

CASE STUDY

Elevate: Accelerating Specialist Potential for Organisational Impact



A Companions for Leadership & Lantmännen Initiative



Lantmännen, an agricultural cooperative and Northern Europe's leader in agriculture, machinery, bioenergy, and food products, partnered with Companions for Leadership (CFL) to design and deliver a two-module development journey for high-talent specialists. Over five months, the programme strengthened self-leadership, influencing skills, and cross-functional collaboration across a complex matrix.

About Lantmännen

Lantmännen is an agricultural cooperative owned by 17,000 Swedish farmers, operating "from field to fork" with activities spanning agriculture, food production, machinery, and bioenergy across 20+ countries.

In Sweden, Lantmännen has repeatedly been recognised as one of the country's most attractive employers. For example, they have been appointed a "Career Company" for seven consecutive years, applauding its strong commitment to employee development and employer branding. Additionally, in a recent Young Professionals survey, Lantmännen ranked among the top companies, placing 3rd among both social science graduates and law students and 4th place among economics/business administration students.

Strategic talent context

Like many modern industrial and food companies, Lantmännen relies on deep expertise to drive safety, quality, sustainability, and innovation. Yet organisations traditionally invest disproportionately in people on the leadership track, leaving specialists with fewer visible pathways.

Lantmännen has chosen a different strategy by creating a dedicated specialist option that recognises expert contribution as a strategic lever for performance, collaboration, and innovation. (On the market level, research underscores the shift from linear ladders to fluid careers and the value of dual-career paths for technical talent.)

The Challenge

Retaining & Developing High-Talent Specialists

Common pain points: Specialists often experience limited advancement options without transitioning into people management; their impact depends on influencing peers and stakeholders within a matrix, rather than relying on positional authority. These conditions can constrain engagement, mobility, and retention.

Why now: In a volatile, innovation-driven environment, businesses that invest in growth opportunities for all talent (not just managers) gain agility, resilience, and capability at scale.

Opportunity at Lantmännen: Strengthen specialist self-leadership, collaboration, and organisational influence; enhance cross-silo problem-solving; and signal a modern, dual-path talent philosophy that boosts pride and retention.

Programme Design & Delivery

The Elevate programme is designed with two in-person modules, each 3 full days, spaced ~5 months apart for real-world application and integration.

Module 1

Transforming Leadership from Within™

A deep, experiential journey that builds presence, purpose, and personal agency to navigate complexity and change. Participants develop self-awareness and clarity of personal values, empowering their inner capacity to act with courage and integrity in their specialist roles.

Module 2

Wisdom in Teams™/Succeeding in Collaboration

Based on Wisdom in Teams™, originally designed to enhance team clarity, resilience, and strategic focus, the programme was adapted for specialists who do not lead line teams but instead must influence across the matrix.

The adapted module focuses on:

- **Influencing from inner authority:** Framing, stakeholder mapping, and strategic conversations that build alignment.
- **Recognising engagement styles:** Understanding how different people connect, process information, and make decisions, allowing specialists to tailor their communication for greater impact.
- **Refining individual contribution for collective impact:** Translating deep expertise into business value by engaging stakeholders in ways that advance shared outcomes and strengthen trust.

This version of Wisdom in Teams™, named Succeeding in Collaboration, helps specialists elevate their presence and contribution within the organisation's complex network, turning expertise into influence.

Learning philosophy

The journey combines reflective inquiry, experiential exercises, peer coaching, and wisdom-based leadership principles to transform insight into behavioural change at work.

Co-creation

CFL and Lantmännen co-designed the journey, tuning content, cases and tools for real specialist contexts (e.g., regulatory, quality, engineering, sustainability, product). Session design included feedback loops to refine language, examples, and post-module application.



Participant Journey & Experience

Who participated

High-talent specialists from core functions (e.g., Finance, IT, Supply chain, Engineering, R&D, Quality, Sustainability, Product/Category).

What participants valued (themes)

- Greater confidence to speak up and contribute beyond their silo
- Clearer stakeholder strategies and alignment skills
- Enhanced listening and communication skills to engage more effectively and successfully drive projects across levels and functions
- Peer network across functions, building trust and speed in day-to-day work



Elevate gave us the tools to listen differently, map stakeholders with clarity, and shift from frustration to forward motion. I see the potential to not just working together, but solving together



Elevate helped me see the benefit to shift from expert focus to becoming a strategic contributor with expert knowledge. I will approach cross-functional challenges with more confidence, clarity, and influence - even without formal authority.

Outcomes & Impact

Early indicators:
NPS (Recommend to a peer): +95

+95

Voices from the Partnership

Carina Eriksson

Head of Learning and Talent Development

“Elevate marks a significant step forward in our approach to supporting, developing and retaining specialist talent at Lantmännen. The co-creation and implementation of this programme demonstrate our dedication to releasing the full strategic potential of our experts. In a matrixed organisation such as ours, it is essential that deep expertise continue to drive influence, collaboration, and innovation. This programme empowers specialists to lead within their fields, drive cross-functional initiatives, and enhance our competitive advantage—an essential component of our long-term success.”

Emma Stockhaus

SVP & Head of Group HR

“At Lantmännen, we believe that deep expertise is a strategic asset, not just a specialist resource and therefore Elevate is more than a development programme for us. It is a strategic investment in how we work and grow together. In today's competitive and complex environment, it is crucial to retain specialist competence. By investing in the advancement of our experts' self-leadership skills, strategic tools, personal values, and their ability to influence without formal authority, we strengthen the potential in our employees to reach full capacity to lead effectively, shape our future and live our values - from field to fork.”

Fredrik Lyhagen & Sanna Uthardt

CFL Programme Leads & Facilitators

“Partnering with Lantmännen to create Elevate has been a deeply rewarding experience. Their Learning and Development team brought clarity, openness, and a genuine spirit of trust that shaped every step of the journey. We felt fully trusted to bring the programme alive, and that trust extended to the participants, who trusted each other, leaned in, and created a powerful space for growth. The participants' curiosity, engagement, and courage reflected Lantmännen's proactive commitment to developing leadership at every level. It is fulfilling to partner with a forward-thinking organisation that values human development as a cornerstone of collaboration and innovation.”

Key takeaways from the Elevate partnership

1

Elevate demonstrated that specialists gain significant influence when development goes beyond technical expertise to include self-leadership, clarity, and communication.

2

A dual-career approach strengthens retention by giving high-talent specialists a visible, valued path without needing to become line managers.

3

Co-creation between CFL and Lantmännen ensured every tool, example, and exercise was grounded in real specialist contexts, increasing relevance and impact.

4

Influencing without authority emerged as a critical capability in a matrixed organisation, enabling smoother cross-functional collaboration and decision-making.

5

Participants developed stronger confidence, presence, and stakeholder strategies, translating expertise into broader organisational value.

6

A shared learning experience built cross-silo relationships and trust, creating a specialist network that accelerates everyday collaboration.

7

Early indicators – including a **+95 NPS** – signal high engagement, strong perceived value, and meaningful behavioural shifts already visible in the business.

Credits & Contact

Lantmännen

Northern Europe's leader across agriculture, machinery, bioenergy, and food products; a cooperative owned by 17,000 farmers.

Contact:

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CFL

Wisdom-based leadership development; designer and sole delivery partner for this journey.

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Human Potential Unlocked

We accompany leaders who choose to grow from the inside out, anchoring their impact in clarity, courage, and presence.

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