

The objective

To improve the leadership and management capabilities of South and Vale service managers now working in a shared services model, in order to deliver the best, most efficient services with reduced budgets.

The approach

TLC programme of tailored workshops, management cafes, action learning sets and mentoring to every service manager to develop core leadership and management skills.

The business impact

Positive, motivated staff equipped with the tools and techniques to be excellent managers. Enhanced working across departments has led to higher engagement, increased efficiency, a reduction in absence rates and a saving of £250K a year as managers take on more responsibilities.

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South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils feel the benefits of partnership working with TLC

In 2010 South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse Councils identified a need to up-skill their service managers to meet the challenges of their new shared management and staffing structure. "We'd just begun to pull services together, and people who previously had one or two members of staff found themselves managing teams. We really needed to equip all the service managers with the knowledge and skills to manage well" says Matt Prosser, Strategic Director, South and Vale Councils.

The buy-in of all the 33 service managers was so important, they even had a say in appointing TLC Ltd. The two shortlisted organisations were invited to run a taster session and overwhelmingly the service managers wanted TLC. "In addition to their unique blend of psychological understanding and organisational development expertise, TLC showed creativity and innovation in their approach – they were a good 'fit' for our organisation, plus they have a great track record of delivery" says Matt. "Our relationship with TLC has been fantastic. We have been looked after extremely well; they are responsive and flexible and the programme has really benefitted from having honest conversations about its content."

The benefits of the programme have been significant. "As a result of Mastering Management we have empowered service managers working collaboratively and learning from each other for the benefit of South and Vale," states Matt. TLC's unique blend of transactional analysis with emotional intelligence has led to increased efficiency and creativity, a more supportive culture, and the relationship between the organisation's senior team and the service managers has improved. As one of the service managers says, "I have grown enormously as a manager. I'm now much more confident in my ability to manage a team, my budgets, deliver quality services that are fit for purpose, and think strategically. This is largely down to the Mastering Management programme."

Absenteeism rates have gone down from an average of 8.5 days per year in 2009 to 6.5 in 2012, and Matt attributes some of this to Mastering Management. "Our service managers are now equipped to have difficult conversations if they need to, and there's been a definite reduction in conflicts. We have motivated staff who are engaged, committed and want to be at work."

"Everyone has certainly 'upped' their game. The service managers feel capable to take on extra responsibility across a range of service departments and as a result we are saving £250,000 per annum thanks to the TLC programme."

Delighted with the impact of Mastering Management on the performance of the organisation to date, TLC is currently rolling out the programme to South and Vale Councils' team leaders as well as running taster sessions for all employees. "The tools and techniques are so relevant, we want everyone to understand them and speak the same language. We sincerely believe it is a worthwhile investment for the organisation" concludes Matt.

About TLC:

Established by directors Colin Newbold and Nicky Pharoah in 1991, TLC specialises in organisational talent development and helps to align individuals, teams, organisations and cultures behind the business strategy. The shifting economic landscape has forced our clients into organisational restructuring for cultural and commercial reasons and we're helping by up-skilling line managers. TLC is where shift happens...helping to shift organisations from where they are now to where they want to be. TLC shift workers (our facilitators and coaches) are operationally experienced leaders with a psychology background and expertise in organisational development. This enables them to diagnose and get to the root cause of the specific issues affecting both professional and business success, as well as equipping them to deal with any behaviour that comes up during the course of their delivery.

Specific deliverables include talent assessment and development; leadership, management and team development; culture change and change management; communication skills; sales development; individual and group coaching, while our online subsidiary offers organisational feedback tools such as 360 and employee engagement.

TLC are based in Tunbridge Wells and have worked with an impressive portfolio of clients ranging from well known brands to public sector organisations. Examples include Telefonica O2, E.ON, Southern Railway, Diageo, Catalyst Housing Ltd and Kent County Council.