

## LEADING LEADERS

Businesses need to train their managers to become their leaders of the future. We find out how two companies employed the services of a business psychologist to take a slightly different approach...

Companies William Hill and Anglian Water had identified a number of potential leaders amongst their staff, who they wanted to provide with the skills to be their leaders of the future. They turned to business psychologists Kaisen Consulting to implement a leadership training programme for their managers that would stand apart from previous training undertaken.



Kaisen Consulting's FAB (Feelings Attitude Behaviour) programme has been developed to impart managers and leaders with leadership skills. Explains Kaisen consultant Robert Myatt: "Using psychological insights we locate where the skills shortages are and work with individual leaders to provide them."

The FAB programme is based on five desired outcomes: good teamwork, improved performance, innovation, engagement and alignment. Leaders are shown how to achieve these outcomes using psychological techniques to shape staff behaviour and encourage the communication of emotions, to convey authority and integrity, to deliver effective motivation and show that their teams are valued.

Instead of the usual broad-brush theory, Kaisen provides individually-tailored sessions in practical skills, provided by trained experts.

William Hill had already had performance management processes in place for some time, and had used Kaisen before. However, they decided they needed a more skills based, people focused approach to support the process of taking senior management training one step further.

The top 60 William Hill managers from the CEO downwards took part in a two day training course, which was based around role play scenarios of an employee review. With small groups made up of three William Hill employees, and observed by a Kaisen trainer, each person had a role to play; that of the manager carrying out the review, the person being reviewed and a third person observing the behaviours and attitudes of the other two involved. At the end of each role play, each individual involved was asked to give their feedback to the Kaisen observer, who collated the information and talked to all three participants individually, to encourage them to think about their style and approach during the session.

*"training has raised the bar on their performance"*

"The training allowed people to practise their skills at tackling a challenging issue. It has helped people to develop their own style, and understand about their choice of language and the impact it has on others. Eighteen months after the training, we now have a situation where senior managers are carrying out reviews and are scrutinising the way they are doing it. We can see key areas where the behaviour of emerging leaders has changed, in particular in their attitudes and use of language. The training has raised the bar on their performance and accelerated their development to become leaders," said Jo Brown group management development manager at William Hill.

Kaisen believes that leadership development should start with individuals really knowing themselves. "It is not just about teaching a new set of techniques," says Myatt, "leaders need to understand their own psychology - in particular which aspects of their personality are holding them back. Leaders have to create the right conditions for the key outcomes we've identified as essential for getting the best out of the work-force."

Anglian Water wanted an integrated and holistic approach to leadership growth and the Kaisen model formed an integral part of an intensive development programme delivered over twelve months.



"Kaisen's leadership programme formed part of our strategy to lift our high-flyers onto the next leadership tier. Participants were assessed using psychometric testing, reasoning and biographical interviews, and a personal development plan agreed," explained Phil Brown, Anglian's head of Organisation and People Development.

*"an understanding of the way people feel, think and behave"*

The Anglian leadership programme included modules on 'Leading and Inspiring Teams' and 'Personal Impact and Influence'. These showed how an understanding of the way people feel, think and behave would enable managers to better motivate and inspire - and improve team performance.

The modules explained how the principles of psychology can be applied effectively to leadership. How a manager conveys authority, the behaviour they model and the messages they communicate will all influence how a team responds to their leadership. FAB's focus on practical skills also showed Anglian's emerging leaders how to create alignment, engagement and innovation in their teams, and how to get people to buy into their vision.

Kaisen conducted before and after skills check questionnaires to measure the success of the FAB programme. Across the group, the results showed an uplift of up to 41% in confidence and ability to perform essential leadership skills.



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