

Transforming Aspirations at Civil Service

Learning

Change management is well understood in our VUCA world (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity), but organisations still tend to revert to type and maintain entrenched behaviours despite leaders' best efforts to effect change. Much of this 'stickiness' is attitudinal, underpinning cultural norms which defend the status quo. We set about transforming attitudes and behaviours, and find that the organisational performance usually follows.



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A highly effective and important example of our work is the Positive Action Pathway project, designed to 'level the playing field' of representation within the Civil Service of BME, LGBT, disabled and female staff. It is the first cross Civil Service leadership intervention designed to improve under representation at all levels and is a significant initiative in the Governments Talent Action Plan regarding Diversity and Inclusion.

Our programme design is challenging, dynamic and experiential, whilst also building the safe learning environment and communities that are essential to embed real behavioural development. We combine questionnaires, psychometrics, pre- and post-course reading and inter Module and Acton Learning Set work to further the application of learning back in the workplace in the spirit of 70:20:10 learning. Action Learning Sets especially have enabled participants to address live cultural and behavioural issues at work, while developing their own distinctive leadership style.

The benefits to the Civil Service have been significant, with talent being unlocked and inspired at all levels. For individuals, this means promotions or the courage to apply for new posts, improved engagement in their work, presenting ideas and delivering projects with new confidence and ability.

The success of the design has been borne out by its popularity, with over 1000 staff having experienced to programme: since 2015 over 1500 participants have experienced the programme. One in four participants has been promoted during the 12-month programme, which has also won a national training award.

Our proven approach of client collaboration, integrated blend of approaches and high quality facilitation has been recognised and rewarded with the programme being extended from Grade 6 to AO staff across the Civil Service – a huge accolade for our team.

“Thank you for such an interesting module, and for the energy and enthusiasm that you and your colleagues bring to the table. You have made this programme a success by keeping us all motivated and focused on the end goal.”