



Being versus Doing

Overview

A large organisation, with highly skilled technical leaders, found themselves lacking change management skills. With an ambitious Transformation Plan and limited time for delivery, they recognised a need to set their leaders up with some softer skills.

The Leaders in this NHS Trust, with multiple hospitals and 8,000 staff, agreed to focus on 'being' rather than the 'doing' to garner the engagement and support required for their significant change plans to succeed.

This case study is an example of a Business Psychology intervention delivered by a Consultant who is not a Chartered Psychologist. Instead, with an MA in Strategic Human Resources Management, she effectively applied psychological theories and models to this work in practical ways.

Challenge

A major London-based NHS Trust aspired to become a systems leader in healthcare. As the Trust was part of the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK, they were affected by increasing financial challenges and uncertainty. Nevertheless, they defined an ambitious and comprehensive three-year Transformation Plan, building on their already strong reputation, to achieve their ambition. A broad range of initiatives, across the organisation, were included in their plan. These included re-engineering many of their core operational processes, transforming technology to enable improved patient care, re-defining clinical pathways and improving both patient and staff experience.

The Chief Executive Officer and the Board recognised potential risks to their success:

- The Trust's culture was hierarchical and not consistently engaging
- Senior clinical and operational Leaders focused on tasks, operational processes and work in their own silos
- Frenetic change in previous years had created pockets of 'resistance' in the organisation
- The Leadership across the Trust had not been practically enabled to effectively catalyse and manage change

When the Consultant undertook this engagement with the client, focus groups were conducted with representative staff across the Trust. Based on the output from the group discussions, an opportunity was identified to develop 'being' Leaders rather than 'doing' Leaders. A 'being' culture stresses quality of life, experiences and relationships, whereas work and getting the job done take precedence in a 'doing' culture.

So, the Consultant proposed emphasis be placed on the mindset the Trust's Leaders would bring to the initiatives in the Transformation Plan. This could enhance how the Leaders would understand their own values, connect to the values of the broader organisation, and show the empathy, coaching and co-creative aspects of Leadership. It appeared that

developing the right mindset in the Leaders would be far more important than merely implementing new management processes.

Approach

The Consultant's proposal was accepted, to create an effective development Programme based on Leadership psychology, change management research, and relevant frameworks and tools.

The intervention was called the "Enabling Change Through People" (ECTP) Programme.

The Consultant's various ideas were tested with stakeholders, and they progressed to developing a pilot. Delivering a pilot of the ECTP Programme was essential to win support for full deployment of the solution, targeting the top 400 Leaders across the Trust.

Participants in the pilot were Leaders of the Transformation Programme workstreams. The feedback on the pilot was unanimously positive, around the overall approach as well as content and delivery methods, securing essential support for the Programme.

Programme Design

The ECTP Programme model had three underpinning philosophies:

- Change begins with Self
- Focus on task and relationship
- Systemic working

The Consultants partnered with the Director of Organisational Development, co-creating the content and structure of the Programme with stakeholders, to ensure they reflected the practical reality of working at the Trust and tackling change. They were mindful in their approach to represent the culture they were promoting, of 'being,' rather than 'doing.' So, the consultation process reflected 'being,' to ensure the design process did not reinforce the 'doing' aspect of the existing culture.

Collectively they created a framework for enabling change through people, with underpinning philosophies and a clear visual process covering the stages of a change programme. Each stage had a supporting toolkit, to be used co-creatively by Leaders with their own teams and the broader organisation.

Programme Participants represented a mix of roles and levels; this was intentional to consciously break down the hierarchical culture. In some cases, the Programme was delivered with complete project teams. This was particularly valuable with one large, complex project in the Transformation Programme where people had been resistant, and building relationships was key to its success.

The ECTP Programme design addressed three levels:

- The Consultants provided rigorously researched input and content, essential to establishing credibility with the highly educated workforce, for whom rigour of research is fundamental
- Programme Participants were encouraged to share their experiences, to demonstrate the value of collaboration without hierarchical constraints
- Practical sessions offered Participants an opportunity to gain confidence with the tools introduced, to build their network and show the value of having safe places for practice and learning

Applying Science

The examples below reflect Programme elements informed by Business Psychology, which were designed to meet organisational objectives.

- Increase cross-functional collaboration using:
 - Appreciative Inquiry (AI), a strengths-based, positive approach to leadership development and organizational change. AI can be used by individuals, teams, organizations, or at a societal level; in each case, it helps people move toward a shared vision for the future by engaging others in strategic innovation
 - The Nested Model of Wellbeing (Henriques, Kleinman, Asselin, 2014), a unified approach to understanding wellbeing. This model proposes authentic wellbeing is achieved when there is positive alignment of four nested domains, subjective wellbeing, within health and functioning, within environmental stressors and resources, within ideology and values
 - Systems thinking, a holistic approach to analysis that focuses on the way that a system's constituent parts interrelate and how systems work over time and within the context of larger systems

In order to:

- Build on positive psychology concepts
- Encourage cross-functional awareness and collaboration rather than silo working
- Develop Change Leadership capability using:
 - Leadership agility, a combination of important skills that drive employee and business success. As defined by Josephs & Joiner (2006), Leadership agility is a master competency deployed for sustained success in complex, fast-paced business environments
 - Johari window, a technique developed by psychologists that helps people better understand their relationship with themselves and others. It is used primarily in self-help groups and corporate settings as a heuristic exercise (Luft & Ingham, 1955)
 - Mindset tools, as mindset determines how individuals think about and interpret situations, their emotional reactions, decisions and actions. Mindset directly impacts the quality of relationships, interactions and the way one leads. Leaders' mindset can set the tone for an organization
 - Values, "internalized attitudes about what's right and wrong, ethical and unethical, moral and immoral" (Yukl, 2010)

In order to:

- Deepen Participants' understanding of themselves and others, beyond the surface
- Teach Leaders how to move from the role of Expert (tell) to Catalyst (enabling, involving)
- Increase empowerment within the culture
- Move stakeholders from a victim mindset to empowerment using:
 - The Transactional Analysis Drama Triangle, a social model of human interaction. The triangle maps a type of destructive interaction that can occur between people in conflict
 - Parent/Adult/Child ego states; this application of Transactional Analysis is about identifying which ego states are present in transactions so that individuals can be

more conscious of their thoughts and behaviours, and ultimately have better, more constructive transactions with others (Berne, 1964)

In order to:

- Provide an easy to remember reference which encouraged adult-adult interactions and mindset, useful in framing communication at an individual and organisational level
- Support employees through change using:
 - The SCARF model, a brain-based model for collaborating with and influencing others, involving five domains of human social experience: Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness and Fairness. Status is about relative importance to others. Certainty concerns being able to predict the future. Autonomy provides a sense of control over events. Relatedness is a sense of safety with others supported by interacting in ways that will surface points of similarity and strengthen social connections. Fairness is a perception of fair exchanges between people (Rock, 2008)
 - The Kubler-Ross Change Curve, also known as the Five Stages of Grief™, is a model consisting of the various levels or stages of emotions which are experienced by a person who is soon going to approach death or is a survivor of an intimate death, sometimes applied to understanding individual response to change (Kübler-Ross, 1969)
 - The 'dance of change' model expounded in *The Fifth Discipline* (Senge, 1990), which describes change as a challenge and offers exercises, tools and techniques for sustaining organisational learning over the long-term

In order to:

- Illustrate the risk the employees are exposed to, during change, as human beings. The research was used to demonstrate how social threats elicit a fight-or-flight response. This raised awareness, with easy to remember models, of how to create a safe environment which minimised perceived threats in ambiguous situations. (The biological acute threat response, i.e. 'fight-or-flight' response, was first described by Dr. Walter Cannon in 1915. He demonstrated that not only physical but also psychological emergencies can create an acute stress response in the brain, an automatic reaction to a stressful and potentially dangerous situation)

Programme Delivery

The Consultants modelled psychological safety and catalytic facilitation. (Psychological safety required being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences for self-image, status or career (Kahn, 1990). Catalyst facilitation utilised 'the hero's journey' as a structural guideline in facilitating the group process, applying the power of storytelling with skill in catalytic questioning, asking questions which held the most potential for disrupting the status quo.)

In this context, Participants felt able to ask questions and test ideas because they felt safe and valued. Consultants facilitated dynamically, adjusting to Participants' needs, demonstrating agility. They regularly introduced new materials, keeping the content fresh and current.

Before leaving the workshop, Participants created an action plan and shared one commitment to further their learning and practice. They were encouraged to establish post-Programme learning groups.

Consultants designed and produced a comprehensive handbook containing all ECTP Programme materials and templates to provide Participants with access to toolkits and

concepts. Materials were placed on an electronic portal and a community of learning was established for peer-to-peer learning.

Measuring Success

The Kirkpatrick Model was used to measure the effectiveness of the project (Kirkpatrick, 1955). Kirkpatrick demonstrated measuring the impact of a learning intervention at four levels: reaction, learning, behaviour and results.

The success of the ECTP Programme would be framed by the change observed in individual mindset and behaviour. Focusing on relationships during the ECTP Programme would ensure that subsequent Transformation Programme projects would align across the Trust, with departments' collaboration rather than competition.

In this case evaluation of return on investment was agreed, that was manageable within the budget, using:

- An evaluation form with qualitative and quantitative questions, that each delegate completed at the end of the Programme
- A process to review and summarise these evaluation forms after each Programme and quarterly

Outcome

The team evaluated their work using Kirkpatrick's four levels.

Level 1: Reaction

They could assess the initial impact on mindset and confidence with the Framework and in using the tools through feedback collection immediately after the conclusion of each course.

Level 2: Learning

In the evaluation form, the Consultants questioned how confident Participants felt at being able to implement the Framework at the Trust, so that they could track how the culture was shifting over time, with use of the Framework.

Level 3: Application of Skills/Behavioural Change

Confidence levels using the Framework increased each quarter between the first and last course (November Year 1 to March Year 3) – demonstrating usage across the organisation. Participants in the second half of the year were attending because previous Participants had recommended it, and because the Framework and language were being used in their department.

Level 4: Business Impact

To assess efficacy the Consultants conducted a series of evaluation workshops, six to 12 months after Participants had attended, to extract evidence of the impact. There were multiple, tangible accounts that demonstrated how the Framework had enabled successful implementation of change projects, with people.

This was written up in a report and was used to sustain sponsorship of the senior leadership. It was also shared with other NHS trusts so they could benefit from the investment made by the Trust.

Finally, the evaluation results informed the objectives and design of the Masterclasses planned for Year 3 and beyond, which ran for past-Participants to deepen their learning.

These Masterclasses ensured the Leadership journey evolved to meet the needs of the Trust.

Lessons Learned

What the Consultants learned from this work was the value of:

- Co-creation in coming up with a set of interventions
- Creating a simple, relevant and visual map which pulled the toolkit into a manageable process
- Utilising well-researched psychological theories and models which directly reflected the issues and language of the client
- Providing a comprehensive handbook with all the materials, to support ongoing learning and implementation
- A highly effective delivery team with different personalities and experience
- Facilitating Leaders to share their stories in a structured way to maximise existing valuable experience
- Remaining flexible and incorporating new learning to keep the interventions fresh

The team felt confident that these outcomes were due to their work, because the language Participants used was a direct reflection of the ECTP Programme content delivered. Participants provided tangible examples during the evaluation workshops to show how they had implemented the Framework in their change projects. Prior to the intervention, there was no Framework for leading change at the Trust. Programme Participants attribute their successes to the ECTP Programme change-enabling workshops.

If the budget had been larger, the Consultants suggested implementing additional value-adding interventions including:

- Facilitating Action Learning Sets to extract maximum learning
- Providing two to three individual coaching sessions to enable Participants to reflect and create a plan to support their ongoing development
- Running more ECTP Programmes with complete teams going through a change project, so they could experience it together and move their project along at the relevant pace
- Designing and running the Master Classes sooner, to build on what Participants had learned more quickly

Acknowledgements

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