

SMITHGROUP + MLC

Case Study

SMITHGROUP OVERVIEW

SmithGroup is an award-winning, global, integrated architectural design firm with 15 offices in the USA and China. A network of 1,300 professionals work to support clients in a wide range of industries such as healthcare, higher education and science and technology.



WATCH THE VIDEO

A video case study on MLC and SmithGroup can be watched here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3g97znp>

About MLC

Founded in 1978, Michigan Language Center (MLC) is an accredited educational institution that partners with global companies to empower their international staff.

For more information, visit englishclasses.com or email

info@englishclasses.com

MLC Michigan
Language Center

NEED

SmithGroup employs many H1B sponsored employees in its 15 offices. The majority of these employees are non-native English speakers whose English language proficiency is quite high.

Many of these international employees have recognized that their career advancement and success is tied to their level of communication skills and their linguistic understanding of the US culture. SmithGroup's HR team was looking for ways to support their international staff in their career development, and to assist them in understanding and adapting to life in the US. The company was looking to help their employees and also to increase their return on employee investment.

SOLUTION

To address SmithGroup's need, MLC took the following steps:

- 1 Assessed each selected SmithGroup employee on his/her reading, writing, grammar, speaking and listening skills.
- 2 Conducted individual interviews with each employee. The employee was asked to evaluate his/her difficulties with communication, and to identify which aspect of language learning was most important for him/her to improve for professional and personal reasons.
- 3 Synthesized and analyzed all assessment and interview results.
- 4 Proposed a training program structure based on employee and industry needs.

MLC has implemented its program in 4 Smithgroup offices in the USA and worked with over 35 employees. The classes are conducted in-person in the Southeast Michigan area and in a hybrid manner for the offices in Dallas and Phoenix. The curriculum has primarily focused on pronunciation, stress and intonation, general speaking & listening skills, public speaking, presentations, and informal social communication. We have helped the employees understand the underlying linguistic meanings and implications of daily and work oriented speech.

"SmithGroup has seen improvements in its international staff's confidence in communicating in team meetings and with clients."

Kyle Bauer, Human Resource Manager

TECHNOLOGY

MLC's technology allows employees to watch class recordings on demand. This is useful if an employee missed class due to work responsibilities or needs to review a class session. These recordings may be seen on a mobile phone, a tablet, or a laptop from any location in the world.

IMPACT

MLC has been very responsive to SmithGroup's needs and continues to evolve its curriculum to meet SmithGroup's needs.

SmithGroup has seen improvements in its international staff's confidence in communicating in team meetings and with clients. In addition, employees have a strong sense of empowerment to share their ideas informally and formally with office leadership.

The SmithGroup/MLC relationship continues to grow and expand across the 15 offices.