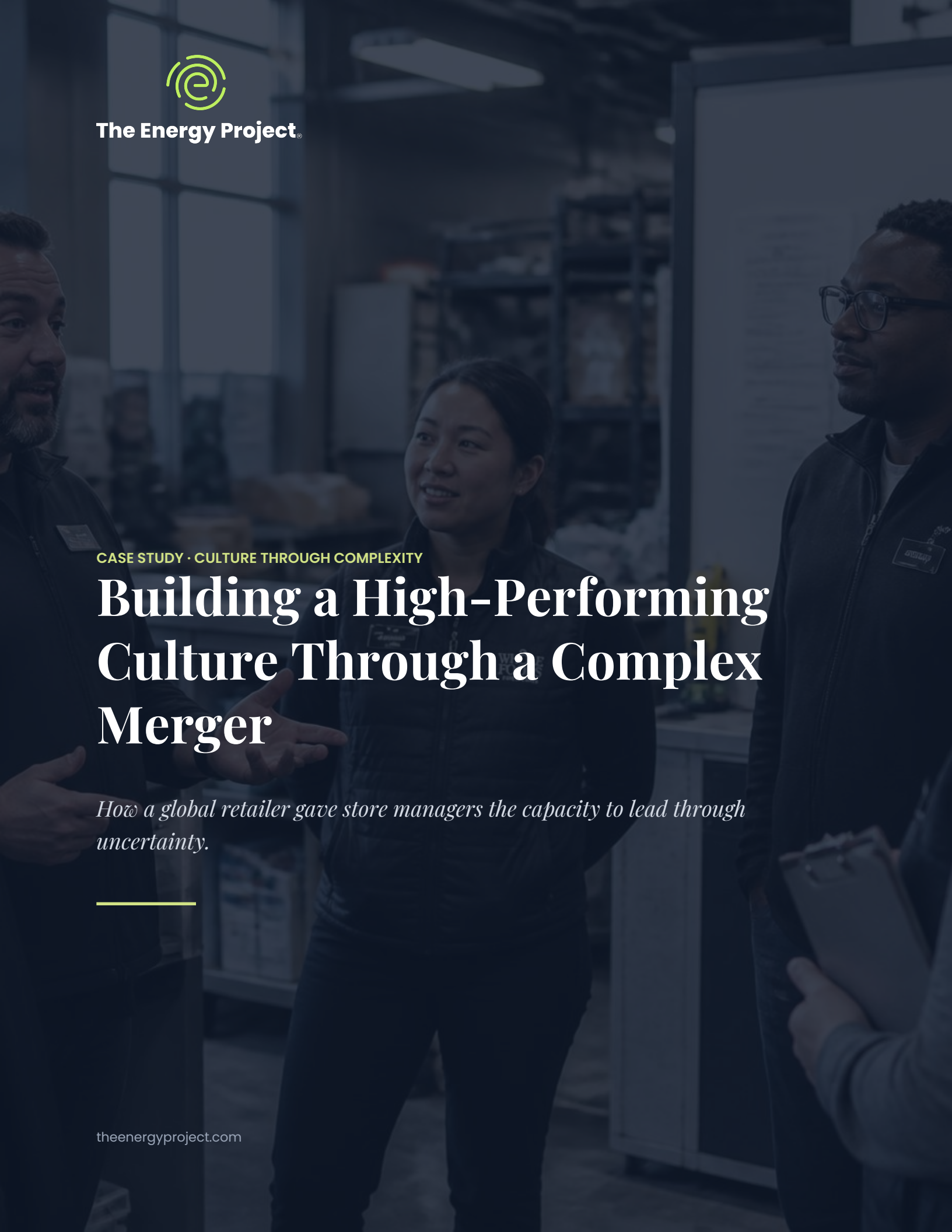

The Energy Project®

CASE STUDY · CULTURE THROUGH COMPLEXITY

Building a High-Performing Culture Through a Complex Merger

How a global retailer gave store managers the capacity to lead through uncertainty.

theenergyproject.com

THE SNAPSHOT

INDUSTRY	Grocery and retail
WHO	180 store managers, two divisions
THE BLOCK	Rising demand and merger uncertainty
THE FOCUS	Sustainable high performance

THE CONTEXT

When demand keeps rising and the ground keeps moving

Ahold Delhaize came to us seeking to build a sustainably high-performing culture amidst relentlessly rising demand and complexity. This was especially critical in the face of a large merger that caused uncertainty and anxiety in a population that was already stressed and stretched. Store managers sat at the center of it, responsible for their own performance and for the energy of everyone around them.

THE CHALLENGES

Where the organization was getting stuck

- Store managers did not have the tools or mindset to make changes to their individual work habits or to the way they managed their teams.
- The culture viewed rest and renewal as impediments to meeting their goals, leaving people feeling overworked and overwhelmed.
- A large merger was looming, bringing additional stress and uncertainty to a population that was already struggling.

> *"The Energy Project is a very compelling investment because it not only impacts your business results, it also impacts how your employees and associates think about you as a company."*
>
> — Tara Fallon, Vice President, Talent, Diversity & Inclusion, and Organization Development, Stop & Shop

THE OBJECTIVES

What the partnership set out to do

- Give store managers a set of tools that allowed them to manage themselves and their teams more effectively.
- Create a culture that fuels and draws on the full range of people's resources to manage a highly demanding and complex work environment.
- Systematically build the individual and collective capacity of the organization in order to fuel resilience, flexibility, creativity, and collaboration.

THE SOLUTION

How we worked together

- Conducted an Energy Audit to identify where the organization was suffering the biggest energy drains and deficits. Store managers emerged as a critical yet overwhelmed population.
- Designed a series of learning modules to teach store managers how to manage their own energy and more effectively meet the needs of their team members.
- Rolled out programs to 180 store managers across two divisions, while tracking an identical division that did not experience the training.
- Launched a pulse survey roughly ten months after launch, comparing treatment and control groups to isolate the impact of the partnership from organic change.

THE RESULTS

What changed

While the store managers who experienced our work started with lower scores than the control group across the board, their increases were significantly higher in every dimension.

+17 pts: Great Place to Work

Agreement with "I would recommend this organization as a great place to work" rose from 33.8% to 50.7%, against 8 points in the comparison group.

+11 pts: Discretionary Effort

Agreement with "I feel motivated to go above and beyond in my job" rose from 54.5% to 65.3%, against 1 point in the comparison group.

+13 pts: Challenged to Do Their Best

Agreement with "This organization challenges me to do my best work" rose from 57.9% to 70.7%, against 2 points in the comparison group.

A Shift in How Rest Is Viewed

Renewal stopped being treated as an impediment to results and started being treated as part of how results get produced.

THE KEY INSIGHT

What this story teaches

> The focus on people's capacity inside this merger is what allowed for the culture to absorb the change without overwhelm or burnout. When the people closest to the front line have the tools to manage their own energy and their teams', uncertainty simply becomes another condition the culture feels large enough to hold.

Ready to build capacity through change?

Talk to our team at theenergyproject.com/contact-us

The Energy Project®