the abp awards 2022

Awards Case Studies

THE ABP AWARDS 2022
WINNERS AND RUNNERS UP

	WINNER	RUNNER UP
EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	CATAPULT Cell and Gene Therapy / lumina learning	ARUP
EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION	LANTERN TRAINING / inemmo Leadership potential unleashed / lumina learning	EQUIIDA / Adevinta
EXCELLENCE IN STRATEGY AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	GIG CYMRU NHS WALES	peoplewise enabling change
EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS PSYCHOLOGY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT	Work Psychology Group Thinking differently	ARUP HS2
EXCELLENCE IN ASSESSMENT & SELECTION	Work Psychology Group Thinking differently	SHL
EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION	Mindset Practice	NetworkRail
EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH & WELLBEING	UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER	ARUP
OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	Zircon / BeTalent	Hanover
CHAIR'S CHOICE	LANTERN TRAINING	

EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

ARUP

OVERVIEW

Our client was the ARCC (Autoridad Para la Reconstruccion con Cambios), a reconstruction authority established by the Peruvian government to help orchestrate their response to a catastrophic 'El Nino' weather event that occurred in 2017. Subsequently, a UK Delivery Team (UKDT) represented by a consortium of UK companies Arup, Mace and Gleeds, worked with the ARCC in a historic Government-to-Government agreement (G2G) to facilitate the reconstruction effort. The G2G hoped to leave a legacy of both improved infrastructure and long-term construction delivery capability.

CHALLENGE

The G2G, as a multi-billion pound programme, presented a significant opportunity for the Peruvian construction industry to learn by doing at scale. Our challenge was to support the G2G to maximise this learning opportunity and to leave a legacy of enhanced capability throughout Peru.

We believed this context would allow us to usefully apply psychologically grounded learning and development strategies that focused on targeted needs-based training, supporting the application of knowledge in the work itself, as well as deploying social learning techniques to embed knowledge within communities.

We considered that a successful response to the challenge would be multi-factorial and necessarily grounded in the local context. Consequently, we undertook a process of setting out our overall Knowledge Transfer (KT) strategy. The KT strategy underwent a series of reviews, challenges, collaborative discussions and essential refinements for the local context before it was accepted by our client (ARCC).

We collectively sought to answer: How to utilise the size and scale of the G2G programme to immerse people into new ways of doing things and to fundamentally learn by doing?

APPROACH

We developed our Knowledge Transfer strategy from first principles. Rather than viewing it as a mechanism to drive a programme-wide training agenda, we placed an equal emphasis on creating a positive social and workplace learning culture within the G2G. Further, our approach recognised that people ultimately learn by doing, by being supported in the completion of real work and by sharing their work experiences with professional peers.

Accordingly, our approach to KT was governed by core psychological principles:
- Knowledge transfer is a two-way process of social exchange
- Trust and mutual respect is at the heart of developmental social relationships
- Knowledge is developed through application in different contexts
- Knowledge is socially constructed and can be retained long-term within communities.

With these principles in mind we worked to establish the systems and processes to streamline the transfer of knowledge, skills, tools and ultimately capability. Our approach was data-driven and focused on executing a systemic Knowledge Transfer strategy that targeted capability development priorities, and tailored learning support.

Early in the engagement we developed a measurement survey, which established a framework of the required capabilities and development gaps for the ARCC to effectively carry out its remit. This assessment process enabled capability development priorities to be identified, efforts to be targeted, and a clear baseline to measure progress against over time.

Our KT strategy recognised that international expertise needed to be integrated with local knowledge to achieve to long-term transfer of best-practice. 114 Peruvian public entities (national, regional and local)

were engaged (often virtually) in courses from technical specialist knowledge institutions (ARUP University, CDBB, UCL, LSE, PUCP, LEEDS). These courses created virtual spaces for professionals, from typically siloed Peruvian public institutions to connect, constructively debate, question technical issues and share experiences in a neutral context of learning. These courses created a powerful new context for professionals to connect and retain knowledge.

OUTCOME

How did you measure the success? What metrics did you measure and what was the outcome?

Our success in knowledge transfer was ultimately determined by systematically gathering evidence of enhanced capability and applicatin. Our primary source of this evidence came from the capability data validation workshops, which cross-referenced survey scores with observed experience in the field. Directors from both ARCC and UKDT reviewed the capability survey data against the capability improvements they were observing in reality. These discussions provided the quality of insights needed to direct future capability development efforts and provided clear evidence where the KT Strategy was (and wasn't) making a difference.

Another key measure of success was the implementation of a Learning Management System (LMS) that:
- enabled on-demand learning, tailored learning for individuals,
- acted as a knowledge repository,
- facilitated peer-to-peer learning, and
- provided access to expertise through digital Communities of Practice.

The LMS could manage, deliver and report on all training provided, as well as support functionality for Communities of Practice (CoP) to connect people with expertise within the G2G. Training courses were evaluated at Level 1 and Level 2 on Kirkpatrick's evaluation model, providing us with evidence of learning impact. In terms of training content, the learning portal contains 211 training modules, 125 workshops, 1,490 users (ARCC, contractors, national government entities who support ARCC projects) and 16 CoP forums. The LMS recorded 21,000 complete modules, 330 lessons learned, and excess of 900 informal training/knowledge transfer sessions.

On top of its utility, developing the capability to operate the LMS held substantial symbolic significance for the ARCC:

"This tool will ensure that the lasting legacy that the UKDT is delivering for Peru is not just about the physical infrastructure but the transfer of knowledge and capacity building to the people who implement and manage projects for the country."
Former Executive Director of ARCC Amalia Moreno

Through the G2G, Peru has the capacity to deliver sustainable and resilient public facilities and infrastructure that will make the country safer and greener for generations to come. The ARCC has become a leading example for other Peruvian public authorities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION AND CHAIR'S CHOICE

WINNER

OVERVIEW

The World Food Programme employs 13,500+ staff worldwide and is committed to a diverse and inclusive working environment where differences are seen as valuable and where teams work together to make zero hunger a reality. The Respect Campaign was central to this, and Lantern Training supported WFP Kenya to equip staff with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to build a working culture of respect. Lumina Spark was central to the campaign; 350 assessments were generated and debriefed in 13 workshops; deep discussions around diversity were facilitated in multiple programmes and the programme is now being rolled out across East Africa and Zimbabwe.

CHALLENGE

WFP's vision is for a diverse, committed, skilled and high performing workforce, where each member is selected on merit, lives WFP's values, and works together in a healthy and inclusive environment to save and change lives. The Respect Each Other campaign was launched to bring about culture change in the long term and is founded on four core pillars; Awareness, Inclusion, Fairness and Humanity.

Whilst many country offices implemented this campaign internally, WFP Kenya Office was committed to real change. The Workplace Culture team understood that self-awareness was central to understanding the impact of staff behaviour on others but had a myriad of psychometric tools that had been used in the UN over

recent years. We challenged them to think beyond the first pillar of Awareness. We made a compelling case that Inclusion, Fairness and Humanity would be central to the entire narrative on Respect. We helped them understand that the whole workshop experience would build team cohesion and Lumina Spark would support individuals in their personal and professional development.

Above all, it was the passion and sheer determination of our two Lumina practitioners Lucy Brewster and Justa Njeri that ensured they couldn't say no!

APPROACH

The Respect campaign involved more than 350 WFP staff over thirteen days across eight area offices. We held workshops in Nairobi, Mombasa, the northern refugee camps of Kakuma and Dadaab and the field offices of Lodwar, Garissa, Marsabit, Isiolo and Wajir.

Our carefully designed workshop aimed to:

- Trigger a paradigm shift in mindset about their role in building an honest and respectful culture within WFP.
- Equip the team with the latest thinking on respectful working and a solid understanding of WFPs code of conduct.
- Help them understand how their own preferred ways of working can impact the way people feel around them.
- Establish personal accountability and respect at the core of teamwork.

350 Lumina Spark Portraits were generated, and the

full day workshop was carefully designed to ensure maximum participation and focus on specific actions and changes in behaviour. Groups of 30 staff came together each day; led by two Lumina practitioners, we used cards and mats to build an understanding of the methodology and peer coaching to ensure everyone could deep dive into their own portraits. All conversations guided the team to reflect on how their own behaviour preferences and responses to pressure might impact those around them.

The afternoon session focused specifically on their own team dynamics, using the Lumina Team to guide the

discussion through the World Café activity. Through the Lumina lens, we asked the team to consider:
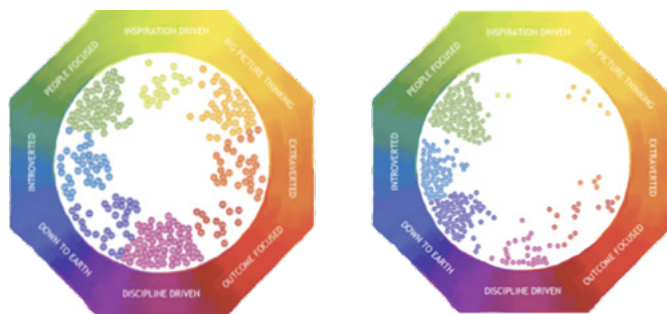
- **How are we treating and working with each other?**
- **What are the consequences of our behaviour under pressure?**
- **How can we truly appreciate diversity in the team?**
- **What do we need to do now to change?**

Colourful beaded Kenyan bracelets were given as gifts of appreciation from one staff member to another, highlighting the value of each colour within the team.

Teams working in more challenging environments, where they are away from home for weeks at a time, enjoyed three-day workshops, where we combined Lumina with teambuilding activities, and allowed time for deeper conversations around diversity, communication and team dynamics.

Covid hit, but maintaining momentum was key to success. Over the last two years we have supported teams through:

- Practical ideas to continue activities and discussions themselves.
- On-line workshops during lockdown to reflect further
- On-line manager workshops to build resilience
- Coaching for priority individuals who are struggling
- Focused programme on managing conflict and resilience for Field Offices
- Refresher Lumina programmes for priority offices in 2022

OUTCOME

The new Kenyan Country Director joined in 2022. In our first conversation, she asked "what is this Lumina that everyone is still talking about?"

Directly after the launch, feedback included:
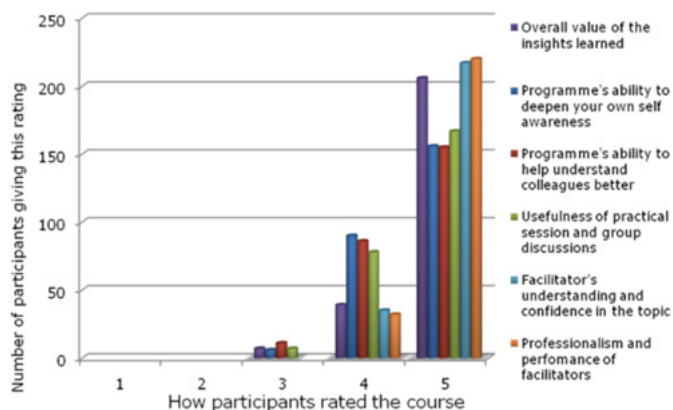
"This is an excellent training as you leave with actionable learnings on how to deal with people and also understand your behaviours".

"This has been a life-changer. It sets a new standard for the way we work together"

During country lockdown, Lumina was the "go to" intervention to address issues arising in Field Offices, where some individuals were stranded for months at a time, and so tension and friction between individuals started to show. We supported them at a team and an individual level.

WFP's global staff survey measures long term shifts in organisational culture. Conducted in 2018 and 2021, this has given us an accurate and meaningful way of measuring impact. Whilst we are not able to share all findings for reasons of confidentiality, staff feedback in Kenya showed improved scores for:

- Line manager effectiveness; from 54% to 61%
- Communication; from 50% to 63%
- Teamwork and belonging; from 62% to 69%
- Diversity and inclusion from 61% to 64%

Looking at specific questions, improved scores include:

- In my team, I feel valued and respected for who I am.
- In my team, we hold each other accountable for doing a good job
- There is open and honest two-way communication between my supervisor and me.
- In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
- At work, my opinions seem to count.

Please see click:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=4koqHfNU16E&t=15s
for WFP Kenya testimonials.
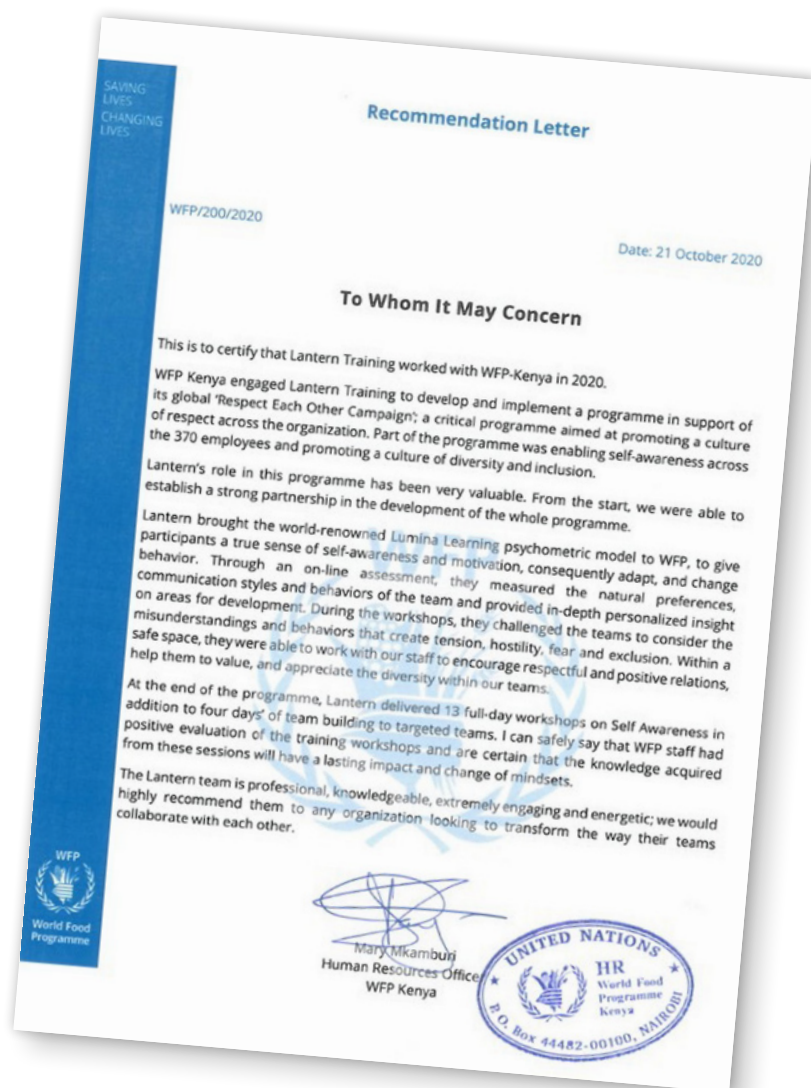
EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

RUNNER UP

Adevinta is a global classifieds specialist with market-leading positions in key European markets. They connect buyers and sellers in the second-hand market, empowering millions of individuals to make sustainable choices and fight the war on waste.

Equiida is a leadership Advisory firm where our consultants improve C-level leadership and organisational performance through integrating expertise in succession, assessment, coaching, team effectiveness, and cultural evolution.

CHALLENGE

Detail the strategy you put in place to answer the challenge, who was involved and how did you respond to the challenges faced?

The rapid growth of the business, both organically and through acquisition, posed cultural challenges for Adevinta. Ramifications of the pandemic, inflation, environmental concerns, and military conflict added to the negative impact on their core services and sense of inclusion and belonging throughout the organisation.

There was a pressing need to enable the organisation to mature their DEI journey and accelerate progress which needed to be driven by the top 10% of the Adevinta employee base, consisting of senior leaders and key influencers across the business to become champions and advocates of DEI and inclusive leadership for the wider organisation.

A systematic approach was taken while formulating an appropriate intervention for Adevinta. The objective was to create cultural evolution within Adevinta by a series of transformational DEI events focused on building a shared language, personal connection to the topic, encourage action taking, by providing ongoing support to ensure a DEI movement is ignited within the business.

The approach Equiida used was to provide a flexible structure to create cultural change which were adapted based on client feedback as follows:

Stage 1: Discovery and design phase consisted of desk research, strategy sessions with the client and conducting pre calls with the executive team

Stage 2: Role modelling at the top by engaging the executive team in an intensive program which allowed them to develop a personal connection with DEI

Stage 3: Building a movement by having a wider roll out of this program to 60 Adevinta employees at their annual conference

Stage 4: Ongoing involvement by facilitating a virtual check in with the group to encourage their individual and collective commitments following the workshop while supporting the DEI head and CPO on introducing their company-wide inclusion

APPROACH

After witnessing the large-scale impact of this project, we collected data in a meaningful way that helped bring to life the work we did with Adevinta.

As a first step, we reviewed all categories of awards at the ABP to understand how the diversity, equality and inclusion category we were applying for was distinct from the others and to identify the key factors that would help our project stand out.

We also engaged our clients by explaining the ABP awards and devising a plan to work together on the submission. It was important to combine Equiida's psychological expertise with Adevinta's business insights to produce the best version of the submission.

Before writing the first draft, we agreed on what and

how information would be shared. We carefully gathered all project data and aligned as a team to develop an accurate narrative. This led us to dividing the submission into the key business challenges, the bespoke solution created and the measures of impact.

It was important to have a clearly defined challenge objective that was specific to what Adevinta wanted to achieve, while detailing our strategy in a way that encapsulated months of work. It was also essential that we had a quantifiable measurement of success in addition to all the qualitative insights and observations.

A key part of the submission was the supporting material- a video displaying an integral element of our project, the advantage line up with about 600 individuals participating. This footage was created in collaboration with Adevinta and detailed key elements of the workshop along with a drone view of them taking a step forward or back, while a facilitator asked a series of questions, based on their life experiences. This helped support our submission in a powerful, visual format that conveyed some of the participant experience.

OUTCOME

How did you measure the success? What metrics did you measure and what was the outcome?

Reactions
Complete buy in from the Executive Committee, with all of them working on their individual and collective commitments to progress the DEI strategy and role model the culture.

The program has empowered the Executive Team, and 600 individuals with a shared language.

Increased visibility for the DEI department and increase in requests to engage with the business in workshops, all-hands meetings, strategy days etc.

Participant reactions from the workshop were very positive and they mentioned terms like 'thought provoking', 'impactful', 'practical', 'life changing' and 'transformational'.

Learning
Participants walked out of the workshops with tangible actions (such as sharing any one key concept with the teams they lead) and declaring what they commit to do going forward.

Anecdotal evidence suggests the advantage line up continues to be talked about as a key learning highlight.

Behaviours
The virtual follow up session 6 weeks after the workshop encouraged leaders to follow through on the commitments they made.

A surge of interest from participants in wanting to be more active players in being involved in DEI related initiatives.

Leaders have taken various learnings from the workshops and are practising it with their teams in ways of having open conversation, setting up team charters and creating a safe and non-judgemental environments.

Results
The employee value proposition now includes a DEI pillar, raising its importance.

Adevinta's Product and Technology team has integrated DEI in their strategy to make their products and innovation processes more inclusive.

Our work highlighted the need for greater resources, resulting in the growth of the DEI department and increase in sponsorship from executive leadership.

The pre and post survey conducted displayed a positive shift in mean scores across three key dimensions – cognizance, organisational outcomes and living the Adevinta values.

The average NPS (Net Promoter Score) for this intervention was noted as a high 8 out of 10.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Image 1: Advantage Line Up.

Image 2: A model of Identity being introduced at the workshop.

EXCELLENCE IN STRATEGY AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

RUNNER UP

peoplewise
enabling change

OVERVIEW

Peoplewise is a global leader in strategic talent management and business psychology. We partnered with our client in the utilities industry to build a values-led culture to drive their new vision and net zero targets.
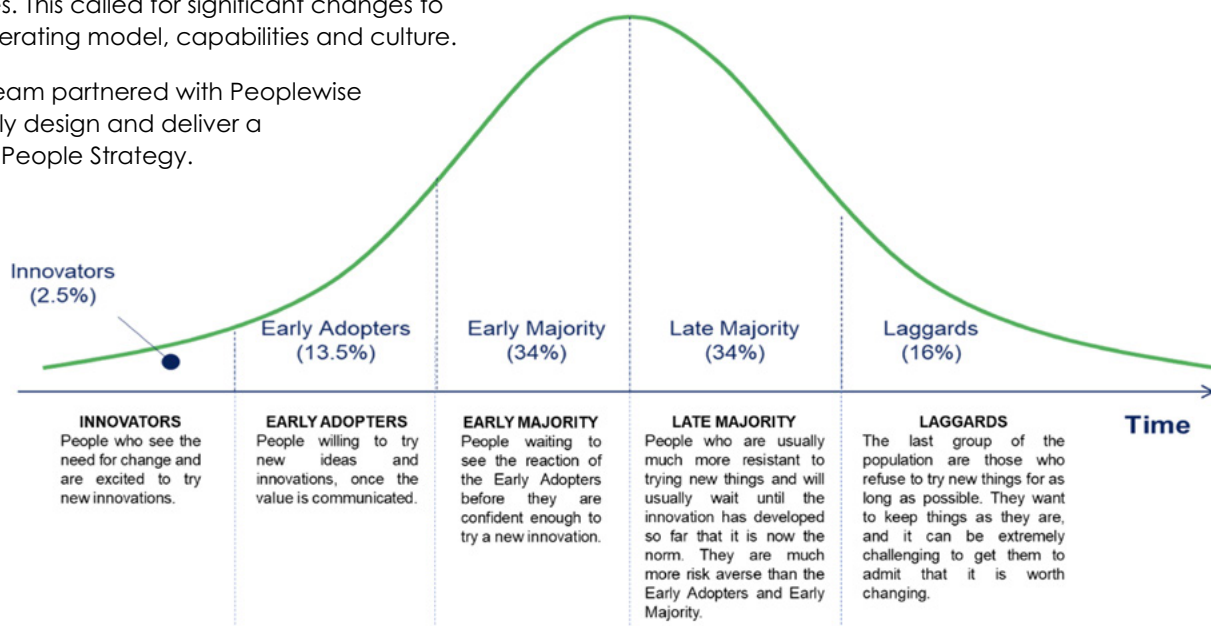
CHALLENGE

Our client separated from its parent company in 2016, taking with it many of the structures, processes and practices. This 'lift and shift' approach enabled them to operate successfully as their own entity after the separation, however, by 2019 there was clear recognition that many of the processes, structures and behaviours were no longer fit for the long-term future vision, to be a best-in-class gas operator leading more sustainable ways in industry. To exacerbate this, there were numerous initiatives being rollout concurrently and inconsistently in the business, resulting in a lack of clarity on the business' vision and values. This called for significant changes to the strategy, operating model, capabilities and culture.

The executive team partnered with Peoplewise to collaboratively design and deliver a comprehensive People Strategy.

The strategy targeted five critical areas, each comprising various components. Peoplewise led several components, however this case study focuses on two foundational components: defining the organisation's new values and building a values-led culture to shift and embed the desired behaviours.

APPROACH

Our chosen approach to the values-led culture transformation was informed by the Law of Diffusion of Innovations (Everett Rogers,1962). This theory outlines the pattern and speed at which new ideas and practices spread through a population. The theory states that within any given population, different groups of people are more or less willing to adopt change over time. Any target population, including our client's, can be split into five groups below:

Innovators (2.5%)

| Early Adopters (13.5%) | Early Majority (34%) | Late Majority (34%) | Laggards (16%) |

Time

INNOVATORS
People who see the need for change and are excited to try new innovations.

EARLY ADOPTERS
People willing to try new ideas and innovations, once the value is communicated.

EARLY MAJORITY
People waiting to see the reaction of the Early Adopters before they are confident enough to try a new innovation.

LATE MAJORITY
People who are usually much more resistant to trying new things and will usually wait until the innovation has developed so far that it is now the norm. They are much more risk averse than the Early Adopters and Early Majority.

LAGGARDS
The last group of the population are those who refuse to try new things for as long as possible. They want to keep things as they are, and it can be extremely challenging to get them to admit that it is worth changing.

This theory informed how we approached the values-led cultural transformation. Instead of taking a once-off blanket approach to introducing and implementing change, we used this theory to manage client expectations around how staff may respond to the change and explain to them how we would design a programme, with a series of initiatives, that catered to the varying expected responses and adoption rate of employees, in turn increasing the probability of sustained change across all groups.

Step 1: Define the values

We targeted the Executive Team (*the Innovators*) first as we knew this group was onboard with the change required and could influence change from the top, down through the rest of the population. A 2-day Executive offsite was conducted to define an initial version of the organisation's values aligned to the new vision and strategy.

We then conducted virtual engagement sessions with a group of *Early Adopter* employees from across the business who volunteered to road test the new values. Feedback from these sessions informed the recommendations back to the Executive for finalising the values. The outcome was a single set of values shaped by the business.

Debrief sessions were then hosted with *Early Adopters* to share back the values and the rationale behind final decisions. Continued engagement and transparency with this population was crucial for creating ambassadors for the new values and behaviours, who would later 'pull' and influence the mass of the population throughout the transformation programme.

Step 2: Deliver values-led transformation programme

The transformation programme aimed to socialise and embed the finalised values and behaviours throughout the rest of the population. The programme was designed to directly engage employees at all levels of the business initially through **team-based workshops**, supporting People Managers and their direct reports explore the new values within the context of their team. Workshop outputs were 'Values Action Boards', including tangible actions aligned to the values that teams could implement immediately.

The rollout of workshops was cascaded through the organisation, starting with the Executive team (*Innovators*) going through the workshop as peers, and then subsequently each Executive member went through the workshop as a 'People Manager' with their direct reports. Thus, People Managers went through the workshops twice, once as a Team Member with their manager and peers and subsequently as a manager with their direct reports. The rollout was scheduled this way so that *Innovators* went first, role modelling and leading the way to ensure key messages and priorities were filtered down through business areas to promote stronger vertical and horizontal alignment of teams across the business, as well as encourage momentum with *Majority* groups.

A hybrid-delivery approach was taken for the workshop rollout. Peoplewise facilitators delivered initial rollout phases, whilst upskilling an internal people team. This enabled the people team to deliver subsequent phases of the rollout, delivering cost efficiencies and enhancing ownership and embedment of the values-led culture.

Other programme initiatives aimed at reinforcing the culture beyond the workshops, included champion networks, leadership events, sharing exemplar stories, competitions, awards), two-way communication scheme, tracking of metrics and ROI and the alignment of formal talent practices with the values. These initiatives continue to be delivered by the client's people team and have been particularly essential for the *Late Majority* and *Laggards*, initially more resistant.

OUTCOME

- 100% of teams through the workshops to date (144 teams / 926 employees) have co-created Values Boards, currently used in ongoing conversations around team culture, ways of work and objective setting.

- Themes collated from action boards are being fed into business support initiatives.

- The values and behaviours defined and socialised through this project have been embedded in the client's behavioural framework, underpinning and aligning all talent management practices.

- Positive impact for employees and teams confirmed through qualitative and quantitative survey feedback

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Impact for employees & teams

Over **82%** reported the workshops to be an engaging experience

Over **85%** reported understanding the new values and behaviours very well following workshops

Over **82%** reported having clarity on how to apply the new values and behaviours within their own team

"Listening to other people from my team and different areas of the company was beneficial to understand why the values have changed. Sometimes it feels like there's lots changing and I'm not sure why, this level of understanding now makes sense see why we're doing it."

"I can now see the whole team driving in one direction"

"The highlight from this session has been to see how clearly the values have been defined - simple to understand - as well as the opportunity to identify some actions that actually feel deliverable"

"Talking through the individual values one by one - has hugely helped my understand how to embed"

"Being able to openly voice our views and discuss behaviours that work well and less well in our teams and for our goals"

"Talking about the values and how they fit with me personally and how they fit with others and they're interpretation of it has been extremely helpful for understanding ways of working moving forward"

"Going through each value and seeing how they apply to our own team's context and scenarios"

EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS PSYCHOLOGY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

WINNER

Development and Practical Application of an Evaluation Framework to Explore and Improve Widening Access into Medicine.

OVERVIEW

Work Psychology Group (WPG) partnered with Health Education England (HEE) to evaluate the success of six new UK Medical Schools in widening access to medicine for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

CHALLENGE

Medicine has historically been seen as an elitist profession requiring significant investment of time and money from both students and society. Widening access to medicine is a key government objective to encourage a diverse workforce more representative of the society it serves and to address under-doctored areas of the UK.

Research consistently shows that a more diverse healthcare workforce leads to improved population health outcomes (Razack et al., 2015). However, entry into medicine is expensive, highly competitive and relies heavily on prior academic attainment. This makes it difficult for candidates from underrepresented groups, such as lower socio-economic and more educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, to enter the profession (Cleland & Palma, 2018).

In 2016, six new Medical Schools opened across England as part of the government's plan to increase the number of medical students by 25% and, ultimately, the number of UK trained doctors. These new schools - Anglia Ruskin, Aston University, Edge Hill University, Lincoln Medical School, Kent & Medway and University of Sunderland - were asked to address widening access and workforce shortages by using more innovative approaches to selection and recruitment.
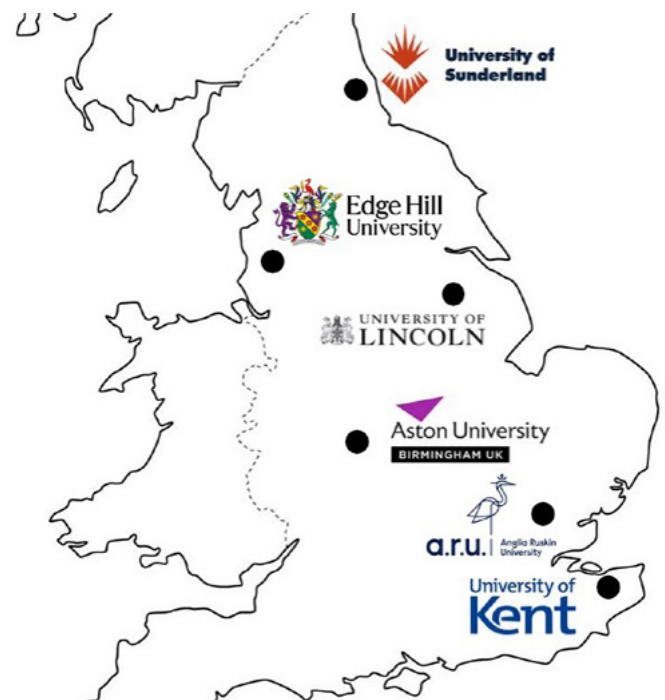
Locations of the six new Medical Schools in England

WPG has extensive experience in the design and evaluation of selection and recruitment processes and in the research and application of interventions targeting equality, diversity and inclusion/widening access.

APPROACH

WPG undertook initial research to develop an Evaluation Framework to define future evaluation activity against the original aims. The multi-method approach comprised interviews with senior stakeholders including Deans, Health Education England, Office for Students, Medical Schools council and an independent expert review. Template analysis was used to analyse the transcripts (King, 1998). This led to the identification of 7 key influencing factors important to support widening access.

The final evaluation framework was structured in two parts. A Generic Evaluation Framework, for consistent evaluation of the new Medical Schools, enabling comparisons and broader conclusions to be drawn. Also, Individual Evaluation Case Studies, where evaluation activity is specific to locally defined objectives and activities, reflecting their unique context.

For the individual evaluation case studies, qualitative data was collected with key stakeholders using interviews and focus groups. These focussed on the locally defined objectives/activities being undertaken by each school that reflected their unique context and strengths. Participants included Deans, admissions tutors, teaching staff and senior leaders and medical students from widening access backgrounds.

Throughout this work, WPG engaged in steering group meetings with HEE and the schools to provide updates and share risks and issues. WPG also supported with organising interviews and focus groups and collating the quantitative data to facilitate the evaluation and reduce the burden on schools and students. This enabled a deeper understanding of the unique context and challenges of each school.

Throughout the evaluation, the approach was updated based on findings that emerged in relation to the school's local context. Whilst there is largely commonality, challenges regarding educational and socio-economic disadvantage are subtly different in Sunderland compared to Kent or Liverpool, and so on. Importantly, WPG's ongoing engagement with each of the schools generated discussions around how they could best measure their outcomes against their overarching aim to widen access. This led to adaptations to the way the evaluation framework was applied to ensure that outcomes are meaningful for both the individual schools and wider community.

In addition, WPG consulted Professor Jen Cleland throughout the project. Jennifer is an Occupational and Clinical Psychologist with over 15 years' expertise in medical education and, in particular, selection and widening access. Jen is also part of the WPG Science Faculty, an invaluable team of trusted international experts with specialist skills that we can call upon to complement our in-house knowledge.

The stakeholders agreed that success would be the identification of initiatives and approaches that have had a positive impact on widening access to medical education while maintaining required educational standards.

OUTCOME

The findings suggest that significant innovations have successfully taken place at the new Medical Schools in relation to outreach and attraction, selection and recruitment, and the induction/ongoing support available for widening access students.

Examples are new innovations in selection criteria and the use of contextualised offers which look at a student's performance in the context of the average performance of their school, adjustments to the weighting and sequencing use of various selection tools (such as situational judgement tests and interviews) and the use of taster/outreach programmes targeting schools that don't usually send students to medical school. The work identified 7 key success factors:

Work has been positively received by stakeholders from HEE and the new Medical Schools. Early evidence shows that initial objectives have been met using a thorough Evaluation Framework and robust data collection. The findings identified several approaches and initiatives which have been deemed successful to promote widening access, and it is intended the work will be used to inform policy across Medical Schools (in the UK and internationally).

Sharing these approaches initiates discussion and prompts further thinking around improving selection and assessment approaches and supporting widening access. Not just in medicine but potentially across additional professions.

1. Approaches to outreach and attraction
2. Adjustment to selection methods and contextualised offers
3. Institutional culture supportive of widening access
4. Leadership committed to widening access
5. Educational initiatives for staff and students
6. Institutional support for students (e.g. contact time, personal tutoring etc.)
7. Early educational placements for shortage specialties

Outcomes – 7 Key Success Factors

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS PSYCHOLOGY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

RUNNER UP

ARUP **HS2**

OVERVIEW

Tackling climate change and reducing our carbon footprint is one of the most pressing challenges of our time. HS2, a major rail infrastructure project, recognise their social responsibility in leading systemic change across the industry. They have made ambitious goals such as committing to net zero in construction and operation from 2035. This project applied business psychology concepts to the development of 20 team level action plans. We created shared ownership for decarbonisation across the business whilst setting up the organisational and social systems for success.

CHALLENGE

Prior to work commencing, HS2 developed a net-zero strategic roadmap outlining key objectives and committing to driving ambitious change across the construction industry. However, the client team recognised that they needed a transformative shift in how the business and its wider value chain thinks, behaves and acts about carbon to fulfil their industry leading role in accelerating decarbonisation.

The challenge was three-fold:

Carbon reduction seen as a 'nice-to-have' rather than a business imperative, meaning that carbon was often not considered during key decision making.

A lack of ownership of carbon outside of the environment team. Many teams did not see carbon reduction as their responsibility to drive or understand how to contribute to the overall targets.

The organisational structures, systems and processes were not set up effectively to enable and encourage people to drive carbon reduction when delivering the day-job. It was not embedded across their Operating Model.

Business psychology skills were recognised as essential to embedding decarbonisation into decision making and mobilising cross-discipline, business-wide ownership.

Stakeholder engagement and strong facilitation was required to create psychologically safe and participant-driven platforms for moving from high level technical concept to meaningful action. Preparing leaders to lead within uncertainty whilst building momentum would also be critical to avoiding paralysis and inertia.

Arup shared their emerging sustainability organisation maturity framework based on cutting edge research into the implementation of sustainable development transformations. Combining insights from academia on environmental psychology and good practice examples across industry, the framework provided rigour and credibility to our approach which encouraged buy-in from key stakeholders. Finally, an integrated client-consultant team of carbon experts and change managers secured confidence in our capability to facilitate both the technical and social solutions needed to achieve HS2's net zero goals.

APPROACH

Arup developed a methodology which put the HS2's teams at the heart of understanding, defining, and actioning systems change through development of team level carbon implementation plans. The plans would detail how their directorate can work towards achieving net zero through tangible actions considering their broadest influence across the system. To enhance engagement and ownership we:

1. Developed a toolkit of resources including role profiles, plan templates and briefing packs to support communication of messaging and clarity on expectations.

2. Ran leadership briefing sessions to secure critical

buy-in from team leadership. The leader nominated a working group to develop their plan and a project manager (PM) with responsibility to author and lead their team's plan.

3. Interviewed a cross-representative sample of each team to explore their role and potential contribution, whilst capturing their perceptions of the opportunities and barriers to implementing net-zero across Arup's organisation maturity framework.

4. Collated a 'long-list' of actions from the diagnostic interviews and co-facilitated with the PM an interactive workshop with decision makers in the team to narrow down to key actions for their team. We integrated ideas across team plans and encouraged teams to collaborate on joint or interdependent actions.

5. Supported the PM to complete the plan template, coordinate input from their team and secure sign off from leadership. We provided technical support from the carbon team to provide challenge and ensure high quality plans.

Sustainability interventions require a holistic understanding of the interactions between elements. Therefore systems-level change concepts such as socio-technical systems theory and systems leadership theory (SLT) underpinned our approach. Arup translated these complex psychological concepts into a clear and easy to understand framework aligned closely in language to the HS2's operating and capability model. This framework informed development of a practical interview guide to inform the diagnostic exercises.

OUTCOME

A key expectation for the project was sharing ownership for net zero across the business. This required regularly measuring the number and breadth of teams engaged throughout the process and reviewing stakeholder engagement lists as our learning of the business context increased. Related to this was an expectation around improving understanding of personal contributions to net zero carbon. We measured this by reviewing the quality, not just quantity, of ideas put forward by individuals on what they can do to drive net zero in their roles: ultimately the content of the detailed action plans.

We noted several positive project outcomes:

1. Teams were empowered to drive their team's carbon plan. Nomination by leadership of team project managers with responsibility for authoring their team's plan worked well in creating top-down accountability with local ownership. The supporting toolkit provided clarity to help manage the role with existing workloads.

2. Over 150 people were involved in developing the plans meaning we established a network of champions to drive forward the carbon agenda across the business.

3. Our diagnostic exercise reinforced that a wide range of changes across the system are required. We learnt quickly that this project was not about the hard sell and persuading people to think differently, but about supporting individuals to understand their accountabilities and tackle the system barriers in their organisational environment.

4. Our creation of psychologically safe spaces allowed for open conversations enabling us to identify where to focus efforts. We reassured teams and instilled confidence in their ideas, through regular 1:1s with the PM and technical review discussions with our team of carbon experts. For future projects we would recommend a structured network for PMs to engage with each other and share ideas peer-peer.
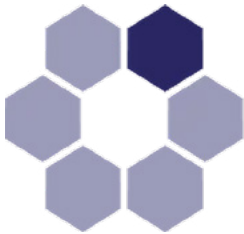
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

EXCELLENCE IN ASSESSMENT & SELECTION

Work Psychology Group
Thinking differently

OVERVIEW

WPG was commissioned by the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) to conduct an independent review of the Statutory Consultation element of their selection process. The brief was to review the approach to Statutory Consultation, whether the process disproportionately impacted certain groups and what, if any, improvements could be made.

CHALLENGE

The appointment of members of the judiciary is a challenging context for selection and assessment. The JAC must deliver on their statutory duty to attract and recruit a diverse group of individuals in a fair and transparent way using a robust process including some selection elements mandated by law. One such requirement is the "Statutory Consultation" – where the JAC seek comments on candidates from someone else who holds that position or has relevant experience.

Concerns were raised regarding fairness and relevance of the Statutory Consultation, bearing in mind public dialogue concerning the diversity of the judiciary compared to the wider population. Following an appearance at the **Justice Select Committee in 2021**, the JAC commissioned an **Independent Review** of this process from Work Psychology Group (WPG).

WPG has significant experience conducting external reviews of selection processes using techniques and tools from across business psychology. WPG followed the literature on selection best practice to apply a mixed-method approach designed to interrogate fairness, reliability & validity, stakeholder acceptance, practicality and efficiency (key principles for any selection process, Patterson, et al 2018).

This project was politically sensitive. WPG's use of interviews, alongside desk-based material review and quantitative analysis of selection outcomes, meant a range of individuals with knowledge of, or involvement

in, the process could provide views. This supported effective stakeholder engagement and ensured all parties understood the intention of the work. WPG referenced its extensive experience of conducting reviews of selection methods in high-stakes professions, including judicial processes, to help stakeholders feel confident in the scope of the work and validity of the conclusions.

APPROACH

A kick-off meeting defined the scope of the review in consultation with the client and other interested parties. This was refined at the interim reporting stage, based on feedback from relevant bodies, to ensure the work spoke specifically to concerns about discrimination against certain groups, as well as concerns about the broader Statutory Consultation process.

A range of material was reviewed by WPG. This comprised generic information on the Statutory Consultation process, including background on its use in different selection processes, and example 'live' Statutory Consultation data from recent selection exercises. Interviews were arranged with individuals from the JAC, senior judiciary including those who facilitate Statutory Consultation processes, and relevant external professional bodies including the Law Society, CILEX and the Bar Council. This review enabled WPG to generate conclusions as to the value and fairness of the process at a holistic level.

Following initial reporting, the scope of the work was developed by WPG and the JAC to dive deeper into the impact of Statutory Consultation on specific groups when split by gender, ethnicity, disability, and professional background. Use of quantitative analysis comparing success in different selection exercises across these groups provided an indication of the impact of the Statutory Consultation data on the outcome for different groups. Additional qualitative analysis generated by Statutory Consultations, sampling across all groups,

was used to understand the quality and fairness of this data and how it might therefore impact on selection decisions. Analysis from both phases of the work was synthesised to generate recommendations for the ongoing use of Statutory Consultation across judicial selection.

The findings were reported to stakeholders using summary slides and a discussion-based meeting at both interim and final reporting stage. A full version of the review was created as a report that could be circulated by the JAC to all interested parties and act as a formal record of the review.

The **final report** was published on the JAC website along with the **JAC response**.

OUTCOME

All stakeholders gave positive feedback on the comprehensive nature of the work and the useful findings the review generated.

As a result, the Statutory Consultation process will be changed for a number of roles and removed for some others. For the remaining roles, the process will remain as per legislation, but changes will be made to how it is administered and managed to make it more efficient

and reliable. The review has led to tangible change that is likely to significantly improve stakeholder perceptions of process fairness and deliver savings in time and resource for the judiciary and JAC who are involved.

The work has been helpful in generating ongoing discussion about the relative fairness of recruitment processes for different groups and illustrating the importance of supporting applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds from the earliest stages of recruitment. Whilst the Statutory Consultation itself does not impact on the fairness of the process for certain groups, as far as could be evaluated from the data available, more still needs to be done to reduce disparity in diversity in selection.

Improved data collection at all stages of selection and more outreach to all potential applicants would allow further analysis of this issue and support ongoing change. However, making improvements to the consistency and reliability of the Statutory Consultation, or removing it from some processes, will have an immediate impact on the experience of selection for many people.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The JAC Policy Team and the Judicial Office for supporting and facilitating this work.

EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION

WINNER

Mindset Practice

OVERVIEW

Mindset Practice provides innovative, products and programmes to enable everyone to be their best, most authentic self every day by showing up more consistently from a mindset of Growth than Survival.

Dstl is an agency of the MoD, it's purpose is to "to maximise the impact of science and technology for the defence, security and prosperity of the UK". A mindset of Growth (I'm Okay, You're Okay) and applied EI is central to Dstl's purpose. We were tasked with improving the mindset and EI capability of all staff (largely STEM talent/a high proportion identifying as neurodiverse).

CHALLENGE

Research found Dstl had significantly lower levels of Self Belief (I'm not Okay) than the general population. Critically, low Self Belief increases the likelihood of defensive, Survival behaviours (e.g. increased burn-out, low collaboration, blame, avoidance of conflict, resistance to change).

Our solution needed to develop all staff (whether neurotypical or neurodiverse), target and improve Self Belief and provide a practical toolkit that would enable performance more consistent with Growth.

APPROACH

Pre-pandemic we used a 70:20:10 approach and applied humanistic psychology to develop a residential 'Realising my Impact' (RMI) programme followed by three months of self-managed learning and workplace application. Feedback from the Growth Climate 360 (how others experience my G&S) and Growth Profile (GP) psychometric (profile of G&S habits) was administered before RMI to profile current capability. After three months, the 'Sustaining my Impact' (SMI) residential quantified improvement through a retake of the GC360 and GP and introduced tools to sustain learning.

Participants learnt to apply EI and understand their G&S patterns through the completion of experiential activities intended to provide feedback from multiple sources and enable the participant to uncover their own 'truth'.

Integration of the G&S language into the toolkit, the GC360 and GP, allowed participants to manage their own G&S patterns throughout the programme. Once a participant understood G&S, they could also explore their feedback without expert facilitation.

Using numbered decile scales in pilot GPs, especially for Self-Belief (designed to give insight into participant's self-esteem)and Belief in Others would often trigger significant defensive reactions. We developed an innovative, interactive feedback report that required participants to watch an animation describing G&S for each habit, which proved particularly effective at conveying challenging feedback in a consistent, matter-of-fact way. Moving a sliding-arrow to indicate participant self-assessment allowed the release of feedback against the comparison group shown as an arrow illustrating a tendency towards Growth. Enabling participants to discover their own 'truth' (rather than decile score) reduced defensive reactions to the feedback significantly, enabled self-compassion and inspired a greater commitment to change.
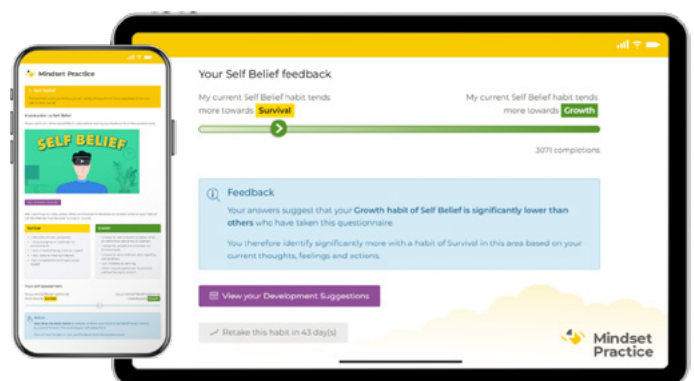
The pandemic meant the F2F RMI/SMI sessions were transformed into four hours of webinar-learning per day complemented by a modularised digital programme that:

- ensured webinar time was used for coaching/ feedback rather than conveying knowledge

- provided self-managed, experiential learning completed in learning-sets outside of the webinars – this included new learning activities designed to mitigate defensive reaction known to manifest at key points during RMI/SMI before it hijacked the virtual learning experience

- released GC360/GP feedback automatically as participants progressed through RMI/SMI
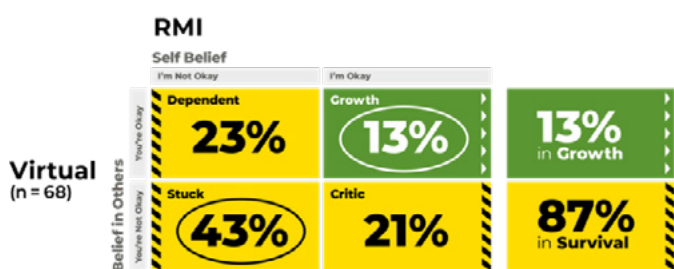
OUTCOME

More Growth less Survival

People in Growth significantly outperform those in Stuck (and Survival) on a range of criteria (e.g. personal resilience, intent-to-quit, learning agility). Increasing numbers in Growth and reducing Stuck is key.

Both F2F (number in Growth increased by 120%, Stuck decreased by 60%) and Virtual solutions (Growth up 177%, Stuck decreased 49%) delivered similar transformational results.

Improved levels of EI

Before and after analyses of the GP found significant increases in EI, especially in relation to Self Belief, Belief in Others and Personal Resilience.

Intention to quit halved

Interviews confirmed at least 15 resignations of key talent avoided, minimising technical-specialism attrition:

"Before RMI I was doing this training to help me to leave, now I see my Survival mindset was impacting how I felt all along. I now want to commit for the long-term.." **Senior Scientist**

Tranformational impact with neurodiverse participants

RMI/SMI is now key to Dstl's support for neurodiversity:

"I can't thank you all enough for what you have taught me and how much of a positive impact your teachings have had on my life. The calmer me…is very much modelled on what I took away from the RMI…it really helped me to realise my full potential in the workplace and… at home." **ASD Scientist**

Wider impact

90% of F2F participants and 95% Virtual rated RMI/SMI as 'very' to 'extremely valuable':

"RMI for me was a watershed moment for how training should be delivered. You should all be extremely proud of the product and courses you are delivering because for some of us they are truly life changing." **Senior Scientist**

Minimum 10 promotions attributed to RMI:

"My social anxiety meant I isolated myself in my lab. RMI helped me see I was restricting my choices and I now have a new job advising on policy!" **Scientist**

Several participants report success on £1m+ projects attributed to RMI:

"We have had a few staff within the Group that have really benefitted from RMI. It has added real value as part of an individual's personal development pathway in some challenging scenarios." **Senior Leader**

Overall:

"The mindset programmes, underpinned by straightforward and applicable practical tools, ...have improved our leadership skills and communication proficiency, improving collaboration between staff – and between staff and stakeholders – helping us to maximise the impact of science and technology for our customers" **Dstl Sponsor**

EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH & WELLBEING

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

RESLEAPS

MOVEMBER® FUNDED

OVERVIEW

As a team, RESLEAPs holds a wealth of experience and qualification in Clinical and Health Psychology, Occupational Psychology and also with former Chief Superintendent expertise. The result of this collaboration allows a strongly research informed approach with direct experience and understanding of the target group we aim to help. This preventative programme expands a pilot to a quarter of UK Police forces. It builds on existing peer networks within the rank to create reflective practice groups and trained peer supporters, to foster a trusting culture, reduce stigma of seeking support and create a safe space to share concerns. These groups match superintendents in terms of transitions (newly promoted and pre-retirement) to support new leaders and those transitioning to retirement.

CHALLENGE

Senior officers, with approximately 30 years' service, will have been exposed to an estimated 900 traumatic events in their careers. Whilst promotion to Superintendent may reduce frequency and direct exposure to traumatogenic events and material, the cumulative legacy of repeated exposure can heighten the risk of developing anxiety, depression and PTSD symptoms, magnified by the isolation of leadership roles. Those who report depression link this with occupational stressors including workload, demand and a macho organisational culture where there remains a stigma around mental health issues. This senior leader role confers a potential sense of jeopardy, coupled with a vulnerability to acute and sustained mental distress and cumulative impact of exposure to trauma, in a reactive, long hours, masculinised culture in which help-seeking is stigmatised, increasing risk of significant psychological morbidity.

These risks are further compounded by the transition into retirement particularly for male officers. With lengthy, collegiate service, bonds between senior officers are strong, and loss of membership from this group can be extremely difficult, creating a sense of isolation during the transition from employment to retirement. This can have a negative impact on officers' mental health with the majority of suicides in work occurring in the five years prior to retirement. After retirement police veterans' rate of suicide is 3 times higher than general population, with 5 years lower life expectancy.

APPROACH

Stage 1: Involved conducting a needs assessment, to understand Superintendents' and Chief Superintendents' perceptions, experiences, stressors, psychological needs and gender-specific needs. This involved engagement sessions with the Chief Officers' teams and Superintendent Chairs; interviews with a sample of senior police leaders to understand to gather in-depth insights and points of vulnerability.

Stage 2: Facilitated reflective practice groups. These sessions aim to promote a safe space and protected time for senior police leaders to reflect on challenges and difficulties they may face in their roles, creating a shared learning environment and fostering mutual understanding and trust. Topics discussed will be guided by group members.

Stage 3: Peer Supporter Selection Process: Peer support focusing on transitions will train those transitioning out

of the organisation through retirement to be peer supporters. This will allow them to share tacit knowledge and experience they have gained in rank with less experienced peers for mutual benefit. In addition, offer further sense of purpose, increase their networks of veterans post retirement, enable them to continue feel valued and also contribute to the organisation in a meaningful and useful way by mentoring and buddying those new to rank.

Stage 4: Peer Supporter Training: The training will be shaped by the needs assessment but retain some core elements from the pilot to ensure replication to other forces. Sessions will comprise seven, interactive modules of one and a half hours which have already been successfully piloted. The core principles behind the programme are that of mentorship, coaching and developing social networks.

OUTCOME

We measure the success of the intervention through qualitative and quantitative means. Prior to intervention and post intervention, participants are given a survey to complete including the: Generalised Anxiety Disorder Assessment (GAD 7), Patient Health Questionnaire 9 (PHQ 9), Psychological Safety Questionnaire, Self-Compassion Scale, Trauma Screening Questionnaire, Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWS). This assesses the change in various psychological wellbeing measures. One-to-one interviews are also conducted pre and post with some of the participants, in order to establish changes in concepts not covered in the measures, which are thematically analysed. This will cover themes surrounding changes to perceived workplace culture, workload, available support, retirement readiness and transitions.

Our pilot research concluded that Superintendents were initially wary of seeking support and feared being seen as weak. However, rooted in the officers' own needs and appraisals, alongside robust psychological evidence, our programme addressed and reduced the stigma of self-disclosure, building trust and psychological safety through shared networks, with impacts continuing post retirement, mitigating some of the risks of poor mental health; this addressed some of the key aims of the pilot study, and also are representative of the aims expected to be achieved with the national roll out of the programme amongst other police forces.

EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH & WELLBEING

RUNNER UP

ARUP

OVERVIEW

Arup is an independent firm of designers, planners, engineers, consultants, and technical specialists offering a broad range of professional services.

CHALLENGE

At the start of the wellbeing project in January 2021 we were in the grips of a long lockdown and we needed to create a programme that could be accessed remotely but also cultivate a supportive, trusting, empathetic environment so that members felt a sense of team unity. We needed to cater for different organisations, various team challenges and time constraints. It was essential to strengthen relationships remotely over the 'Teams' platform, develop a sense of psychological safety and openness.

As we launched a wellbeing programme entirely in a remote setting we needed to be creative with the different methods of communication with our team members to avoid 'teams fatigue'. We also needed to reach surveyors who were going out on site and not always able to make the sessions 'live' via a laptop.

We also needed a way to connect with those who needed support but didn't necessarily want to share much in a large group forum and feel too exposed. We had a duty of care as practitioners to support vulnerable team members, create a psychologically safe space and to sign-post additional helped if needed.

We needed to engage the leadership team to support their own resilience, to role model wellbeing behaviours and by doing so encourage team members to look out for their own individual and team wellbeing.

As practitioners we also needed to bolster our own psychological wellbeing and we needed to create firm boundaries with our coaching sessions and interventions. This was important to support our own mental health and provide the best support to team members. 262

APPROACH

In early 2021 the wellbeing team embarked on a 'discovery' phase to understand the needs of the integrated workforce via a wellbeing survey and from there designed a plan of interventions in response to the emerging themes.

The team were busy and we decided that we would limit engagement on 'Teams' to once a week and release a wellbeing card, we were conscious to not overload the team with wellbeing content but to provide a structure of 'checking in' on a Tuesday.

We encouraged all team members (irrespective of home organisation) to share the content we designed in project team meetings to help embed a wellbeing team culture. Before exploring a particular theme we ensured that we engaged carefully with the right stakeholders and conducted a process of sense checking before we launched an intervention.

For each theme from the wellbeing survey we researched, designed and facilitated an intervention. For example we learned that team members wanted some guidance on how to have effective wellbeing conversations, as a result we created and facilitated a session to help empower team members, exploring techniques like active listening.

The course of the pandemic created distinct wellbeing challenges and we needed to listen carefully and respond with sensitivity to support the team in a proactive way. We knew that the toll of the pandemic and project pressures meant some team members felt overwhelmed and so we were mindful to make our interventions, simple, short and accessible.

Lockdown significantly blurred work/life boundaries and it was important to provide a space for reflection, where through guided exercises team members could make proactive steps to support their wellbeing. As we recorded some interventions, we ensured that we

contracted with participants at the beginning of each session around sharing and confidentiality.

We were also conscious not to leave team members feeling too vulnerable in a virtual session and we placed an emphasis on 'self-reflection' in our design so that they didn't need to 'present' themselves to others but rather take time to reflect on their own individual needs. We designed guided self-reflection exercises to facilitate this approach.

As practitioners we were often vulnerable and shared our own experiences, this seemed to help others open up and also to create a safe sharing space. We engaged in peer coaching during 2021 to help support with development and a space for reflection. 392

OUTCOME

The desired benefits to our approach was to foster a 'lived' wellbeing culture, that sees team members supportive of each other, having wellbeing conversations and in turn supporting individual and team mental health. In turn providing a positive impact on team and individual performance whilst enhancing project outcomes.

Measuring workforce wellbeing was a challenge on the project, during the pandemic there were so many variables at play that could impact team or individual wellbeing. We encouraged feedback via different mediums: the wellbeing survey, online polls, interventions and coaching.

Feedback has indicated that raising awareness around different themes has demonstrably helped with areas like disconnecting from work and creating a 'tool-kit' of options to support mental health in challenging times. Feedback indicated that the wellbeing interventions provided a place for a pause, reflection and stillness - something that many of us needed in the midst of lockdown.

This approach to reflection time gives permission for team members to process thoughts and feelings whilst helping to consolidate memories. As such there is an opportunity to apply this to hybrid working where moving from online to person can be intense for our brains to process.

We ensured that all interventions offered the opportunity for guided self-reflection to provide the space to process the world events and work challenges. Feedback indicated that some team members found the reflection process really useful, in some cases (where people were juggling caring responsibilities and work) embedding the daily habit of reflection became a necessity.

Our intent is that wellbeing practices are integrated within everyday working, this approach is simple and can be replicated in an entirely virtual world. A few key components are integral to success here: creating a 'one team' culture irrespective of parent organisation, designing sessions that embed a psychologically safe environment for sharing, wellbeing role modelling from leadership and managers and embedding the practise of reflection.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

WINNER

Zircon

BeTalent

OVERVIEW

Zircon is a talent management consultancy whose purpose is to help organisations grow through proven talent strategies and development of the workforce using positive psychology. With a deep understanding of commercial context and aligning to commercial objectives, Zircon are a thought leader in the industry creating whitepapers, podcasts and innovative product development.

BeTalent offers a range of psychometric products which are validated* by the BPS. Providing scientific, evidence-based assessment and development tools that are intuitive, accessible and rigorously tested.

Emily Willis joined the Zircon team to complete her placement year as part of her undergraduate degree in Psychology from the University of Kent. With a predicted first class, Emily came with high aspirations, a curious mind and a meticulous approach to scientific-based theories.

CHALLENGE

At the beginning of her placement year, Emily was faced with a set of research papers that investigated impostor syndrome and an idea for a new product offering based on this topic. After conducting extensive research into the subject, she quickly realised that impostor syndrome was not the full story – it was a branch of a much bigger topic: self-belief.

Once she understood this, it opened up a world of possibilities of what Zircon could offer to their clients, as the product no longer had to be limited to those experiencing impostor syndrome but could apply to all individuals who have moments where they lack self-belief. The main business challenge this creates is that when an individual experiences a dip or has residual doubt in their self-belief, it is likely they will be indecisive, fail to speak up against consensus-driven issues or fail to put forward their ideas.

Emily was intrigued by the dichotomy that presented itself when considering leadership effectiveness, accountability, resilience and psychological safety versus self-belief. From here the pivot from the original brief was how to develop a new offering from Zircon which would be helpful to improve an individual's self-belief and, crucially, how to support those individuals to perform more productively at work.

To solve this challenge, she decided that having a psychometric tool to measure self-belief would enable personal insights which, upon reflection, could help individuals be more productive at work.

APPROACH

Once deciding to create this new psychometric tool on self-belief, there were a number of challenges set out in front of Emily, particularly as she was new to the field of Business Psychology. For example:

- How would she create a valid questionnaire?

- Who should she ask to complete the questionnaire?

- Who does she need to work with at Zircon to make the project successful?

It was a fairly daunting challenge at the outset and Emily understood that she would need to educate herself and create a support network of peers. To develop her skills in order to create a high-quality psychometric tool, Emily avidly read and listened to podcasts; compared multiple BeTalent and other questionnaires; requested guidance from her supervisor, research psychologist colleagues and university advisor; and created an additional mentored relationship with the CIO of Zircon.

Developing the questionnaire was a constant process of designing and improving, using Emily's own research as well as advice from her colleagues. After several iterations of perfecting the language, inferences and quality of the questions, the first draft of the questionnaire was created. The questionnaire was based on Emily's

research into the self-belief topic, where:

- Those who score low on self-belief have 'impostor syndrome risks',

- Those who score in the middle have 'self-belief strengths',

- Those who score high have 'overconfidence risks'.

Emily felt it was important to take lead on directing a thorough user acceptance testing process for this questionnaire, which involved coordinating members of the Zircon team to identify any issues and then working through the feedback to solve them. At the end of this process, the BeTalent Self-Belief Questionnaire was created.

Following the development of the questionnaire, Emily decided to use it as part of coursework for her placement year. By doing this, Emily could help to start validating the product that she had created in order to use it in practical conditions.

The research project focused on the relationship between self-belief and resilience. Specifically, Emily hypothesised that there would be a curvilinear relationship between the two, where medium levels of self-belief would be associated with high levels of resilience, but high and low levels of self-belief would be associated with low levels of resilience.

Emily sent the BeTalent Self-Belief and Resilience Questionnaires to existing clients of Zircon and received 92 responses. She then conducted a curvilinear regression analysis to look at the relationship between self-belief and resilience.

OUTCOME

Interestingly Emily found that there was actually a positive linear relationship between the two, and so despite the fact overusing self-belief (i.e., having overconfidence) might cause negative consequences in some situations, it does not reduce resilience levels but continues to enhance them.
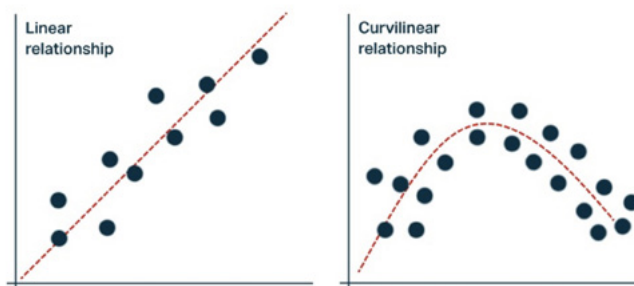
Examples of linear vs curvilinear relationships

This scientific research contributes to the process of validating the Self-Belief questionnaire. With further refinement, Zircon can take this product to a fully validated assessment tool.

Following her research, Emily created a 7000-word report based on her literature review, methodology, findings and interpretation of the results.

The findings from Emily's research have been referenced in The Chief Psychology Officer podcast and will be included in future submissions for the BPS and ADM publications, demonstrating the significance of her work.

Congratulations Emily – truly you are an outstanding student!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

RUNNER UP

Hanover.

OVERVIEW

Using Critical Discourse Analysis, I critically examined how diversity and inclusion statements on nine websites of pro-diversity organisations discursively construct "diversity management" within which explicit and implicit messages regarding race and gender put forward discursive practices.

CHALLENGE

Websites are used by organisations to display statements of diversity and inclusion, wherein notions of gender and race are incorporated and serve as "windows" in promoting the organisations as employers of choice, sometimes displaying diversity and inclusion awards they have won, and equality charters they have signed up to (Dobbin, 2009). This was used as a selection criterion to justify the "pro-diversity" quality of organisations under study. The rationale for choosing these stems from how diversity messages and deployment of strategies interact on a dyadic level with employees' perceptions. Organisations that brand themselves as such are most likely going to be perceived as places of fairness and equality.

Gender and race were a key focus of my study:

- organisations have been created by men for men; are gendered places that (re)produce gender power relations and inequalities (Benschop and Meihuizen, 2002)

- the business management rationale for diversity derives from racial capitalism (Leong, 2012) and reproduces the racial hierarchy of White dominance. From the business case perspective, racial equality is only advanced when it converges with needs and interests of the ethnic dominant group, namely Whites (Milner, 2008), therefore serve to maintain the status quo of power relations (Bell, 1980).

Research questions

I was interested in the power dynamics that permeate knowledge and the power relations within which voices are heard whilst others are silenced, and within which some are beneficiaries to the expense of others. The aim was to untangle and critically examine the representations of gender and race within organisational diversity and inclusion discourses promoted on corporate websites. The specific aim of the analysis was to reveal how the discursive construction of D&I management, in relation to gender and race, is shaped by micro-level discursive practices that undermine macro socio-structural dynamics.

- How are pro-diversity organisations conveying messages of diversity and inclusion about race and gender on their websites?

- What implicit messages can be untangled from the explicit messages, and what implications do these have for understanding issues and debates of race and gender in organisations?

APPROACH

Epistemology

I took a critical lens which rejects neutrality and recognises that all knowledge is socially constructed. From this social constructionist stance, gender and race are socially negotiated and constructed through social interactions thus challenging their inherent nature is necessary to delegitimize the assumptions underpinning inequalities (Burr, 2018).

Reflexivity

As a (non-British) White woman, I am simultaneously a member of the minority and of the dominant group. I was mindful of the implications of conducting research that ultimately seeks to address systemic racial discrimination and inequalities in which I am myself

involved as a White person; and how my identity, as a product of the institution, influences my vision of the world (Emirbayer, 2012). The study would have benefited from being co-created with a female BAME researcher to challenge potential assumptions (Gunaratnam, 2003).

Data collection

This research harvested existing data (web-based). A purposeful sampling was executed using cross selection-criteria. This led to 10 large UK-based organisations from private sectors.

Data analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) seeks to uncover how and why specific linguistic details are used and how these serve to advance or conceal particular ideologies. Grammatical choices made to represent people, processes and issues are ideologically grounded (Kress,1995) and shape people's perceptions on how to understand these, on who holds responsibility over them and what the solutions are (Van Djick, 1998). The main aim is then to deconstruct the discourse to reveal implicit and explicit assumptions, power relationships and ideologies (Van Djick, 1993). Therefore, the importance of both absences and presences in the data (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001) made CDA a perfectly suited methodology to answer the research questions.

Social semiotic view of language

My study combined the most common linguistic analysis in CDA:

- lexical analysis
- representational strategies

Abductive analysis

Analysis and interpretation, whilst subjective, were grounded in theoretical knowledge gained prior to and during the study in a dynamic and iterative manner. The analysis was abductive.

The coded data was critically examined through a framework identified by Vaara et al. (2004) as problematisation, rationalisation, fixation, reframing and naturalization.

OUTCOME

The diversity management and pro-diversity discourses simultaneously offers:

- a conceptualisation of a diverse workforce as a business benefit (explicit) and as problematic (implicit)

- a naturalisation of the organisations as meritocratic places of fairness and equality by equating D&I with being "good" at D&I legitimised by the "visible" diversity

And obscures:

- alternative structural accounts of inequalities in the workplace rooted in historico-political context by equating difference with deficiency to justify the "missing" diversity
- the ineffective deployment of strategies that can de-serve minorities.

In conveying messages to diversify the workforce and ensure inclusion, organisations discuss "empowering and transformational" strategies which are explicitly and implicitly directed at ethnic minorities and women. These are mostly targeted at the individual level, simultaneously constructing problems and solutions through an individualist lens and burying wider socio-structural responsibility. When deconstructing messages of empowerment, the dynamic of power relations emerges wherein white male managerialism is elevated against women and ethnic minorities constructed as being the problem, inferior and deficient. From this conceptualisation, inclusion is only made possible if minorities conform with the norm that sets ideologies of the ideal worker and that would engage in behaviours expected by the norm to become successful, which may lead women and ethnic minorities to downplay or conceal aspects of their identity in an attempt to fit with the in-group.

"Award winning initiatives", combined with the expertise and scientific discourse work to make them self-evident. In naturalising the strategies as though they equate effectiveness, it creates a distraction from questioning the nature of their measurements.

In conveying forward-looking messages, the (uncomfortable) socio-cultural historical context is detached from gender and race diversity rationale and reframed in terms of exciting economic prospects, this offers a blame-free optimistic narrative (Noon, 2017) and obscures whiteness (Meseinbach and Goldstein Hode, 2016) and male dominance. Worryingly, this increases perceptions of procedural fairness towards minorities in both dominant and non-dominant groups which then gets translated into a disregard for discrimination claims (Brady et al., 2014).

By being simultaneously constructed a product of deficiency and a product of symbolism, women and ethnic minorities are "invisible" in the socio-symbolic space as they are socially constructed not in their own

right but in relation to White men who remain unmarked; and "hypervisible" as they are used as symbols to display diversity and inclusiveness, thus creating hegemonic structures (Gramsci, 1971). The (re)production of social power and dominance and the (re)production of social inequalities is activated by obscuring existing discrimination and racism, fixating stereotypes, and using tokenism that creates an illusion of diversity and inclusion and conceals organisational power dynamics that shape career opportunities.

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