

Case Study: Enabling Leaders to Manage Change in a Dynamic Environment

The Challenge

Aircraft Test and Evaluation (AT&E), a division of QinetiQ (formally DERA), had a problem: They were forging ahead with a major change programme, where a greater proportion of new business was to be won outside the MOD arena, against a culture of many years of cost-plus projects with a single customer. This change was resulting in strain on the organisation. The traditional values of the engineers and technical scientists were being challenged by incoming marketing people and a new breed of project manager.

Poor teamworking was affecting the leadership effort of the directorate. There were many challenging goals to be achieved and it was necessary for the whole senior management group to get behind the change effort.

The Solution – The Leadership *through* Teamwork Development Programme

ValueAdding.com was brought in to work with the senior management cadre – some 125 people - to look at ways to improve collaborative working. The issues that were identified were:

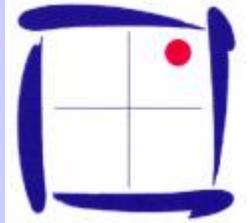
- Ø Improving teamwork in a dynamic matrix structure (projects vs. functions vs. channels)
- Ø Lack of commercial urgency in some projects
- Ø Role ambiguity and prioritisation for people working in several teams concurrently
- Ø Understanding of personal contribution to teamworking by staff
- Ø Personal relationships within teams – conflict, positional power vs. influence, team roles, priorities, etc.

The 'Leadership through Teamwork' programme was to confront all these issues and seek to align the senior management team to the organisational goals in a committed and energetic manner.

It entailed one-to-one coaching and behavioural analysis using DISC profiling. A series of two-day workshops brought all senior managers together to discuss their different perspectives and resulted in much improved understanding and cooperation. From these workshops, comprehensive action plans were formulated with a six month time horizon to achieve radical change. Further coaching and follow-ups showed that attitudes were being influenced and new working relationships were being formed.

QinetiQ

www.valueadding.com



What Was Done

In collaboration with QinetiQ, ValueAdding.com designed a programme entitled 'Leadership through Teamwork' which focused on bringing all parties together to work collaboratively for the good of the business and drive change.

The programme consisted of:

- Individual coaching
- Behavioural analysis and understanding
- Two-day planning workshops for 25 managers at a time, off site
- Follow-up coaching and support
- Review of actions and projects

The workshops reflected the specific requirements of AT&E. Directors were involved in each workshop, and follow-up activities. There was a high degree of commitment by the directors to the programme.

Results

A number of new projects were initiated by the senior managers in direct response to the needs of the change programme. These included ways to improve communications between departments, better project administration, improved professional development, gaining customer feedback, better specification by sales people, etc. This was in sharp contrast to previous attitudes where goals were not being deployed, and the change activities were solely driven by the directors.

From the workshops a new network of alliances was formed from across the business. Better collaboration between the technical teams and marketing resulted in more successful bids for within the commercial sector, amongst other benefits.

This programme was seen as a platform to improve collaboration, teamworking and leadership throughout the directorate that would be built upon over the coming years.

Comments from QinetiQ Delegates About the Workshops

The best I've been on – and I've been on a few!

Much of what I learnt I am eager to put into practise and will use the course material as a reference.

As an inveterate hater of this type of event – I thought it was well conducted by a professional team – well done!

This was an excellent team-bonding event.

I thoroughly enjoyed this course. Colleagues were generally enthusiastic and this was infectious.