



## Heitman Created a Feedback Culture In a Distributed Organization & Retained Top Talent by Implementing Radical Candor



*“Our engagement survey showed that employees knew their managers cared about them, but we also needed to make sure that managers were giving their teams better access to information and enhanced clarity around goals.”*

— Christine Nicholl

Senior Vice President, Global Head of Organizational Development & DEI Officer

### At a glance:

Industry: Real Estate Investment

Location: 10 offices globally (HQ in Chicago)

Size: 350 employees / US\$46 billion in assets under management

Founded: 1966

Heitman, founded in 1966, is a global real estate investment management firm with \$46 billion in assets under management. With have 10 offices worldwide they are also an active participant in three key segments of the global real estate property and capital markets. Heitman’s collaborative investment process uses input from some of the most experienced investment and research professionals in the industry.



## The Challenge

### Scaling a Sustainable Feedback Culture In a Distributed Organization

Heitman is committed to creating an environment where managers strive to become better leaders and strengthen their relationships with their teams.

As part of that strategy, managers were tasked with learning how to have career development conversations with their direct reports. In turn, employees have been empowered to ask questions and solicit feedback in order to grow in their careers.

With 350 employees and 10 offices globally (with some people working remotely), training every manager and employee to execute this strategy during a global pandemic required a solution that was both flexible and sustainable.

Getting everyone in a room or on Zoom for a one-off training session at the same time was unrealistic.



## The Solution

### A Virtual Radical Candor Platform & Drip Approach

Heitman looked at a number of potential solutions before landing on Radical Candor's feedback framework.

*"The biggest reason that we chose Radical Candor was that it was memorable and developed by a proven expert [Kim Scott]," says Christine Nicholl, Senior Vice President, Global Head of Organizational Development & DEI Officer at Heitman.*

*"Kim does a great job of crystallizing the idea of caring personally and challenging people, and that really resonated with us. Not only is it practical, but it also aligns with who we are as an organization."*

Even with a memorable framework, all employees still needed to be able to take the training during the Covid-19 pandemic. And Heitman needed to identify a way for them to retain the knowledge long term.

Research shows that learning competency is reduced by 70% one day after a training session and 90% three-to-six days after a session. How to make sure employees retain the information presented a particular challenge.

Using a drip approach, Heitman leveraged their own learning platform to curate existing Radical Candor content (blogs, videos, podcasts) to allow people to learn when and how it's convenient for them.

OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

## Employees feel rewarded and recognized.

*"We chose this deconstructed model instead of the traditional classroom training because science says in order to change behavior you have to work at it over time," says Nicholl.*

Each person going through Heitman's 15-week Radical Candor Certification Program is assigned a cohort and an accountability partner within that group to foster learning retention and rich idea exchange.

During the last three weeks of the program, each person meets with an HR representative to elevate issues or questions they may not feel comfortable bringing up among their peers.

*"We've heard that the last three weeks have been tremendously helpful for people to actually get motivated to practice Radical Candor."*



## The Results

### Transparent Career Goals + Talent Retention

OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

## Individuals have a clear understanding of their goals.

After employees participated in Radical Candor training, Heitman saw a 17-point shift in managers asking employees for feedback — it now happens more frequently on a weekly basis.

In addition, the company saw a 24% increase in the number of people who say they are clear on Heitman's definition of great leadership.

And, people at Heitman are noticing a difference in folks who've gone through the program.

*"After the Radical Candor training, I had an employee come to me and say, 'I can see a total change in my manager. I went from barely speaking to him to meeting with him on a regular basis,'" Nicholl says.*

*"The relationship has completely improved. I went from being uncertain about my future at Heitman to now being confident that I can fulfill my career goals."*

**"Relationships may not scale, but culture does." — Kim Scott**

