

# Thomas assessment tools prove instrumental in helping Kraton Chemical transition their culture to “one Kraton”



**KRATON**

**Manufacturing company**

Over 800 customers  
in over 70 countries



### Objectives

- > To create ‘one Kraton’
- > Develop a new Kraton culture
- > Increase self-awareness and engender colleague trust
- > To embrace each other’s behavioral skills



### Results

- > Built ‘one Kraton’
- > Manager effectiveness increased by 27%
- > Increase in employee engagement
- > Increased trust between employees and managers

## INTRODUCTION

Kraton Corporation develops, manufactures and markets biobased chemicals and speciality polymers. As a leading global producer of styrenic block copolymers (SBC) and pine chemicals, they manufacture high-performance materials that differentiate their customers’ products and meet multi-market needs. Kraton has more than 800 customers across a diverse range of end markets in over 70 countries worldwide.

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**THE CHALLENGE:**

Four years ago, Kraton purchased Arizona Chemical. When two companies merge, a big challenge the new entity faces is one of culture. Each business already has its own culture which is distinct, and when they merge, people from either side can often resist further changes because they like how things were.

The Senior Leadership Team included people from both Arizona Chemical and Kraton, their mandate was to create ‘one Kraton’ and develop a new Kraton culture, and culture is all about behavior.

Elaine guided the focus and use of the PPA across the globe and the business ran 750 DISC assessments in two years. Each new hire received a debrief on their results, intact teams went through a Teams workshop based on their PPAs. The focus was collaboration and ownership with a foundation of developing trust.

**THE SOLUTION:**

Elaine Moore was one of the senior people on the leadership team – she’d joined Kraton from Arizona Chemical, who she’d been with for 18 years. Elaine knew exactly what tools could help the wider business become ‘one Kraton’, and would improve two key areas of collaboration and ownership in the business at large. Elaine had worked with Thomas International for 15 years



and had used the Personal Profile Analysis (PPA) workplace behavioral assessment extensively.

Elaine knew from her years of experience the value of the PPA DISC-based assessment; how people became self-aware of their behavioral preferences. How they learned to understand that others were not being difficult, they simply had a different way of doing things. Using a new framework of talking – the language of DISC – team members could truly embrace each other’s behavioral skills, learn to adapt to each other and this would engender much deeper colleague trust, collaboration and ownership – exactly what Kraton was looking for.

The decision was made to roll out the PPA assessment along with Team workshops, globally. In tandem, a Leadership Essentials course which included the PPA assessment, was rolled out. This course helped leaders in the business discover their strengths in leadership, learn to adjust any personal limitations and recognize what behaviors they were seeing in others. They then learned how to modify their own behavior for the best outcomes.



## THE RESULT:

The PPA helped with the culture transition to 'one Kraton' because it creates the right conditions for self-awareness, and insight for managers into their people. The SLT also went through the process to send the message to the business how important this was and how much they believed in the process.

According to Elaine, running the Team workshops is something that never gets stale; each team has its own unique make-up and all participants leave happy and excited from the sessions.

Kraton runs an annual employee engagement survey, they'd always had high engagement rate globally (in the high 70% range) but the most recent survey had an incredibly high response rate of 89% - and excellent results.

## The PPA has helped:

- > Employee engagement. People understand their own and others' behavior
- > Build trust between managers and employees, and between team members
- > Give people a voice; they feel engaged and want to contribute
- > Manager effectiveness is at 85% - a big increase from 68% a few years prior
- > The SLT became more effective and they fully embraced the information, recognizing their bench-strengths and areas they needed to shore up
- > Build 'one Kraton' - their starting goal



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UK: 01628 244 024  
USA: +1-888-597-6455



info@thomas.co.uk  
support@thomasus.com



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