

Public Sector Providers

▶ Experts agree - Effective Leadership Development is essential!

At a recent conference held by Public Sector Providers on "Leadership in the Public Sector", whilst a healthy diversity of views were shared, one thing that all of the speakers agreed on was the need to ensure that leaders are thoroughly equipped to carry out their leadership responsibilities.

A poll of delegates at the same conference (representing a range of public sector bodies all over the UK) revealed that whilst 92% of them felt that the need to develop strong leaders was greater now than five years ago, only 69% of their organisations were providing more Leadership Development activities than five years ago.

Even more worryingly, 5% were doing less, and 13% have never offered any form of Leadership Development at all.

Beverly Alimo-Metcalf claims that poor leadership can lead to:

- increased stress
- decreased motivation
- decreased achievement
- decreased job satisfaction

Unfortunately, these four factors are increasingly common amongst employees within the public sector, which can lead to increased sickness absence levels and a poorer quality of service delivery.

Developing our leaders would seem, therefore, to be a necessity rather than a luxury!

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Managing Change - Building Internal Capacity

Forum Theatre - a Powerful Addition to the Training Toolkit

Leadership in the Public Sector

Managing Performance in the Public Sector - forthcoming conference

.. and more



Professor John Adair, keynote speaker at our "Leadership in the Public sector" conference, with Jane Hatton, Managing Director (left) and Gill Beards, Training and Development Manager (right), both from Public Sector Providers.

See inside for a report on this conference, and news of our next conference, "Managing Performance in the Public Sector" on 8 June 2006 in London.

This newsletter is brought to you by

Public Sector Providers Ltd

We exist to help public sector bodies achieve their aims by learning from each other and from us. We offer:

- **High quality training and consultancy services dedicated to the public sector**, delivered by Consultants who are both experts in their own field, and experienced at applying that expertise within the public sector;
- **Conferences of topical interest to the public sector** with high profile speakers and practical workshops (see later for reports on the most recent conference, and details of the next one);
- **This free newsletter** dedicated to the needs of the public sector.

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to find out more!

Please let us know what you would like to see in this newsletter - we are open to new ideas and would welcome your contributions!



Welcome!

Welcome to the May 2006 issue of our newsletter.

We try to ensure the newsletters are full of content that you will find useful, enjoyable or both!

In this issue we have included articles on issues that we hope will be of interest to HR and training professionals within the public sector.

Equal pay reviews are crucial to public sector bodies, and are often seen as a massive mechanistic exercise, fraught with potential disaster for the organisation - Ian Bonny tells us about the benefits that can be achieved when conducted properly.

Sometimes it seems that the only constant we can rely on is the increasing pace of change within the public sector! Whilst there is much help available for organisations to manage change effectively, Mark Baxter tells us that the most effective way is to build the internal capacity of the organisation to manage change effectively.

Whilst it is important to ensure that all employees are equipped to carry out their roles effectively, much thought should be given to which of the many development tools available are the most appropriate for every need. Nigel Higgs uses the case study of work with Elected Members at Herefordshire Council to illustrate how powerful Forum Theatre can be in enabling sustained improvements in behaviour and practice.

In March we held a conference on "Leadership in the Public Sector" with keynote presentations from Beverly Alimo-Metcalfe and Adrian Furnham. John Adair gave a speech and then facilitated a masterclass with questions on leadership theory and practice. The conference was a huge success, and Beverly alluded to some ground-breaking research during her talk. Her daughter, Juliette Alban-Metcalfe, who conducted the research, has agreed to talk about it at our next conference.

Our next conference is on "Managing Performance in the Public Sector", held at a new venue (for us) in London. Details on page 7. We'd love to see you there!

Please enjoy the newsletter with our compliments,

Managing Director,
Public Sector Providers Ltd.

We like to ensure our newsletter goes to those who want it! If you have colleagues who would like to be added to our mailing list, or if you would like to be removed from our list, please email us at info@publicsectorproviders.co.uk.

Building Internal Capacity

All public sector organisations are currently addressing the need for change to improve services and business process performance in order to drive out inefficiencies and gain service delivery and productivity improvements.

Some organisations are more advanced than others with their programmes of change. A key aspect of an organisation's ability to successfully manage complex change initiatives is to develop the internal skills and capabilities at senior and middle management levels to successfully initiate, plan and deliver the changes required to realise the envisaged benefits.

Whilst many public sector managers have received formal training in Managing Successful Programmes (MSP), Project Management (PRINCE2) and Business Process improvement methodologies (e.g. BPR/Business Transformation/Lean/Six Sigma), difficulties are often experienced *after* the formal training when managers attempt to utilise these methodologies in their own organisations.

This is often due to a lack of understanding or focus from colleagues and other staff. Also, if applied too rigorously, these methodologies can often cause additional bureaucracy and management overhead which inhibit the ability to develop and implement creative & innovative solutions to business problems.

A unique approach has been developed to tackle this issue. Based on a combination of formal training and development, supplemented by more individual, hands-on, practical support to managers and project teams, this will

help them deliver the change projects they are assigned in the workplace. The approach combines formal training and individual and project team mentoring and coaching services including support to help managers to:

- establish an effective management and control framework for a change programme
- assess the organisation's readiness for change
- establish a prioritised set of initiatives based on a clear business case
- effectively lead and manage the organisational, political and cultural aspects of change
- deliver the business benefits from change initiatives
- establish a culture of continuous improvement.

A recent project example in Solihull Libraries enabled Solihull M.B.C. to identify and realise £140K of added value and increased purchasing power by reviewing the whole supply chain for books and by improving end-to-end business processes. In addition, this then resulted in more budget being allocated to book buying and in books being more quickly available to the public.

The project was started following a best value review which highlighted poor public perception of the service levels and availability of new books. Senior managers in Solihull were aware of the need for change and sought external help to facilitate the process in partnership with internal staff and managers.

The approach to this project was to fully engage with managers and staff to understand exactly how the work was

currently carried out. This participative, consultative approach highlighted the real underlying problems in the business processes and also enabled staff to overcome their concerns about change by being fully involved in the improvement process.

A key part of the project was to support managers with planning and delivering the communications required to persuade staff of the benefits of the change. The business case established at the outset of the project was also used throughout the project lifecycle to support the need for change.

This structured, phased approach enabled the achievement of the following critical success factors:

- Achieve business benefits as early as possible
- Ensure all affected staff were closely involved to increase acceptance of new ways of working
- Ensure the day to day business was not adversely affected during the changes
- Communicate with all parties to ensure alignment with project objectives
- Monitor tight project budgets
- Manage any resistance to change to ensure the targeted business benefits were actually achieved
- Minimise risk through effective monitoring and project management.

We would be happy to come and talk to you about increasing the internal capacity of your organisation to manage change more effectively.



Mark Baxter,
Consultant,
Public Sector Providers

a Powerful Addition to the Training Toolkit



Nigel Higgs, Consultant with Public Sector Providers, talks about Forum Theatre.

Have you ever attended or arranged training which, although perhaps enjoyable and entertaining, didn't really make a difference in practice?

Training can be an expensive activity and the return on investment is crucial in these days of limited budgets. Sometimes, quantity (putting on lots of courses) is not the answer, if the training doesn't result in improved performance which is sustained. In some instances, using high quality powerful learning techniques, which may only take a day or two (depending on the subject matter of course) can produce amazing results which leave delegates with a much deeper understanding of the issues, and improved performance is embedded consistently in their everyday practice.

This is even more important when your people are trying to change social and business-related behaviours and skills, and this is where Forum Theatre comes in.

"Excellent – live involvement and good dramatic presentation is worth a thousand hours of death by Powerpoint."

Delegate

The objective of Forum Theatre is to engage the participants in exploring the variations in how personal interactions work in as deep a way as possible. This is achieved by watching actors play out one or more scenarios, and then also looking at how outcomes can change when different behaviours are used (in both positive and negative ways). The participants can then, with the actors, experiment around the ways in which they could use these different behaviours within their workplace.

For illustration, I will describe how a Diversity project we carried out recently for Herefordshire County Council looked at aspects of Community Leadership in relation to the diversity issues within the Council's area of influence.

The objective was to apply and develop the theory on diversity that Elected Members had been working on following previous training we had provided. The process began by using a standard Forum process as described below.

As the Facilitator, I outlined the Forum Theatre process and the subject matter – in this case diversity. The actors then performed an improvised relevant scenario which had been agreed beforehand (in this case, a local resident complaining to the Elected Member about the "influx" of migrant workers into the area).

I then split the audience into 2 teams, each of which supported one of the actors. The initial brief was for each team to support and help 'their' actor in achieving his or her aim (as is apparent from the action of the scene). This was achieved through a start/stop process – after the first performance of the scene,

the actors ran it again and any member of either team could stop the action, merely by calling out 'STOP!' The actors then consulted with their team.

The objective of the team was to provide the actor with alternative strategies (language, behaviours, attitudes, etc.) with which they could achieve their character's objective – whether it be a constructive or destructive one. There is a time-limit on each stop, and as the Facilitator, I brought the actors back to the performance area once this was reached.

At one point we switched the teams to support the 'other' actor – so both teams could look at the other side of the equation.

Using professional actors to enact the scenario takes the pressure off delegates of having to role-play, and has the added benefit of allowing them to engage with the issues and possible solutions in a far deeper way. They get to see how different behaviours work - behaviours that they define, that they may well have experienced.

"Made me realise the importance of my role in the community and am now more informed about the problems."

Delegate

Further involvement of delegates is then achieved by adapting the Forum process so that smaller teams of participants can work with a single actor on agreed scenarios. This will allow members of each smaller group to replace one of the actors whilst allowing the rest of that group to continue to support them using the stop/start process.

Marketing Your Website Effectively

A practical, hands on workshop from NikkiPilkington.com

An interactive workshop that will showcase practical applications of Internet Marketing techniques, this workshop will provide you with the skills and knowledge to market your services on-line.

Learn how to:

- Use the Internet successfully for marketing and PR
- Make your site more effective in attracting targeted traffic
- Achieve higher and more useful visibility to the search engines (inc. Google)
- Build and run a virtual Media Centre through your site
- Plan, implement, test and measure a variety of successful web advertising campaigns
- Use direct email campaigns that work
- Exploit Web News Services and Portals effectively

This bespoke workshop is ideal for groups of 4 – 10 marketing professionals wishing to develop a sound grounding in the basics of Internet Marketing. It needs no specific technical knowledge, although a basic understanding of the Internet is implied.

For more information contact Nikki Pilkington on 07841 429795 or nikki@nikkipilkington.com



In this adaptation of the Forum process the actor can also provide feedback, as would occur within a role-play, allowing participants to 'play' with and adjust (or radically change) the strategies they have looked at in the standard Forum process. This added real-time experience means that those strategies are more likely to be applied back in the workplace. This is because the person's confidence will be higher, and they will have alternatives they can put into practice that they have experienced.

"Practised a method of mediation; focused on the real issues for Herefordshire"

Delegate

In the Herefordshire Council workshop, the elected members outlined a scenario which the actors then improvised, in small groups, with volunteers from the participants. The actors and members in each group explored a range of strategies that could be used, and some elected members also gained greater insight into how their own behaviours could unwittingly affect a situation.

As you can now see, Forum Theatre can be used as an adjunct to theory – allowing participants to test and explore the theory – or as an integral part of a training session – built in alongside the delivery of the theory, allowing the participants to test and develop each element as they move through the workshop or course, building understanding and expertise as they progress and thus gaining a deeper understanding and greater skill.

It is extremely effective when exploring or dealing with any face-to-face (or voice-to-voice) interaction between two or more people. The process allows the participating teams to explore alternative or adjusted strategies – since different people have different strengths, a different approach may work for one person better than it will for others. Thus, there is a wide range of dynamics that can be used to explore and discover alternative ways of being in many types of interactions between people.

In the Herefordshire workshop there was very powerful observable change in a number of participants. One delegate started the day struggling to

understand the relevance of the subject matter to his role, and three hours later was heard say "of course Elected Members should challenge racism - if we don't, whose job is it?"

"Makes you confront your own prejudices."

Delegate

If you would like to try it out I will be running some hour-long workshops using Forum Theatre as a training tool around "Managing the Poor Performer" at our forthcoming conference on "Managing Performance in the Public Sector" in June – maybe I'll see you there?

Leadership in the Public Sector

Public Sector Providers hosted a successful conference on “Leadership in the Public Sector” on 7 March 2006 at the National Motorcycle Museum, Birmingham. The conference included a mix of high profile keynote speakers and interactive workshops.

Professor John Adair



Professor Beverly Alimo-Metcalf

Beverly Alimo-Metcalf, Professor of Leadership Studies at the University of Leeds, presented some ground-breaking UK-based research she has conducted into what makes effective leaders.

“Good examples backed up with research – encapsulated and contrasted what had been done in the field”

Enid Charlton, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service



Professor Adrian Furnham

Adrian Furnham, Professor of Psychology at the University College London entertained us with a fascinating talk on the traits of leaders, and looked at various leadership theories and how these can be applied in practice.

“Found this speaker inspirational – Adrian’s humour and reality-based approach was excellent”

John Whittaker, Historic Scotland

John Adair, pioneer of the Action-Centred Leadership model, spoke about how leadership and the challenges faced by leaders has changed over the years, and led a “Masterclass” where a range of current challenges in the area of leadership were discussed.

“Very interesting to see leadership theories brought together”

Jane Johnson, Leicestershire County Council

Delegates attended a variety of interactive workshops exploring some of the practical issues around Leadership, and were able to network and share best practice ideas with other delegates.

“I valued the opportunity to network and the inspirational keynote speakers”

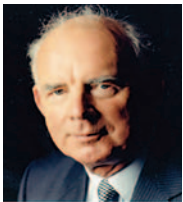
Helen Mason, Hull City Council

Managing Performance in the Public Sector -

Managing, measuring and improving performance are becoming increasingly important to the public sector, which is more accountable than ever before.

This conference includes leading edge research in this area, presented by the people who conducted that research. Keynote speeches from these acknowledged experts in this field are combined with interactive workshops exploring the practical application of best practice.

Held at the Park Inn, Heathrow, London on 8 June 2006, keynote speakers include:



Michael Armstrong

A former Chief Examiner for CIPD, Michael is a prolific author of many management text

books including "Performance Management" (CIPD 1998, now in its 3rd edition)



Juliette Alban-Metcalf

Senior Research Psychologist at the University of Leeds, Juliette has been

involved with ground-breaking research on 360 feedback and the implications for minority staff.



David Pottruff

A Research Manager within the Audit Commission's Local Government

Performance and Improvement Directorate, David has conducted research within the Performance Management and Information project.

Delegates can also attend two workshops of their choice, giving an interactive learning experience, and encouraging the sharing of good practice:

1. Managing the Poor Performer

An interactive workshop using Forum Theatre to explore skills and strategies in managing individuals whose performance is causing concern. An opportunity also to see the power of Forum Theatre.

2. Transforming Managers into Developers

An opportunity to actively explore ways of equipping managers with the skills, knowledge and confidence to develop the performance of their own staff and teams.

3. Managing the Performance of a Diverse Team

Effective managers understand that every member of their team is different. Whether the difference is about race, gender, disability, working hours, family circumstances or any other issue, this workshop explores strategies to manage individuals' performance fairly and effectively.

4. Making the Appraisal Process Work Effectively

Most public sector bodies have appraisal processes in place, with varying degrees of effectiveness. This interactive workshop explores how to make the appraisal interview more effective for all involved.

Programme:

- 9.00 Arrivals, coffee
- 9.30 Welcome: Jane Hatton
- 9.45 Speaker: David Pottruff
- 10.30 Workshops (see left)
- 11.30 Coffee
- 12.00 Speaker: Juliette Alban-Metcalf
- 12.45 Lunch
- 1.45 Keynote speaker: Michael Armstrong
- 2.45 Tea
- 3.15 Workshops (see left)
- 4.15 Plenary
- 4.30 Close

The content and timing of the programme, or keynote speakers will only be subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control.

£349 + VAT per delegate.



Places are limited. Book on-line at www.publicsectorproviders.org.uk, or contact us for a brochure now on 0845 658 5717 or email info@publicsectorproviders.co.uk

Equal Pay Reviews - Pain or Gain?

According to the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), only one third of large organisations have carried out an equal pay review. Releasing the findings of the research, Jenny Watson, Chair of the EOC said, "The pay gap will never close until employers check whether they have a problem and this research shows that still too few employers do this."

The task is hard.

More than 35 years after the 1970 Equal Pay Act, there is still an 18% disparity between the pay of full-time men and full-time women, which cannot be explained away purely by arguments around the different life and career choices between men and women.

Commenting on the research, Ian Bonny of Public Sector Providers said, "We carry out equal value audits for public sector clients, and many are beginning to appreciate the value of doing such reviews. Not only does it allow them to spot any pay discrepancies between different groups of employees, but also to uncover other, less obvious issues which have an impact."

These issues could include identifying bonus schemes that discriminate against certain groups of employees, or reward systems that pay one department differently from another for doing the same work, not through any deliberate policy but simply through 'pay drift' over a long period of time.

It is also a good opportunity to review wider benefits. For example, are the policies for payment of telephone bills for home-based staff consistent? Clearly some benefits are directed at individuals or small groups of employees because of the nature of the work, but are the criteria used as fair and inclusive as they could be?

Ian continued, "I recently reviewed an organisation where one complaint of staff was of a lack of career opportunities above a certain grade, a point of view dismissed by managers. However, a review of pay and benefits related to length of service, actually reinforced the views of staff, showing that supervisors in some departments were actually recruited externally rather than by promoting from within. As a result, that organisation is now implementing a development programme to ensure that the next group of supervisors will be appointed from existing staff. Good for staff, and good for the organisation."

There are also external factors at play. The government has shown itself ready to introduce new employment and other legislation whenever and wherever it sees fit. With a government target of 45% of large organisations to be completing regular reviews by 2008, it is looking increasingly likely that the only way this will be met is through introducing yet more employment legislation compelling organisations to carry out such reviews.

Jenny Watson continued, "Unless the pace of change increases, the government's target on pay reviews may be missed, despite the welcome step taken by the government to introduce new laws to ensure that public sector employers take action."

As Ian pointed out, "It is far better to carry out an equal value audit looking at the complete compensation package of pay and benefits, and put right any problems now, than wait to be obliged to carry out one through legislation."

*Ian Bonny, Consultant,
Public Sector Providers*

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