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Asiakastieto AT FUTURE

Asiakastieto Group is one of the leading providers of digital company and consumer information services in the Nordic countries. The Group's products and services are primarily used for risk management, finance and administration, decision-making and sales and marketing purposes. The Group operates in Finland under the brand Suomen Asiakastieto and in Sweden under the brand UC. Asiakastieto and UC merged on 29 June 2018. The Group's pro forma net sales for 2017 amounted to EUR 130 million and it had approximately 500 employees. The Group serves several industries, the largest of which include finance and banking as well as wholesale and retail sectors and expert service companies.

DETERMINED AND COMMITTED COOPERATION

"We got what we asked for. During the cooperation, we had a strong sense that Trainers' House was determined and committed to the work. We were very satisfied with the jointly planned strategy creation process. Engaging our employees in the effort as extensively as possible was an essential part of the process. The strategy room we built with help from Trainers' House is one example of how we approached our personnel. Another example was the strategy fair for all employees, which became a big success.

The end result of the process was that more than half of our employees were involved in the strategy process, which is something we were very pleased about. This meant that we were able to incorporate our employees' expertise and insight into the process; it also provided us with a strong foundation for commitment to the strategy and its execution," says Jukka Ruuska, CEO of Asiakastieto.

ENGAGING THE ENTIRE PERSONNEL IN CHANGE

Asiakastieto wanted to execute a strategy process to renew its mission and define its new direction, vision and strategic objectives for the years to come. It was essential to engage the entire personnel in the process.

"When we were deciding on a partner, we believed that Trainers' House would have the methodology to facilitate the process and the ability to help us in such a way as to make our people feel that they have a genuine opportunity to be involved.

At Asiakastieto, we carry out a comprehensive strategy process once every 2-3 years. We wanted to make maximum use of the knowledge, understanding and insight that our experts possess. We believed that engaging people would improve process quality and increase commitment to the ac-

tual execution of the strategy," Ruuska explains.

The goal of the cooperation was to create an executable and quantifiable strategy, engage and commit the personnel to the process and build bold guidelines for Asiakastieto's new direction.

A PARTNER FOR AN ENGAGING STRATEGY PROCESS

At the start of the cooperation, Trainers' House carried out comprehensive background work that included an employee survey as well as interviews with key personnel, customers and partners. The assessment of alternative strategy scenarios was a key aspect of defining the company's new direction. Strategic choices were finally made and clear targets along with concrete actions for achieving them were specified together with Asiakastieto's Executive Team and key personnel.

To support the strategy process, Trainers' House built a strategy room, which promoted engagement throughout the Asiakastieto organisation. All information regarding the progress of the strategy process was compiled in the strategy room. The space was open to all employees and they could freely comment on the planned actions. Feedback from the personnel was utilised in workshops organised by Trainers' House along the way.

"We weren't looking to partner with a strategy consultant, but a partner to facilitate the process. It was important for us that the thinking done on the actual substance of our strategy was left for our own experts. I dare recommend Trainers' House specifically for this kind of a facilitating role. Having a partner was essential also because our in-house resources don't have that much time to spare. We don't have resources to carry out this kind of work ourselves, and it doesn't really make sense to try to do everything on your own," Ruuska concludes.