

CASE STUDY: UNITED GRAIN CORPORATION



SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE®

FEEDING THE WORLD

Dialect helps organizations create greater value by aligning their people to their strategies.

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The Dialect team created the right platform and environment to allow openness and creativity by delving into our company's culture, operations, and people. The UGC Distinction is the result of the collaborative efforts from all levels of the organization and carefully and masterfully managed by the Dialect team.

AUGUSTO BASSANINI, PRESIDENT AND CEO

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OPPORTUNITY

United Grain Corporation (UGC – owned by Mitsui & Co.) has been the Pacific Northwest's premiere grain exporter for more than 50 years. UGC's employees serve as a bridge between producers of wheat, feed grains, and oilseeds and global agribusiness buyers.

Several years ago, UGC's Executive Management Team (EMT) started to consolidate grain sourcing and trading functions to strengthen efficiencies across the value chain. This effort included the following:

- ⦿ Diversifying and establishing a unique position in the market
- ⦿ More closely aligning the UGC growth strategy with Mitsui's strategy
- ⦿ Enhancing employee expertise and growth

ACTION

Using our comprehensive strategy model, we led a process of discovery with employees, key growers, Mitsui leaders, and end users. Focusing on uncovering historical strengths while identifying the strengths needed in the future, a draft Identity was created and shared with key stakeholders to get additional input. The end result was **The United Grain Distinction** that focused on:

- ⦿ strengthening UGC's reputation as the most reliable grain exporter ... from seed to grain to delivery.
- ⦿ emphasizing the importance of relationships in a transactional business
- ⦿ the behaviors and organizational strengths necessary to strengthen reliability, help their customers thrive, and nurture key relationships throughout the value chain

After the development of the **The United Grain Distinction**, we also helped the EMT develop a Master Action Plan that translated the **Distinction** into actions for each department.

“Dialect helped us focus on how we were going to execute together as the EMT, rather than just as separate teams. We worked together to ensure our commitments were achievable and discussed how we would rely on each other to accomplish our goals. This collaborative process and the Master Action Plan were new for us and gave us a great working document for holding one another accountable.”

JULIE SCHUH, VICE PRESIDENT – HUMAN RESOURCES

RESULT

How did UGC benefit from this work? Here's what leaders have said about **The United Grain Distinction**.

- ⦿ *Being aligned on the **Distinction** helped us be better prepared for the emergencies of the last few years like the trade tensions with China and COVID-19.*
- ⦿ *We knew we needed to focus on core strengths in order to weather the challenges of the global consolidation. The **Distinction** helped us do that.*
- ⦿ *The **Distinction** was foundational to the construction of Horizon 2030, our mid to long-range business plan.*
- ⦿ *Focusing on the **Distinction** has helped us improve communication and energy between teams.*
- ⦿ *This work has helped us begin to move from a culture of independence to one of greater collaboration.*