



The Story

Essilor is one of France's most global enterprises, operating in 100 countries. It is a world leader in ophthalmic optical products and one of the world's leading holders of ophthalmic-optics patents, with more than 1,500 active patents around the globe.

Essilor has a unique ophthalmic-optics network, with 160 prescription laboratories backed by 18 production units. They employ 22,300 world wide.

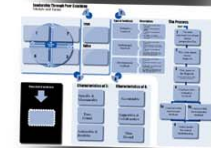
With much of Essilor's production in North America being moved outside of the US, the president of Essilor's North American Operations (NAO) wanted to commission a Think Tank to explore new and emerging opportunities for U.S.-based operations.

Our Engagement

The president's challenge was to sell the idea of a think tank to its predetermined members. The first team meeting needed to not only engage them in defining their purpose and roles, but needed to be a team-building event.

Essilor engaged Solutions House to team with it in the design of the think tank process and in facilitating the first two-day think tank session.

After talking with three of the six members of the think tank, we chose an approach that would not only achieve the president's purpose, it would do so in an interactive and fun way. This was particularly important because only two of the six team members were from the U.S. There were conflicts and some level of mistrust between the French and U.S. members.



How We Delivered Our Solution

Because this was a French based company, and because the offsite was to take place around the time of the Tour D'France, Solutions House consultants designed a half-day bike race game modeled after the Tour D'France – *Le Tour D'Essilor*.

The game's purpose was to:

1. allow team members to explore their *assumptions* about the industry, Essilor, and NAO.
2. ensure all team members had the same level of knowledge concerning Essilor's industry, the company and its operations.
3. engage team members in defining the think tank's purpose, guiding principles and team member roles.
4. engage the group in thinking about opportunities if they had unlimited resources.
5. engage team members in examining how economic factors, political influences, technological influences, and social changes might impact Essilor and NAO.
6. engage the team members in developing a SWOT analysis.
7. be a team-building tool.
8. stimulate creativity.

Le Tour D'Essilor achieved its stated purpose. Following the game, the team worked on developing actions/ideas that might allow them to build on the strengths and exploit the opportunities they identified in their SWOT. They then assessed the impact and probability of implementing the actions/ideas. They used a diagnostic filter developed by Solutions House to assess risks and trade-offs.

The team members then further developed their ideas using templates that encouraged them to explore things such as; sales generated or expenses reduced; process improvements; people improvements; risks and contingencies; and resource availability and allocation.

Designs from Solutions House follow no set template. They are defined by the parameters of your needs... resulting in a fresh solution, time after time.

The last part of the two-day think tank session was spent in planning a process to ensure the think tank followed through and continued to operate.

The Rest of the Story

Essilor has several think tanks in operation today.

To Learn More

We'd love to tell you more about this and other solutions that we have developed for our clients. Please email us at engagementstories@solutionshouse.com.