "give continuity to the events of integration of the team to genuinely improve professionally and emotionally." Team members felt the imperative to share the value of what they had experienced and learned. "We now need to cascade this program down to the other levels of the company," one leader asserted.

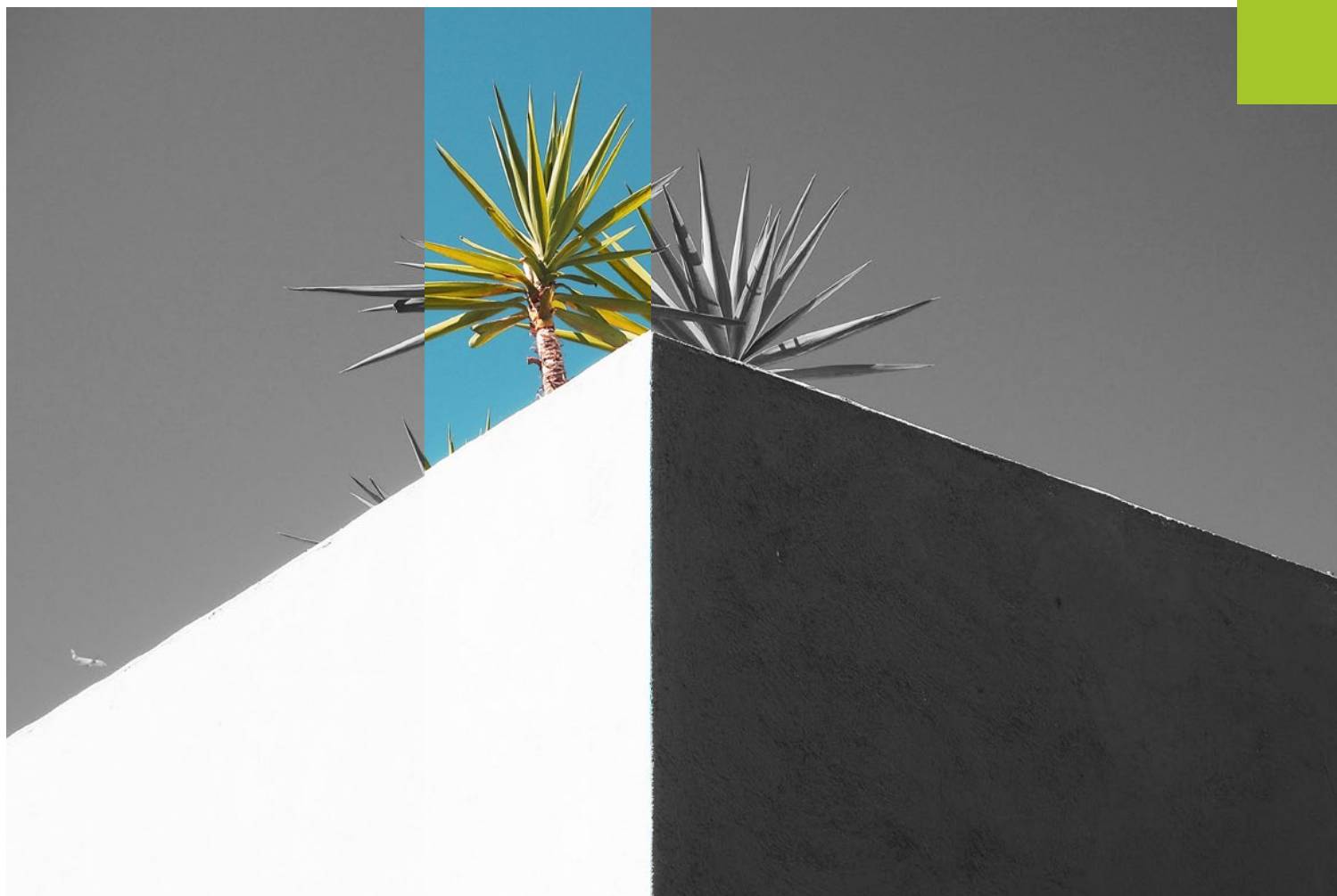


# PUTTING IT TOGETHER

The Siemens Healthineers senior leadership team, working closely with Kronberg to facilitate the change process, was courageous in confronting their reality and acknowledging the need for transformation. They spent time to understand the emotional threat of the VUCA context in which they're working, and feel more comfortable about engaging with each other authentically. Leaders became more willing and able to suspend their judgment and unleash their curiosity

to embrace actionable data from individual, leadership, and team assessments. Team members also learned about emotional intelligence and neuroscience and took risks to reveal new possibilities, to form a new vision, and to step forward to change for the better. At the end, they committed to spreading their insights throughout the company, to become true leaders of change in a rapidly changing environment.





## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Paul Stillman** is Director of Organizational Vitality at Six Seconds. He has over 30 years of experience as a healthcare executive and consultant. Paul leads global efforts to promote Vital Sign, Six Seconds' suite of organizational assessment tools. He has a Ph.D. in Human and Organizational Systems and is a Life Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives. Learn more about these tools at [www.6seconds.org/tools](http://www.6seconds.org/tools)

**Carlos Aldan De Araujo** is a Transformational Master Life Coach, Emotional Intelligence specialist and keynote speaker. He is the CEO and founder of Grupo Kronberg, a Six Seconds' Preferred Partner, which provides customized business solutions for corporate clients in several industrial segments to generate substantial and sustainable financial impact.