

REIGNITING LEADERSHIP

Brimstone worked with an early pioneer of energy storage technologies to help the organization refocus and accelerate their business by activating the next level of leaders.

A \$3 billion global manufacturing enterprise needed to turn around one of its key business units that had been an early developer of energy storage technologies. When they placed an industry veteran in the top leadership role, he saw enormous potential for the business along with some fundamental challenges. Energy storage was a rapidly evolving space, and customers were looking for innovative partnerships. But over the previous five years, the business had produced volatile, and relatively stagnant, revenue. They faced a pioneer's dilemma: early success created opportunities, and, in the process of pursuing them, the business wound up trying to be everything to everybody. Product lines had proliferated, complexity had crept in, and the business found itself reacting to tactical opportunities rather than innovating to address strategic ones.

Brimstone worked with this top leader and his executive team to help focus the business on the opportunity areas that would unlock strategic, long-term growth. To do this, Brimstone activated the next level of leaders in the organization. In a manner similar to a Performance Leadership initiative, we organized these leaders into four Business Acceleration Teams—which the client named the BAT Process. Each BAT team spent nine months addressing a specific strategic imperative that would collectively transform the business. While the top leaders owned the process and regularly reviewed progress, it was this next level of leaders who drove the action. BAT teams were fully empowered to make decisions, and fully accountable for driving progress. The process helped them learn to lead more effectively through uncertainty, to fuel a culture of possibility, to break down internal siloes, and to unlock breakthrough thinking through collaboration. Most important, this group of leaders developed a clear sense of ownership and accountability for the success of the business unit.

Results

After just nine months, the BAT Process delivered positive results for the organization. **Production improved by nearly 30% while production costs went down. The business entered into collaboration agreements with two key customers to explore new technologies. Sales with strategic customers increased steadily after rolling out a cross-functional sales approach based on the work. Employee engagement scores improved, and the business started attracting new talent from inside and outside the enterprise. Most notably, during these nine months, the next BAT Process participants developed leadership capabilities that helped to accelerate the execution of the strategy and exceed the expectations that had been set with enterprise stakeholders.**