

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

EQ Serves as the Foundation for All Training

Farm Credit Mid-America, a customer-owned cooperative, is a leading provider of credit and financial services to the farmers, rural residents and agri-business owners in Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio and Tennessee, with a portfolio of \$39.5 billion in total assets owned and managed.

Farm Credit Mid-America is committed to the professional development of its team members to ensure they work together effectively to provide the best possible experience to the customer-owners they serve.

THE CHALLENGE

Stephanie Shaikun, Head of Organizational Development, joined Farm Credit Mid-America in January 2022 and sought to identify opportunities and solutions for leadership and professional development that supported the needs of the business. While several training programs were in place, Stephanie felt that something was missing – the foundation of emotional intelligence skills.

“ We had done a lot of training and talked about issues, like the need to build trust and have empathy, but didn’t really address them head on. I wanted to go deeper. I wanted everyone to have a higher level of awareness of their own emotions and those of their colleagues so we could have more meaningful conversations. To me, emotional intelligence is the basis of everything else.

You’ve got to get EQ right, or the other training won’t take hold. ”

– Stephanie Shaikun, Head of Organizational Development

AT A GLANCE

Challenge

- Build EQ skills as foundation for other learning and development programs
- Create higher level of awareness of emotions in self and others for more meaningful conversations

Solution

- Mastering EQ Level 1
- Mastering EQ for Teams

Results

- Improvements in awareness and management of personal emotions
- Greater empathy and curiosity towards others
- Increased psychological safety

THE SOLUTION

Stephanie researched Emotional Intelligence training solutions to address their needs and selected TalentSmartEQ's Mastering EQ Level 1 program. The Mastering EQ Level 1 program starts with a simple, fast self-assessment that provides participants with personalized information about their current EQ level, including their natural strengths and opportunities for development. The training session then provides an overview of emotional intelligence, allowing participants to understand the 4 core skill areas – Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness and Relationship Management – and develop individualized plans to improve their individual EQ skills.

“ What I liked about TalentSmartEQ's Mastering EQ Level 1 program is that it met us where we are. I wanted to start at a high level, creating a strong foundation and shared vocabulary in EQ, and then expand from there. ”
– Stephanie Shaikun, Head of Organizational Development

Farm Credit Mid-America implemented a train-the-trainer approach, certifying Stephanie and four other trainers within the organization so they could cost-effectively scale the training to all 1700 team members. They then launched the program with monthly open enrollment classes, for up to 25 participants, as well as a virtual class for remote team members and a private training session for the company's leadership team. The classes continue to fill up, with participants recommending the training to their colleagues. They have trained over 485 team members to date in Mastering EQ Level 1 and have seen the impact of having a common language to discuss emotions and behavior on engagement, collaboration, and customer service.

As a follow-up enhancement to their EQ Level 1 program, Farm Credit wanted to take their EQ training to the next level and look at building team EQ skills to increase team effectiveness and performance. The Mastering EQ for Teams program helps teams evaluate collectively how they manage their emotions and then develop strategies and an action plan to improve how they work together both within the team and cross-functionally. Farm Credit certified five trainers on the TalentSmartEQ's EQ for Teams program and is implementing the Teams course across the organization as well.

THE RESULTS

To evaluate the EQ training course, Stephanie sent out a brief survey to all participants for feedback. The survey results showed a strong Net Promoter Score of 63 with respondents providing valuable course feedback, citing improvements in awareness and management of their personal emotions, greater empathy and curiosity towards the emotions of others, and increased psychological safety with more open team environments where they felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions.

“ I look at our professional development programs as an eco-system. Emotional Intelligence training and skill development is the base that makes our other training programs even stronger. All our training programs work together to create better leaders, better teams, better relationships, and ultimately better service for our farmer clients. ”
– Stephanie Shaikun, Head of Organizational Development