



# INDUSTRY- LEADING CASE STUDIES 2023

Transformation  
Leading With Purpose  
Brand & Values  
Innovation  
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
Employee Voice  
Talent  
CSR & Corporate Sustainability  
Learning  
Coaching & Mentoring  
Wellbeing



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## BUSINESS CULTURE CASE STUDIES 2023

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OVERALL WINNER

# LLOYDS BANKING GROUP: A BEACON OF CULTURAL EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

In the world of finance and banking, excellence is not just a goal, it is a necessity. But for Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) excellence is not just about numbers and figures, it is also about culture, diversity and innovation. Celebrating an astounding ten wins in six years at the prestigious Business Culture Awards, the bank has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation when it comes to its culture.

In 2023 LBG clinched the title of overall winner at the Business Culture Awards and took away three category awards. From diversity and inclusion initiatives to supporting employees with cancer and transforming learning and skills development, LBG has consistently shown a dedication to creating a positive and inclusive culture.



## Championing diversity and inclusion

One of the standout strategies of LBG has been its focus on increasing diversity through the recruitment of returners, specifically individuals who have taken a career break of at least 18 months.

By focusing on transferable skills and offering tailored support throughout the hiring process, LBG has successfully reintegrated returners into the workforce. As a result, the company has achieved a remarkable 90% representation of women and a 60% representation of Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic professionals returning back in permanent roles. The strategy has also debunked the myth that returners are unable to move back into tech roles, with 60% of recent returners securing positions in this field. LBG's commitment to diversity extends further with a public goal to increase the representation of disabled colleagues in senior management to 12% by 2025.

Lloyds Banking Group meets diversity targets with 'business as usual' returners strategy: [\[View full Case Study\]](#)

## Empowering through education: The Data & Tech Academy

In addition to attracting tech people back through the returner strategy LBG has innovatively addressed its skills shortage in the technical field through the establishment of the Data & Tech Academy. Recognising the need for upskilling so that every colleague has the opportunity to become fluent in digital and data, it has created a centralised learning environment. By partnering with external providers and offering comprehensive learning experiences LBG has empowered colleagues to develop the necessary technical skills for ongoing transformation. The Academy has not only increased awareness and knowledge of new technologies but has also reduced the reliance on external contractors and

## OVERALL WINNER

increased retention of colleagues through further developmental opportunities. Now there is a structured development and internal mobility pathway into technical roles.

Lloyds Banking Group's Data & Tech Academy transforms learning and skills development:

[\[View full Case Study\]](#)

### Supporting colleagues through wellbeing

The bank's dedication to its employees extends beyond skill development and diversity initiatives. Recognising the importance of colleague wellbeing it has also taken research-based action to support employees with cancer. As a founding member of the Working with Cancer Pledge it created a workplace culture where employees impacted by cancer can feel supported and bring their whole selves to work. By conducting comprehensive research and implementing initiatives such as peer support communities and manager training LBG has created a psychologically safe environment for employees affected by cancer. The impact of these efforts has been significant, with hundreds of colleagues sharing their stories and actively engaging in support networks.

Lloyds Banking Group takes research-based action to support employees with cancer:

[\[View full Case Study\]](#)

LBG's impressive streak at the Business Culture Awards is not just about winning, it is about setting a precedent for what a supportive, diverse and innovative work environment should look like. Its commitment to its employees solidifies its reputation as a leader and sets a standard for the banking industry.

### Grow with purpose

Lloyds Banking Group already had a compelling purpose to help Britain prosper and it had set out an ambitious five-year strategy to drive growth and deepen relationships. However, to achieve this, the bank needed to transform its culture from one focused on oversight and control to one that embraced growth and purpose. Its Grow with Purpose programme targeted the top 300 senior leaders.

An immersive three-day bootcamp inspired and challenged leaders to adopt a growth mindset and drive personal and team development. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with an overall score of 9/10 and high praise for the engaging sessions and world-class content. The programme's success led to the creation of the Catalysts Programme, involving 6,500 colleagues, and "camp" events to continue driving cultural change. This resulted in visible shifts in leadership and purpose-led decision-making, setting the stage for the organisation's continued growth.

Lloyds Banking Group grows with purpose to drive cultural transformation and purpose-led decision-making:

[\[View full Case Study\]](#)

**To delve deeper into Lloyds Banking Group's approach explore the full case studies linked below:**

1. [Lloyds Banking Group meets diversity targets with 'business as usual' returners strategy](#)
2. [Lloyds Banking Group's Data & Tech Academy transforms learning and skills development](#)
3. [Lloyds Banking Group takes research-based action to support employees with cancer](#)
4. [Lloyds Banking Group grows with purpose to drive cultural transformation and purpose-led decision-making](#)
5. [Your Best](#)
6. [Group Culture 2020](#)
7. [Putting customers first 2019](#)
8. [Using agile in cultural transformation with ?What If!](#)

## TRANSFORMATION

# INVESCO'S RADICAL SHIFT IN APPROACH TO CHANGE TRANSFORMS MARKETING FUNCTION'S PERFORMANCE

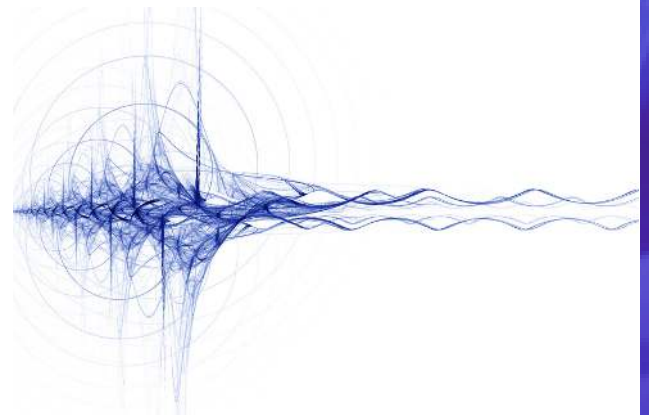
## Background

Invesco, a leading global asset management firm, saw the need for a strategic transformation in its European Marketing function to maintain its competitive edge. Changing market pressures necessitated a shift from a predominantly sales-support function to a role that prioritised creativity, collaboration and strategic influence. Two years in it had made some progress but its incremental approach was not delivering the type or speed of change required. A fresh perspective was needed if it were to achieve cultural transformation in what is a fast-moving but highly risk averse environment.

## Approach

Invesco partnered with Corporate Punk in 2020 to implement a three-step strategy titled Create, Embed and Normalise. Create involved the development and observation of a newly formed cross-functional but small group, focusing on enhancing creativity and collaboration. Insights garnered from this phase were escalated in the Embed phase, with more teams replicating the success of the initial team through coaching and training. The Normalise phase aimed to engage the entire European Marketing organisation in the transformative process, turning the successful practices into the new standard business procedure.

This phased approach ensured a gradual and sustainable cultural shift within the organisation. Invesco used Corporate Punk's Change Index to examine its cultural dynamics and understand where support would be best targeted – and so shape the strategy. It also benefited from the consultancy's Uncomfortable Conversations training, which fortified the capacity of teams to handle difficult politics for themselves.



## Outcome

“The result of this wholesale change is that its team has never been healthier, its performance never better and its people feel more able to bring their best selves to work”

Despite challenges posed by the pandemic, Invesco achieved a significant transformation in the business and cultural dynamics of the European Marketing team. Data from the Change Index and Invesco's own performance management systems exhibit double-digit uplifts in flexibility and risk-taking. Morale jumped with more than 70% of the entire team reporting feeling better

informed, more energised and more willing to support new ways of working with many long-standing team members achieving significant (and often unexpected) improvements in engagement and performance.

The transformation has also delivered remarkable improvements in customer engagement, streamlined marketing practices and expanded opportunities. What is noteworthy is the teams' continued evolution post-transformation – innovating and improving without external compulsion. The success of the project influenced the formation of a global Marketing function within Invesco, enabling similar cultural transformations in other markets. It says the result of this wholesale change is that its team has never been healthier, its performance never better and its people feel more able to bring their best selves to work.

## TRANSFORMATION

# ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY TRANSFORMS LEADERSHIP TO DELIVER 'HELP AND HOPE'

## Background

One in three people born in the UK today are expected to develop dementia in their lifetime. With 1,800 employees and 6,000 volunteers, Alzheimer's Society plays a crucial role in providing support, advocating for change and funding research for people living with dementia.

In 2021 it faced challenges from all sides, including lingering negative media coverage, low engagement results, a change in CEO and the impact of the Coronavirus. That year was about survival – but the charity also recognised the longer-term need to be more strategic, impact-driven and agile if it were to make a meaningful difference for those living with dementia.

However, its leadership structure of a small executive leadership team (ELT) of just six people and a large second tier of 65 heads of function was causing bottlenecks and delays in decision-making. It was working in siloes and opportunities were being missed to drive its culture forward and have the greatest impact for its cause.

## Approach

Alzheimer's Society implemented a new senior leadership team (SLT) structure to increase agility and accountability. The SLT was designed to connect successes across the organisation, focus on culture change and create greater impact, allowing the ELT to focus on external influencing and long-term strategy.

To create the SLT the charity launched an associate director recruitment and development programme, with 50% internal promotions and 50% new hires. The recruitment process and job descriptions were also redesigned to be values and purpose led.

In 2022 Alzheimer's launched a five-year strategy 'Help and Hope' to unite around the way forward all focused on the ambition of wanting a world where dementia no longer devastates lives.



Every part of the organisation was examined to find ways to improve and embed an inclusive, sustainable, effective culture that enabled everyone to deliver at their best.

“ Fundraising income reached its highest ever at £90 million and there has been significant political influencing in order to make dementia a priority ”

## Outcome

The SLT has had a transformative impact in just 12-18 months. Alzheimer's Society has implemented an impact framework, a values-based culture programme and a successful brand refresh. Fundraising income reached its highest ever at £90 million and there has been significant political influencing in order to make dementia a priority. Engagement levels have improved, with overall engagement at 85%, an increase in trust and respect in leadership and positive ratings as a place to work.

The difference in leadership impact has been transformational. Associate Directors have become highly visible and are uniting and inspiring the organisation. Participants in the SLT development programme reported significant increases in awareness and confidence together with a sense of connection.

The Alzheimer's Society featured as a Sunday Times Best Place to Work. This success is attributed to the new leadership team and its role as catalysts, enablers and culture-changers.

[View Alzheimer's Society Wellbeing Case Study.](#)

## TRANSFORMATION

# TRANSFORMATIVE CULTURAL TURNAROUND AT GATTACA BUILDS A BETTER FUTURE ONE JOB AT A TIME



## Background

By the summer of 2021 technical-skills recruiter Gattaca was facing significant operational and financial challenges. From a high-performing business with a growing share price, it was now on difficult terrain thanks to acquisitions, a three-year multi-million pound project to reduce 72 technology systems to just two, pandemic-induced workforce disruptions and complex legislation changes. Performance suffered, the company failed to capitalise on the biggest boom the recruitment market has ever seen and a plummet in share price indicated a need for a dramatic transformation.

## Approach

Understanding the gravity of the situation, Gattaca's executive board embarked on a project to breathe life back into their organisation. It was clear from feedback that an inspiring vision and clear path to success were key to achieving this. The result was a new organisational purpose, vision, mission & values (PVMV) – “To provide the skills needed to build a better future – one job at a time” – replacing an unmemorable one that had spoken to the ‘what’ but not the ‘why’.

This purpose inspired a vision – “To become the STEM talent partner of choice” – recognising that these skills are critical to building a better, more sustainable and more accessible future. And it influenced Gattaca's mission “to provide a service so trusted that we are recommended without hesitation”.

The new PVMV was communicated through a comprehensive engagement programme,

including a launch day event with personalised gift packs sent to homes containing mugs which, when heated, revealed a QR to the launch video. There was also a ‘through the keyhole’ style global awards roadshow, designed to reinject fun and local engagement with senior leaders, showing up unannounced to surprise colleagues, and client and partnership communications.

The company also launched an X-Mess Competition, designed to help to build a better future by teaching children about upcycling and the waste that Christmas produces. Additionally, ongoing weekly video communications were implemented to reinforce the new culture.

“Gattaca has seen monumental transformations in its people and performance strategy, go-to-market strategy and ESG (environmental, social and governance) strategy”

## Outcome

As a result Gattaca has seen monumental transformations in its people and performance strategy, go-to-market strategy and ESG (environmental, social and governance) strategy. The company has realigned its recruitment processes so that new hires embody the company's values, developed the ‘Gattaca DNA’ competency framework to translate the PVMV into tangible behaviours and transformed its brand structure to align with the PVMV. Relationships with stakeholders have also improved both internally and externally and attrition has halved while net promoter scores have risen.

The company has attracted 16 ex-employees back into the business, representing 20% of hires. This has been so successful it has started offering this alumni scheme as a consultancy service to clients. Gattaca is now positioned to work towards a more sustainable, equitable and inclusive future.

## LEADING WITH PURPOSE

# CAE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES LTD POWERS GROWTH THROUGH BECOMING A CULTURE-FIRST ORGANISATION

## Background

As a rapidly expanding company with headcount increasing by 70% and a turnover doubling in five years, CAE Technology Services Ltd (CAE) knew it must prioritise its culture in order to prevent its dilution or loss. Recognising it needed to invest more in articulating, promoting and celebrating its culture-driven purpose, CAE developed a 'Culture First' approach, making culture the first thought to guide actions and to put everything into context. This approach emphasises people, collaboration, wellbeing, communication and constant evolution, with the key principle being the power of an authentic, purpose-driven culture.

## Approach

To uphold its culture, CAE has initiated extensive measures across various organisational spectra. The firm set up technology-enabled collaborative workspaces, fostered employee wellbeing through flexible working hours, gym contracts and access to wellbeing apps, and instituted a 'future of leadership programme in collaboration with

Franklin Covey to develop leadership skills at all levels of the organisation.

It has revamped its learning and development to emphasise personal ambition aligned with company aspirations and released an annual Culture Book to encapsulate the culture-first approach. The company uses language strategically to reflect its values. For example, the term 'buffalo' to describe its approach to managing business priorities and 'making it purple' to signify its distinctive CAE touch in core messaging. Conversely, it avoids using terms like 'collective' and 'fluffy' when referring to decision-making or culture, as they are seen as counterproductive.

CAE has also added mid-year momentum meetings for celebrations of the culture and people's successes and, based on feedback from its people, introduced a new value: Advocate Belonging. Central to CAE's approach is that everyone should contribute to innovation, so it encourages everyone to share their 'if only' moments and has established CAE Labs with a dedicated strategy and innovation team, comprising individuals from across the organisation to ensure innovation is

supported at all levels of the company, including the board. All these changes personify CAE's commitment to continuous improvement propelled by feedback and the experiences of its people.

## Outcome

This investment in culture has positively transformed CAE, as evidenced by its achievements in various areas. In the past year the company has supported the

development of 59 leaders, facilitated internal promotions and reinvigorated its approach to company-wide surveys to better communicate and shared a dedication to operational excellence.

CAE has maintained its 3\* Best Companies status with an impressive globally-unmatched engagement rate of 80%. Its culture-first approach has led to meaningful recognition with

awards like the Cisco Customer Satisfaction Excellence and The Sunday Times FastTrack 100. As the company says, its strategy demonstrates that culture is not a top-down programme but a living, breathing force that permeates all its endeavours. Every individual plays a crucial role in building and developing a successful culture.

“ Its strategy demonstrates that culture is not a top-down programme but a living, breathing force that permeates all its endeavours. Every individual plays a crucial role in building and developing a successful culture ”





## LEADING WITH PURPOSE

# LEEDS BUILDING SOCIETY USES FINANCIAL STRENGTH TO REAFFIRM PURPOSE IN ADDRESSING THE UK HOUSING CRISIS



action that addresses the current barriers to home ownership, with the need to maintain a strong and resilient business that means they can deliver on their purpose for generations to come. This resulted in a series of purpose-aligned actions and the creation of a purpose impact report that set out the issues they aimed to tackle and the positive outcomes the new approach is delivering. A Culture Dashboard was introduced to measure the key cultural enablers of its purpose and track colleague understanding of and advocacy for its purpose-led strategy.

## Background

One of the critical social issues facing the UK today is home ownership. For many people owning their own home has become a dream that's increasingly unreachable. With house prices having quadrupled since the start of the century and the average UK home now costing nearly 10 times the average wage, it's the toughest it's ever been to afford a home since Leeds Building Society (LBS) was founded in 1875. As a mutual society, LBS was established with the purpose of helping people own their homes and save for their future. Seeing how the dream of home ownership was becoming increasingly dim for many, LBS recognised the need to re-emphasise its purpose and be part of the solution to the current housing crisis.

## Approach

Towards the end of 2021, LBS partnered with businessfourzero to refocus its purpose into a clear and enduring commitment to 'put home ownership within reach of more people generation after generation'. The executive team immersed itself in a creative process that produced a blueprint: a simple, enduring framework to guide the business and create an emotional connection to engage colleagues and inspire them to act, regardless of external changes.

The new purpose was then integrated into the business strategy and planning process, serving as a 'north star' for all decision-making. The purpose statement has a designed-in tension that forces the leadership team to balance the need for focused

“ LBS now plans to define its purpose ambition for the next five years and is prepared to use its financial strength to push home ownership ambitions, optimising for purpose rather than profit ”

## Outcome

The purpose blueprint significantly influenced LBS' lending strategy. One bold decision was to stop lending against second home properties, as this directly reduces the housing stock available to local residents. Despite its financial implications, this decision was praised by industry experts, gave the company positive press and reinforced its position as a purpose-led business.

In 2022, despite prevailing market conditions, LBS increased mortgage lending and savings deposits, helping more people own their homes and save for their future. It benchmarked insight from the Culture Dashboard against the financial services sector, where it sits within the top 25%. Regular pulse survey results to track colleague engagement with the Blueprint remain exceptionally high at an average of 97% across all metrics.

LBS now plans to define its purpose ambition for the next five years and is prepared to use its financial strength to push home ownership ambitions, optimising for purpose rather than profit - truly a testament to its purpose-led approach.

## LEADING WITH PURPOSE

# LLOYDS BANKING GROUP GROWS WITH PURPOSE TO DRIVE CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AND PURPOSE-LED DECISION-MAKING

## Background

Lloyds Banking Group has a compelling purpose to help Britain prosper, particularly given the major challenges facing society, such as climate change, inequality and technological advancement. The organisation embarked on a five-year strategy supported by significant investment to drive growth and deepen relationships, with a strong emphasis on placing purpose at the centre of decision-making.

## Approach

To transform the organisation's culture and align it with the new strategy, Lloyds implemented the Grow with Purpose programme, targeting its top 300 senior leaders. The programme aimed to foster a growth mindset, personal growth of leaders and the development of skills within teams. A three-day bootcamp was designed to inspire and challenge leaders, incorporating interactive sessions, external speakers, facilitated coaching and immersive activities.

The programme began with the development of seven behavioural shifts that would shape the transformation and set goals. The Executive and the Board were involved in shaping these shifts. Regular design meetings took place with stakeholders to ensure programme material was on-message and to the highest standard. The bootcamps ran in cohorts of 30-40 people to ensure everyone could be involved and accountable, while cross-business cohorts were able to develop networks. The immersive experience included a fintech 'dragon's den', product prototyping, sustainable model house building and a soapbox storytelling showcase.

“Grow with Purpose has fostered a stronger connection between leaders, customers and customer-facing colleagues”

## Outcome

The programme was a resounding success, with 349 senior leaders attending and an impressive overall feedback score of 9/10. Participants praised the experience as the best growth opportunity at Lloyds and expressed a renewed sense of purpose and focus. They appreciated the world-class content, engaging groups and the opportunity to connect with others.

Following the bootcamp, a Viva engage community was established to maintain connections and support. 35% of leaders shared commitment videos, demonstrating their dedication to driving the necessary behavioural shifts for success.

The success of Grow with Purpose led to the creation of the Catalysts Programme and 'camp' events, involving 6,500 colleagues from across the organisation. These events will further boost cultural change, with leaders acting as driving forces for transformation. The programme garnered exemplary feedback and sign-up rates, highlighting the commitment and effectiveness of the initiative.

Leaders report a 10-point increase in people committing to the organisation's priorities, a 9-point increase in commitment to purpose and a 9-point increase in embracing change. Teams also reported positive changes, including a 9-point increase in perceiving the organisation as more purpose-driven.

Grow with Purpose has fostered a stronger connection between leaders, customers and customer-facing colleagues. Visible leadership and bold decision-making with purpose at the heart became more prominent, leading to improved customer experiences.

It has now become an integral part of the organisation's employer branding, with talent attraction and recruitment activities showcasing the new culture and aspirations.

The logo for 'GROW WITH PURPOSE' features the words 'GROW WITH' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font above the word 'PURPOSE' in a larger, bold, white, sans-serif font. The text is set against a vibrant, multi-colored background of glowing particles in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue, creating a dynamic, starburst effect.

BRAND & VALUES

# LOVELL & CULTURE CONSULTANCY: HOW LOVELL BUILT THEIR UNIQUE WORKPLACE CULTURE

## Background

Lovell, a leading partnership housing company operating in England, Scotland, and Wales, aimed to build a customer-centric, empathetic, and high-performing culture. They sought to deliver outstanding experiences for customers, employees, and partners while expanding from 8 to 12 regions, increasing headcount by 22%, and preserving core culture elements. Lovell aimed to empower its workforce, emphasising principles like devolved decision-making, ownership, and collaboration across regions to create a healthy, inclusive, and high-performance culture.



## Approach

Culture Consultancy addressed Lovell's culture transformation with their 3-stage methodology:

In the **Insight** stage, they comprehensively analysed existing culture, challenges, and opportunities, drawing insights from customer journeys, satisfaction data, and interviews with leaders and colleagues.

In the **Design** stage, facilitated sessions engaged colleagues from diverse regions to define "The Lovell Way" (TLW), comprising three culture principles guiding daily actions, behaviours, and decisions. Internal branding and a 12-month engagement plan were developed to launch TLW nationwide, integrated into campaigns like Suicide Prevention Week and Menopause Awareness Month.

In the **Embed** stage, TLW was gradually incorporated into the employee experience, starting with recruitment. A quarterly survey was introduced to measure engagement, and TLW facilitated collaboration with key partners.

“ Lovell successfully transformed its culture to support growth, enhance employee satisfaction, and achieve better safety records while delivering outstanding customer experiences ”

## Outcome

Lovell's culture transformation yielded impressive results:

- Nationwide events received excellent feedback, with 97% of participants recommending workshops to colleagues and 97% rating them as 'good' or 'excellent.'
- In a quarterly survey, Lovell received high scores, including an 8.6 out of 10 for recommending Lovell as a workplace and an 8.5 out of 10 for overall job satisfaction.
- Lovell's Trustpilot rating improved from 'bad' to 'Great' over 18 months, reflecting happier customers and better reviews.
- Significant safety improvements occurred, with the Lovell Incident Frequency Rate decreasing from 3.58 to 3 and the Accident Frequency Rate (RIDDOR) dropping from 0.07 to 0.04 over 12 months.

In conclusion, Lovell successfully transformed its culture to support growth, enhance employee satisfaction, and achieve better safety records while delivering outstanding customer experiences.

## BRAND & VALUES

# BUILDING BRILLIANT CULTURE – THE INTERACTION WAY

## Background

Interaction, a workspace design firm with a 30-year history, faced the challenge of preserving its culture amid rapid growth and the shift to hybrid work. Their mission: to banish boring offices.

To build a lasting culture, Interaction identified core values intrinsic to everyone through an employee survey: collaboration, commitment, and creativity. Employees, now called 'Actioneers,' embody these values. The challenge was then to streamline onboarding for newcomers, give employees a voice and enhance well-being in a workspace people love.

## Approach

### *Employee Voice*

Interaction established the Ministry of Action (MOA), a group of individuals who volunteered to consistently improve workplace culture and team spirit.

The MOAs have introduced quarterly surveys, which measure employee wellbeing. They created Commitment Days, allowing each Actioneer 2 paid days annually to volunteer for charity, with over 40 Commitment Days being used in the past 10 months. An anonymous channel has also been set up where staff pose questions that the Senior Leadership Team commit to answer at monthly meetings.

### *Onboarding*

Interaction improved the onboarding experience for new starters, ensuring the culture is present from the get-go. A comprehensive handbook now guides new starters through everything from how the taps work to hot-desking etiquette, whilst the MOA pairs newcomers with a buddy from a different department for their first month, fostering a supportive environment for questions without fear of judgement.

### *Happy employees*

Interaction work hard to prioritise employee wellbeing, happiness and job satisfaction, utilising MOA survey feedback. This effort includes weekly bar nights in the office bar, regular 'Beyond The Bar' activities - from board games to boxing, and a weekend

AGM which is a chance for everyone to reconnect. This year's trip included a samba workshop, ferret racing and full-band karaoke.

### *Destination office*

Interaction have recently moved into a purpose-built office that staff love working in. Hot-desking over flexible workstations reduces siloing, and the high-end coffee machine is particularly popular. Weekly face-to-face touchpoints encourage people into the office – smoothies on Mondays, internal learning sessions on Wednesdays, and free Friday bar nights.

## Outcome

The project saw Interaction's headcount grow by about 25%, while establishing a cohesive and scalable culture across all touchpoints. New recruits experience streamlined onboarding, ensuring a quick sense of belonging. Actioneers have a voice in the business and information flow is quick and transparent, with questions, even challenging ones, addressed at monthly leadership meetings. HR data indicates positive trends: increasing quarterly survey responses, impressive onboarding feedback, and decreasing attrition and turnover rates. Relationships among Actioneers are strengthened through diverse social and developmental activities.

What better way to describe Interaction's culture than by asking the team? Here's how they'd describe Interaction in one word:

Dynamic, creative, community, fun, thriving, unique, resilient, inspiring.

What more could you want?

“Their mission: to banish boring offices”



## BRAND & VALUES

# UST TRANSFORMS LIVES AND ACHIEVES IMPRESSIVE OUTCOMES THROUGH ITS 'COLORS' ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

## Background

With an ever-expanding global presence and a diverse workforce, digital products, platforms and services business UST, which has more than 34,000 employees across 30 countries, faced the challenge of sustaining engagement. It also sought to align organisational growth with employee personal growth and promote collaboration across different generations and cultures. And in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic UST needed to facilitate a smooth transition back to the office while ensuring equal engagement and empowerment for all employees, regardless of their start dates.

## Approach

Not content with reinventing the wheel, UST decided to sustain, strengthen and scale up its existing in-house Colors framework. This two-decade-old framework, known as Colors of UST, has become an integral part of the company's organisational culture, firmly rooted in its core values of humility, humanity and integrity. Each Color represents a specific purpose. Color Rose stands for community relations, Purple for people, Quartz for quality and speed, Indigo for innovation, Orange for digital organisation, Gold for global branding and green for growth. The framework connects associates across the globe, fostering a sense of purpose and belonging as well as achieving corporate goals through participative management and employee empowerment. With this foundation in place UST set out to address its key challenges through the below mentioned four-pronged approach:

- 1 - To keep up with rapid growth it embraced a 'glocal' approach that combined a global framework, while empowering each function and geography with full autonomy to run initiatives suitable for them.
- 2 - Aligning organisational growth with employee personal growth, it introduced the Colors Growth Engine. Every UST associate can choose to be part of one or more Colors based on their personal interests, which allows them to drive initiatives related to their passion areas while contributing to the overall goals of the organisation.
- 3- By employing a purpose-driven bottom-up approach UST accomplished intra- and inter-generational as well as intra- and inter-national collaboration. This innovative strategy tapped into the intrinsic motivation of UST's diverse workforce and allowed each Color team to bring their unique perspectives to driving change. Notably, the framework provided equal opportunities for every employee to make a meaningful impact, irrespective of their position or background.

“By employing a purpose-driven bottom-up approach UST accomplished intra- and inter-generational as well as intra- and inter-national collaboration”



4 - Addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic UST focused on making the transition back to the office vibrant and engaging for its employees. The company's Workplace Vibes initiatives energised the workplace by organising a wide range of engagement events. UST partnered with the Values and Culture team to assist employees in smoothly transitioning to a hybrid work mode, with value partners ensuring support through buddying. These efforts helped bring 100% of the workforce back to the office at least three days a week, fostering a 'one-team' mindset while maintaining consistent levels of engagement and empowerment.

Traditional leadership roles are replaced by servant leadership, giving every employee the freedom to innovate and contribute ideas that are supported by the organisation.

## Outcome

UST has experienced consistent revenue growth and profitability, achieved Great Place to Work certification and won numerous Brandon Hall Group awards for excellence in human capital management. Overall, UST was able to contribute approximately 25,000+ volunteering hours across 9 geographies. Additionally, this engaging framework impacted the communities through various CSR projects, by touching 200,000+ lives across the world, including skill-placed training and job placements. And, importantly, this approach has helped it achieve great results with its customers,. Out of the many benefits, there was a \$30 million projected per year saving for a US managed healthcare company whose business problem was given over to bright minds within UST as part of the Color Indigo's internal hackathon event.

## INNOVATION

# PROVIDE COMMUNITY'S INNOVATIVE DIGITALISATION TRANSFORMS LIVES

## Background

The health and social care sector is under significant and increasing pressure from post-COVID waiting times and the cost of living crisis. As a notoriously complex and under-resourced sector, innovation is not easy. However, community interest company Provide Community, a social enterprise delivering more than 50 health and social care services across England in NHS and community settings, had a vision to blend excellence in healthcare with the dynamism of a business venture. Its strategy was to transform services, nurture agility and share learning and innovation, and it believed this could only be achieved by creating and fuelling a culture of innovation, changing mindsets and investing in new ways of working.

## Approach

With innovation as a cornerstone, the not-for-profit organisation was keen to encourage new ideas from its 1,200 colleagues. It came up with an Innovation Tree, designed to engage employees in problem-solving and nurturing bold and creative solutions that promise a return on time, effort and resources and can be shared for the benefit of the wider community in health and social care. A successful collaboratively developed pilot involved its Child Health Information Service (CHIS) team creating a digital triage system to minimise the delay between a child's Accident and Emergency attendance and clinical review. Previously, a high risk due to vast amounts of paperwork, the project involved multiple agencies and partners, with objectives including uploading A&E attendances, reducing processing time and building reports and algorithms within the electronic patient records system.

“ There could have been a commercial opportunity in the solution but all stakeholders in the project have agreed that all learning will be made available to any other organisation who wishes to benefit from this ”

## Outcome

The resulting digital triage system revolutionised children's A&E visit data processing. Amassing over 66,000 attendees' data, it enabled a 100% upload of A&E attendance records within 24 hours, streamlined clinicians' work, trimmed down processing hours and identified children in need of care faster. All these advantages translated into almost £66,000 in savings annually. The changes also ensured better record review, quick information access for strategy discussions and faster clinician response. The success was shared and adopted in neighbouring regions, while information sharing capabilities have been improved through an eRedbook and the Brigid App, which enables clinicians to remotely view A&E data, particularly beneficial to those making home visits.

There could have been a commercial opportunity in the solution but all stakeholders in the project have agreed that all learning will be made available to any other organisation who wishes to benefit from this. Starting in one hospital, spreading to four and now across the country, the solution has been developed in a way that allows for rapid and easy expansion without the need for additional servers, software or licences, reaffirming Provide Community's commitment to transform lives through innovation.



## INNOVATION

# PACE REDEFINES THROUGH A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND CO-CREATION



## Background

PACE, a newly-formed business consulting firm, wanted to create an innovative culture and operational environment to enable it to deliver its aim to create a better deal for its people and customers by creating environments that thrive. The company was launched in October 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, a time filled with uncertainties. However, it viewed this as an opportunity to establish and nurture a culture at founding stage that fosters openness, ownership, thinking differently and high performance to prepare it to move from start-up to growth to scale-up stage. Maintaining and evolving this culture with its expanding team, at the time working remotely, would be a critical aspect of their strategy.

## Approach

The approach was very much people-first. A structured process was established involving the entire team, the leadership, a dedicated people team, in-house process consultants and external teams and individuals from high performance environments like sports, Armed Forces and high performing individuals from industry.

The six-step process involved setting a clear strategic direction, co-creating values through extensive employee engagement, creating a PACE-Setters Culture Handbook titled Pushing Boundaries, embedding cultural values in daily operations and implementing a robust

communication and reinforcement mechanism. Ongoing measurement and adaptation was enforced via a clear measurement framework to help the company understand how effective its culture was at engaging, empowering, attracting and retaining consultants – and if its culture is helping it win and keep customers. When things needed to change, it took action quickly and collaboratively.

The rationale behind the approach was a rich mix of co-creation, effective communication, strategic direction and openness.

“Maintaining and evolving this culture with its expanding team, at the time working remotely, would be a critical aspect of their strategy”

## Outcome

To date PACE's approach has proven effective. Fast company growth, exceptional talent recruitment and wins in business indicate its success. An ongoing focus on diversity and inclusivity, the creation of 'PACE Blend' sessions and an incentive scheme which enables all 41 permanently employed PACE-Setters to be shareholders further enhance commitment. Both employee satisfaction and retention rates (currently 100%) and customer acquisition and retention have shown promising results. The firm has a pipeline of potential candidates that represents 32% of its employees.

PACE credits a 67% year on year revenue growth to the unique culture it has created. The outcomes clearly articulate that PACE's culture is not just effective but that its people-centric approach is helping it to meet its aim of disrupting the business consulting industry.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

# LEWES FOOTBALL CLUB REDEFINES THE BEAUTIFUL GAME THROUGH GENDER EQUALITY

## Background

Lewes Football Club made history in 2017 when it became the first club worldwide to equally split its playing budgets between its men's and women's teams. Community-owned and driven by the mission "to use football as a vehicle for social change," the board directors questioned the previous strategy of giving men the larger share. Directors Ed Ramsden and Charlie Dobres re-stood for election on the basis of introducing 'Equality FC.' The idea: establishing a level playing field by resourcing both teams equally. Critics argued that the attendance for women's games was lower, causing less revenue generation from sponsors and match days. However, Lewes FC countered that by targeting a new market segment, women who disliked football, gate figures would increase.

## Approach

Karen Dobres targeted women's groups to speak to where members did not traditionally like football. To gather traction for 'Equality FC', the matchday experiences were altered to cater to the new market segment. Prosecco bars, female choirs singing during warm-ups, a nail bar, women's football chanting practices and inspirational talks were part of the new, welcoming game environment. The strategy was communicated via thought pieces, speaking engagements, and targeted matchday posters of inspirational women. Major success was achieved when the club got the application for the women's football Championship league approved, thus positioning themselves among renowned clubs like Manchester United and Aston Villa. Further, an 'Unlock the Gate' campaign was introduced in order to align with the centenary of suffrage, focusing on school assemblies and stirring much-needed conversations around gender equality.

“Major success was achieved when the club got the application for the women's football Championship league approved, thus positioning themselves among renowned clubs like Manchester United and Aston Villa”

## Outcome

As a result, the women's gate figure quadrupled within two seasons and the men's gates recorded an increase too. The promotion of the club's mission not only increased game attendance but also increased club ownership from approximately 1,000 to 1,500. Lewes FC won the 'He For She' award, Sisterships groups were launched and the club has attracted expert staff members, including CEO Maggie Murphy, who joined from an advocacy and human rights background, and Head of Performance Kelly Lindsey, an ex US Women player and coach of the Moroccan and Afghan Women's team. The club's commitment towards maintaining a welcoming match atmosphere also witnessed an increase in families attending the women's games. It prompted an initiative started by the men's team, #CallHimOut, addressing sexism and misogyny actively. Lewes FC has become a pioneering example of a sports club emphasising cultural inclusion and fairness.





## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

# SHATTERING GLASS CEILINGS: HOW CHIVAS BROTHERS ACHIEVED EQUITY IN ITS LEADERSHIP

## Background

Pernod Ricard's Scotch Whisky business, Chivas Brothers, needed to develop inclusive leadership skills to cultivate a strong culture across the company, with a vision to positively impact women into leadership statistics and to close the gender pay gap. Notably, in the male-dominated Scotch whisky industry only 25%



of Chivas Brothers' leadership roles were filled by women, resulting in a gender pay gap of 7.3%. Chivas Brothers aimed to address these issues by tackling skills gaps in senior managers who needed to refine their coaching skills, something which was

preventing them from growing and nurturing diverse teams. To instil a culture of inclusivity among its nationally dispersed workforce across offices, distilleries and factories, a programme that was accessible and relevant to all employees whilst embedding continuous learning as a habit was required.

“ The programme delivered impressive results, including helping to reduce the gender pay gap from 7.3% in 2021 to 5.4% in 2023 and helping to increase the representation of women in leadership roles from 25% to 43% ”

## Approach

The company partnered with Hive Learning to execute a strategic blended learning programme that sought to foster an understanding of company values and managers' purpose, diverse talent, inclusive leadership skills and conflict mitigation. Live training sessions brought managers together for facilitated conversation, whilst a platform for social learning between sessions created a space to contribute to the conversation and access additional resources. Recognising the necessity of consistent learning the programme was partitioned into two parts,

taking place from 2022 to 2023. The second half saw the inclusion of an external trainer for further specialisation in leadership skills. Additionally, a Leadership Day was organised as an opportunity for leaders to physically convene and construct a Leadership Charter, reinforcing the culture of inclusivity.

Hive Learning provided tailored content, leveraged social learning features and offered data-driven insights that enabled Chivas Brothers to measure progress and impact. These insights also highlighted where managers were struggling, informing the direction of the masterclasses.

## Outcome

The programme delivered impressive results, including helping to reduce the gender pay gap from 7.3% in 2021 to 5.4% in 2023 and helping to increase the representation of women in leadership roles from 25% to 43%. It substantially improved managerial understanding, with 43% more managers reporting a strong comprehension of their purpose as leaders.

The initiative has contributed to the reshaping of the company culture, equipping leaders with the capability to coach teams to success, to align diverse teams and to instil a sense of inclusivity. As a result, the employee engagement rate increased by +4 points compared to the previous year, and fairness and equity rose by +7 points, demonstrating the shift in culture towards inclusivity and equity in the organisation. Notably, the programme's efforts contributed to the closure of the gender pay gap across the Pernod Ricard organisation as a whole, setting a precedent for ongoing inclusion, equity, diversity and growth through coaching, developing and upskilling senior leaders. In fact, the approach has been so successful that Pernod Ricard is now looking to develop blended programmes for other business units and teams as it seeks to build an even more inclusive, supportive and ambitious business culture.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

# LLOYDS BANKING GROUP MEETS DIVERSITY TARGETS WITH 'BUSINESS AS USUAL' RETURNERS STRATEGY

## Background

Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) started recruiting returners in 2016, with the goal of increasing diversity in its senior leadership. It initially focused on gender diversity and expanded to include other aspects of diversity. It also aimed to bring more women into tech roles, and the Lloyds Banking Group Returners programme played a significant role in achieving this. LBG decided to move this programme into a business-as-usual approach rather than an annual campaign so that hiring managers had more ownership and there would be greater opportunities for business unit participation, as managers could plan and recruit at their own pace rather than at set times of the year.

## Approach

In 2023 Lloyds Banking Group transitioned to the business-as-usual model for returners. To support this change, it created a group-wide learning suite to educate hiring managers on the benefits of recruiting returners. It also tailored and streamlined



recruitment processes to ensure returners feel fully supported throughout the hiring process.

The bank advertised returner roles on various diverse job boards, exclusively targeting

individuals returning from a career break of at least 18 months. It focused on transferable skills and experience rather than industry-specific experience. The company encouraged all business areas to review upcoming vacancies and advertise them to returners, broadening the types of roles available. It also provided tailored job adverts and a recruitment process that offered support, hints and tips to help returners feel fully supported.

Once onboard returners receive considerable support from line managers and team members.

The bank set up a virtual hub for returners to aid in their personal development and networking with other returners. Each returner is paired with a buddy or mentor from their team to help them settle into the business and receive the necessary support to develop their skills and contacts. Ongoing 1:2:1s and check-ins with line managers ensure that returners receive continuous support and a platform to provide feedback or raise concerns.

“Ongoing 1:2:1s and check-ins with line managers ensure that returners receive continuous support and a platform to provide feedback or raise concerns”

## Outcome

The bank has achieved a 90% representation of women and a 60% representation of Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic professionals returning back into a permanent role since 2021. The programme has debunked the myth that returners are unable to move back into tech roles, with 60% of recent returners securing tech positions. LBG has set a public goal to increase the representation of disabled colleagues in senior management to 12% by 2025, with 9% of returners disclosing a disability since 2021. The programme has also been successful in attracting a diverse range of talented individuals, with 74% of returners aged 35-50 and 14% over 50 years old. Returners have shown long-term commitment, with 39% staying with the company for more than five years and 50% for more than two years. The approach has received positive feedback from hiring managers, who say that returners bring a desire to challenge and improve the ways they work, a wealth of experience and a different perspective and outlook.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

# GAME-CHANGING RESULTS FOR THE US DEPARTMENT OF STATE AS VIRTUAL DEIA TRAINING CREATES INCLUSIVE CULTURE

## Background

Locally employed staff at the US Department of State's 87 embassies and consulates across Europe and Eurasia interact daily with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures. As such it is vital they have a deep understanding of DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility). To strengthen this understanding and build their vocabulary to help them become comfortable demonstrating vulnerability and practising critical conversations as part of their learning journey, in 2021 the Regional Support Centre (RSC Europe, located in Frankfurt, Germany) Training and Development Department of the US Department of State tasked Blue Door Creative Development to create a virtual DEIA course for their locally-hired staff.

## Approach

Blue Door interviewed a range of target learners across 11 countries to understand training needs, challenges, concerns, key themes and what initiatives existed. It then worked closely with RSC Europe to tailor a five-day virtual course that included live facilitator-led sessions, online study, group discussions and interactive case study videos.

To enhance the learning experience and bring it to life KIT Theatre was contracted to create realistic case study videos based on the experiences of local staff. Diversity scenarios were filmed using a local staff character and then presented back to the group. On day four the characters surprised participants by unexpectedly appearing and seeking advice. A live actor-led 'mediator' helps the characters and asks the groups to provide further coaching based on what they have just witnessed during the live scene.

Blue Door also trained RSC Europe's trainers and selected adjunct faculty to become fully versed with the facilitation and production of the course.

“Participants said the course created a safe space for them to “get it wrong”, enabling them to share their stories and learn from their colleagues”

## Outcome

The course received high praise from participants, with one calling it "one of the best training courses" in their 20+ year career with the US government. Participants commended the trainers for providing an exceptional learning experience and expressed how they felt more prepared to create a more inclusive workplace. Participants said the course created a safe space for them to “get it wrong”, enabling them to share their stories and learn from their colleagues.

The interactive case study component was particularly impactful, with participants considering it a "game changer" in embedding the tools and techniques. Quantitative results showed that 94% of participants felt challenged in ways that stimulated their professional growth, 98% would recommend the training to others and 96% rated the overall course objectives, organisation, content and materials as of the highest quality.

As a result of the course's success, the DEIA Extended Learning Journey was developed. This six-month, self-guided course aims to further embed DEIA practices in the workplace and support local staff to apply the skills they have learned in the class, as well as to improve participants' skills in listening, asking questions and educating others. Participants engage in activities such as creating podcasts and interviews with individuals from different cultures and identities.

The journey also includes monthly work-based tasks and interactive case studies to enhance participants' knowledge of DEIA at work. Cohorts create shared resources and bond in a safe environment, ultimately fostering a more inclusive workplace culture.



## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

# SAINT-GOBAIN NORTH AMERICA SETS STANDARD FOR INCLUSION IN MANUFACTURING



## Background

Saint-Gobain North America (SGNA), one of the largest building materials companies in the world, recognised the persistent underrepresentation of women in the manufacturing industry and decided to take action. Rooted in the belief that manufacturing is all about trust, empowerment and collaboration, the company set out to inspire women, close the opportunity gap and celebrate women's impact in the field.

“SGNA's commitment to redefine what it means to be inclusive and its innovative approach has positioned the company as part of the solution to the manufacturing industry's diversity challenges”

## Approach

SGNA's leadership began with a goal embedded in the company's People Strategy to foster a diverse and inclusive culture that supports and promotes women at all levels. It forged partnerships with organisations like Women MAKE America and ran an annual DE&I Day, to educate employees on diversity and stimulate critical conversations. HR and recruitment teams also provided additional support to pregnant women and working parents during the pandemic, including flexible schedules, remote work options and robust parental leave and emergency childcare resources.

SGNA made significant efforts to assess and remove any obstacles preventing women from entering the industry. By examining job postings and recruitment practices, it eliminated gender bias

and barriers to applications by rewriting job descriptions and redesigning requirements to remove gender-coded language. To ensure inclusive behaviour the company ran inclusion training, including unconscious bias training, mandatory for senior leaders and business group leaders.

## Outcome

SGNA now has the highest level of gender equality in its history, and women have taken up prominent positions, including the CEO of Saint-Gobain Canada, Vice President of the company's roofing business, and key senior roles in legal, HR and communications. These trailblazers serve as a beacon of support, uplifting other women employees within the company.

To further promote growth and development for women, SGNA established the SG Women's Network, the company's largest and most active employee resource group. This network, with 101 regional chapters and a virtual chapter, empowers women through leadership development, mentoring, networking and community outreach. Through impactful programmes like networking sessions, professional development seminars, career fairs and volunteer days of service, SG Women's Network fosters engagement, innovation and deep connections among SGNA's women employees across different locations.

SGNA's commitment to redefine what it means to be inclusive and its innovative approach has positioned the company as part of the solution to the manufacturing industry's diversity challenges. By nurturing and growing a diverse and inclusive culture it is injecting new ideas, fresh perspectives and valuable talent into the manufacturing sector while supporting and encouraging more women to see themselves in this exciting and challenging industry.

## EMPLOYEE VOICE

# PEOPLE PROGRAMME 'BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE' BOOSTS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN HSBC'S GLOBAL LEGAL DEPARTMENT

## Background

After an employee engagement survey found a clear disconnect between what HSBC's global Legal leadership team desired for its people and the reality for the 1,200 legal colleagues it realised it needed to reshape the employee experience. With only 58% responding to the survey the team ran a virtual Discovery workshop to gain more insight and ensure legal colleagues felt their voices were being heard. Collated feedback found three core areas of improvement: 1. skills development and opportunities to create a world-class legal function, 2. better connections and understanding of the role each individual played in delivering the legal strategy and 3. the need to build a healthy and inclusive culture.

The two-strong Legal people team together with a consultant and communications support were tasked to 'make Legal an even better place to work'.

## Approach

With traditional top-down approaches previously showing limited success the team embarked on a multi-year, global people programme delivered 'by the people, for the people'. The Legal People Programme was announced at a global town hall where the feedback from the Discovery workshop was shared. Colleagues were asked to volunteer to join one of three working groups and 89 stepped forward.

To push change forward in such a large organisation a light-touch, agile and transparent governance approach was introduced. The volunteers committed to activity that would shift the dial and 24 initiatives were identified, featuring structured interventions across various areas, each addressing unique aspects of the employee experience.

In career development, programmes like global shadowing, short term assignment opportunities and HSBC coaching circles were introduced. For skills development, monthly 'Skills Insights' and an effective communication toolkit were developed. A 360 feedback survey pilot for people managers provided insights for a global rollout, while a people manager



“As a testament to the programme's efficacy, 21 out of the identified 24 interventions produced tangible results by April 2023”

skills programme was launched. A director-level DE&I head of legal was hired internally and a DE&I survey served as an instrument to identify areas of improvement to support under-represented population needs. The programme also employed measures to address wellbeing and future of work, while other interventions were made in recognition, legal strategy engagement and career development opportunities.

## Outcome

The programme has delivered significant outcomes. Participation in the annual engagement jumped to 78% in 2022. The Employee Engagement Index scores also saw an uptick of 4%, reaching 67%. As a testament to the programme's efficacy, 21 out of the identified 24 interventions produced tangible results by April 2023. Encouraging feedback from participating colleagues attests to the programme's transformative impact.

Encouraged by the success of the programme, a second round was initiated in May 2023. Volunteer numbers increased by 62% from the initial count and 13 new initiatives have been identified. Feedback from volunteers reveal that they continue to gain benefit from their participation in the programme.

## EMPLOYEE VOICE

# SCOTT BADER BRINGS CONSTITUTION INTO THE FUTURE THROUGH EMPLOYEE VOICE



## Background

Founded by Ernest Bader, Scott Bader is a global chemicals manufacturer known for its business-for-good philosophy. The company was gifted to employees in 1951, preserving Scott Bader from any potential sales and creating a structure for optimal operation. Even today, the balance of commerciality with community initiatives continues. However, with the company celebrating its 100th business year, it was observed that many employees struggled to understand how the legacy played out in the future. The company's key communications vehicle – The Constitution – which outlined the company's principles and responsibilities had only been read by 26% of its more than 800 colleagues. This led to the decision to modernise The Constitution, offer employees a greater voice, ramp up engagement and create a full-time role to represent employee interests.

## Approach

To address the issue, Scott Bader initiated a two-year research and consultation phase in 2020, aiming to reaffirm the company's purpose to its employees. The engagement project sought to simplify the company's governance and spark employee participation. Data was collected through steering groups, external focus groups and company-wide surveys. The findings indicated the necessity of translating The Constitution into a more accessible and inspiring format and the need for more representation across the regions to make every single location feel heard, valued and involved moving forwards.

This led to a comprehensive internal communication programme that included webinars, town hall meetings, virtual 'drop-ins', videos, newsletters, posters and polls.

“The changes were positively received, with an unprecedented 83% of employee members voting in favour of the planned changes – the highest count in the past decade”

The Constitution was made shorter and renamed The Members Guide. TV screens and posters on notice boards across all sites made sure everyone, at every level of the business, was aware of the pending updates, from the boardroom to the factory floor.

Teaser communications prior to an AGM where the plans were to be voted on were delivered in multimedia formats and five languages (Zulu, Urdu, Croatian, French and English). Core assets have also since been translated into Hindi, following the acquisition of Scott Bader India.

## Outcome

The changes were positively received, with an unprecedented 83% of employee members voting in favour of the planned changes – the highest count in the past decade. Virtual events attracted 1,500 attendees and more than 3,000 viewings (during and post-delivery), throughout the duration of the programme. Scott Bader's appointment of its first, full-time, independent representative to the Global Members Board representative was a significant outcome, giving colleagues a trusted ally to formally champion their collective beliefs. The company now publishes a Members Report every quarter, ensuring accountability to its employee shareholders. The Members Guide explains what being a Scott Bader Member means to each and every one of their colleagues and an accompanying animation sets out the benefits of being part of a business that embraces the employee ownership model. All indicators point to enhanced global engagement and a more empowered employee pool thanks to this 'living' document that informs colleagues about the core values at the heart of the business.

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

# NHS SHARED BUSINESS SERVICES REINVENTS WORK CULTURE TO COMBAT PANDEMIC-INDUCED FATIGUE

## Background

NHS Shared Business Services (NHS SBS) provides critical administrative services such as accounting, payroll, pensions and procurement to NHS organisations. Every trust in the country uses one or more of its services and it processes the equivalent of 13% of the UK's GDP every year. With 1,300 employees across the UK NHS SBS was under tremendous strain during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to an increased demand for their services. Despite successfully navigating these challenges and processing more than £250 billion pounds, the pandemic's impact left the workforce feeling fatigued, leading to a spike in staff turnover and sickness. The service urgently needed to re-engage, re-energise and re-motivate its people.

## Approach

In response to these issues, the NHS SBS commenced a listening exercise with colleagues across the organisation - including HR, estates and facilities, employee representatives and senior management. A Future Ways of Working strategy was established with the aim of re-energising the workforce and striking a healthy work-life balance. Key stakeholder groups were formed to engage in dialogue through focus groups, surveys and one-to-one meetings, discussing a variety of subjects, including preferences for work location, office workspace design and additional support for staff with unique needs.

It was clear people wanted a blend of home and office working with flexible workspaces, set up to connect, collaborate and congratulate. These words became its '3Cs' values, which guided strategy and communications. Particular support was required for those new in post, with physical or mental health issues and with training needs.

Following the successful consultation period, the findings were implemented, enabling a move to an organisation where flexible working was the norm, an overhaul of office spaces for collaborative work and stronger internal communication channels. These included monthly all-hands calls with the Managing

Director, 'MD Monthly' podcasts cascaded to the entire organisation and a weekly 'Three Things' email bulletin to highlight, briefly and simply, the three most important things employees need to know or do that week.

## Outcome

In response to pandemic-induced fatigue, NHS SBS has pioneered a transformative work culture, resulting in better work-life balance, lower staff turnover, improved recruitment and a first-time pat on the back from Great Place to Work for being one of the UK's best super-large workplaces in 2023.

Employee temperature check scores have risen from 2.95 to 3.36. Other notable achievements include a drop in staff turnover from 20% to 12% and a 40% reduction in vacancies. Although smaller, offices are better used, typically running at 80–95%

occupancy. Furthermore, employee opinions on Glassdoor showed substantial improvements, indicating a more rewarding work environment. Despite these significant strides, NHS SBS remains committed to continually improving its internal communications strategy and the work environment to better cater to its employees' needs.

“ In response to pandemic-induced fatigue, NHS SBS has pioneered a transformative work culture, resulting in better work-life balance ”



## TALENT

# LLOYDS BANKING GROUP'S DATA & TECH ACADEMY TRANSFORMS LEARNING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, SAVING COSTS AND FOSTERING A TECH-DRIVEN CULTURE

## Background

Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) is one of the largest employers in the UK but, like so many organisations, faces a major skills shortage in the technical field, the single biggest barrier to its future economic success. It was relying on costly contractors and struggling to recruit the volume of technical resources required for key roles, such as engineering, data and cybersecurity. With the talent shortage in this area LBG couldn't develop the deep technical skills it needed at the pace or scale it needed to support ongoing transformation. It also recognised the need for upskilling all colleagues in broader digital skills and data fluency to prepare them for future evolutions of work.

## Approach

To address this challenge LBG established a Data & Tech Academy, a learning environment designed to provide comprehensive and centralised learning experiences. Previously, learning in this area had been

siload and duplicated. The bank engaged with external providers and other large organisations to see what was available and consulted with internal leaders and stakeholders to shape the solutions. The academy comprises two main sections: Learning for Everyone

and Topics. The former brings an understanding of the technologies crucial to LBG's growth to all colleagues. In partnership with Pluralsight, Learning for Everyone provides access to the TQ (Tech Quotient); a suite of 12 videos with accompanying assessments.

In the Topic section there are five key topics, based on how the company has organised itself for transformation. Each is based on four personas:

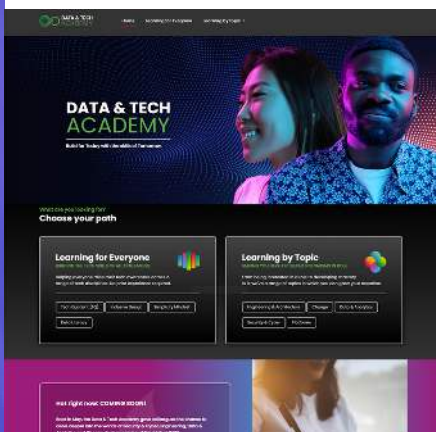
thinking about a career in, starting out in, developing core skills in and developing specialist skills in. Each persona has a suite of solutions so colleagues can either be led on the journey or quickly select elements in which to develop themselves. Within each topic the bank highlights job vacancies, gig opportunities, learning events and mentoring/coaching opportunities.

## Outcome

The Data & Tech Academy has received more than 440,000 impressions and 29,500 unique users since its launch. The TQ system has more than 9,500 activated licenses, with 6,500 passing one or more modules, exceeding targets. Colleagues have rated TQ highly in terms of increasing awareness and knowledge of new technologies.

Moreover, the Academy reduced the need for external contractors and increased the retention of colleagues through further developmental opportunities. It provided a structured development pathway, as learning is now accessible from one site as opposed to 30 plus previous sites and systems, plus it provides a direct route for colleagues to move into technical roles. Reskilling initiatives resulted in 28 colleagues transitioning into new roles, saving potential redundancy costs of £1.2m. The Academy also attracted over 12,000 attendees during Learning at Work Week and saw increased uptake through weekly learning sessions.

The Data & Tech Academy transformed LBG into a skills-based organisation and improved colleagues' confidence to pursue tech-based roles. It fostered a learning culture and resulted in financial savings. LBG continues to update and develop the Academy, leveraging expert support and fostering communities for best practices and networking.



“The Data & Tech Academy transformed LBG into a skills-based organisation and improved colleagues' confidence to pursue tech-based roles”



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## MHP REBUILDS LIVES AND EMPOWERS DEFENDERS OF UKRAINE



## Background

The winter morning of the 24 February 2022 was the start of a day that changed the lives of every single employee of MHP. Russia's unprovoked invasion shook Ukraine, and MHP, a leading Ukrainian agroholding and the sixth-largest global poultry exporter, had to swiftly adapt its plans and shift its operations to provide maximum assistance to the war effort and take care of the defenders and ordinary people affected by the conflict.

Since then more than half a million Ukrainians have stepped up and joined the country's armed forces and more than 2,000 of MHP's employees have been mobilised. As fighting continues across Ukraine MHP recognised the physical and mental toll that modern combat takes on those who serve and has made it its mission to design comprehensive, person-centred programmes to aid in the rehabilitation and successful reintegration of veterans into civilian life.

## Approach

MHP tripled its allocated budget for social and charity projects, quadrupled the number of partnerships and expanded the scope of its projects so that they reached seven times more people than they did in 2021. With a dedicated team of over 60 specialists from its corporate social responsibility department, corporate psychologists, HR business partners, personal development experts and occupational safety and health specialists, along with its strategic

charity partner, the MHP-Gromadi Charity Foundation, MHP provided extensive support to mobilised soldiers. Collaborating with government institutions, veteran organisations and healthcare providers, it developed a comprehensive project, covering aspects such as monthly financial assistance equal to salary, a one-off bereavement support payment followed by up to 10 years payments equal to salary, provision of essential equipment such as bulletproof vests, healthcare support and aid for families navigating household issues while their loved ones were away, including taking care of children and elderly parents and assisting families in their search for missing persons. The company also established regular communication channels to offer mental health advice and guidance.

Once veterans return from the front they can join MHP Standing Together, focused on medical, psychological and financial support to assist recovery and enable them to successfully reintegrate back to civilian life. The programme is based on world's best practices and MHP's standalone research and around principles such as understanding that the consequences of the war will last for decades, and typically veterans experience a loss of self-esteem and competitiveness in civilian life.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## MHP REBUILDS LIVES AND EMPOWERS DEFENDERS OF UKRAINE



“MHP has not only rebuilt lives but also helped rebuild the future of Ukraine”

## Outcome

MHP's unwavering commitment to these initiatives yielded remarkable results. Through direct financial assistance, it provided support to the families of 77 deceased or missing servicemen and 34 deceased family members as well as disabled individuals. It donated 10,000 tons of MHP products to soldiers, helping nourish and sustain them during their time on the frontlines. Demonstrating its dedication to rebuilding and empowering communities, MHP launched the Do Your Business initiative through the MHP-Gromadi Charity Foundation, supporting 154 micro-businesses and enabling veterans and relatives of the fallen to start and develop their own businesses.

The Sow Seeds with MHP campaign distributed high-quality seeds to local communities across Ukraine, empowering them to grow crops and enhance food security. Over 114,800 packets of garden crop seeds have been distributed, resulting in 310 hectares being sown and 11,000 tons of crops harvested.

MHP's commitment to reintegrating demobilised workers and veterans back into civilian life is evident through pro bono legal support, medical treatment and assistance. It also established dedicated communication channels, such as the corporate Telegram channels The Power of Veterans and Together We Are a Force, which have gathered over 13,000 subscribers,

including 100% of demobilised workers and veterans. In collaboration with the Ukrainian government, business community and NGOs, MHP actively shared and exchanged best practices in supporting veterans' mental health.

The exemplary efforts of MHP extend beyond material support. It has fostered a culture of inclusivity within the company, creating special positions that consider physical and mental characteristics, reskilling employees, and implementing training for managers on interacting with demobilised staff. Each step taken by MHP is geared towards recognising the uniqueness of each veteran, their changing values and the leadership experience gained during their time on the frontlines.

By providing comprehensive care, financial assistance, entrepreneurship opportunities and a commitment to inclusive corporate culture, MHP has not only rebuilt lives but also helped rebuild the future of Ukraine. The company has not set a definitive end date but instead has targeted the completion of the project five years after the war ends, though the length may also vary depending on the individual strengths and needs of each person.

## CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

# UST INTEGRATES BUSINESS, COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

## Background

At UST there has long been a strong commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and community engagement. It takes a bottom-up approach with all CSR and sustainability initiatives planned, implemented and monitored at UST CSR volunteer's team level. Following a net zero commitment by 2040 the digital transformation company set a goal to integrate all their organisational processes and initiatives by 2022-23 towards achieving this. It wanted to improve efficiency, reduce emissions, advance environmental initiatives and integrate its ongoing community-based environment programmes.



cleaning projects and committed a dedicated budget to support climate change initiatives.

## Approach

UST developed environmental, social and governance targets aligned with business goals, using the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a guiding framework. It conducted a materiality assessment to prioritise the important topics for the business. Climate action was integrated into decision-making processes at all levels and awareness and training programmes were implemented. A dedicated vertical and ESG (environmental, social and governance) core team was formed to lead and consolidate efforts. A steering committee was formed with a focus on integrity and transparency.

The comprehensive strategy included energy efficiency measures, water conservation, waste management and sustainable supply chain practices. It included everything from using battery-operated vehicles, optimising building design and energy management systems, eco-friendly packaging, rainwater harvesting, a supplier Standards of Conduct to prioritise sustainable business practices and local sourcing, and community-level initiatives such as planting mangroves along the Kochi India coastal area and cultivating over 99,000 medicinal plants with native tribal farmers. UST also dedicated thousands of volunteering hours to lake rejuvenation and beach

“The outcomes of UST's sustainability initiatives are significant. They have successfully diverted 14.39 metric tons of waste from landfills since 2020”

## Outcome

The outcomes of UST's sustainability initiatives are significant. They have successfully diverted 14.39 metric tons of waste from landfills since 2020. Some 80% of its Trivandrum campus's water consumption is now drawn from a sustainable water body, reducing reliance on municipal water supply and leading to it receiving a LEED Gold rating from the Indian Green Building Council.

UST has achieved numerous certifications and aligned their reporting with international standards. Importantly, its community-based projects have had qualitative outcomes as well. These projects have encouraged organic farming practices and fostered a sense of community responsibility for environmental protection.

By utilising technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), UST is addressing environmental challenges through efficient data collection, evaluation and analysis. This enables informed decision-making and supports the goal of minimising environmental footprints, paving the way for a more sustainable future for all.

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# ISS AND PWC SHIFT PERCEPTIONS TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE IN THE CLEANING INDUSTRY

## Background

In the cleaning sector low wages, low morale and feelings of invisibility are pervasive. This even translates down to the uniforms cleaners wear, with workers saying this is a way of ‘marking out cleaning operatives as separate and different from the rest of the workforce’. However, such challenges are opportunities for growth and progress, as demonstrated by ISS. It decided to take action to address these challenges by providing inclusivity, dignity and equal opportunities for its cleaning staff, or ‘placemakers’ as the company calls them. In doing this, the mission was to drive up staff engagement, improve team wellbeing and position their employees at the heart of their operations.

## Approach

ISS introduced numerous initiatives targeting problems faced by their teams daily. These measures, ranging from pay rate adjustments to career development opportunities, aimed to revamp the cleaning industry’s perception and stigma. The driving force behind these changes was the introduction of Wellbeing Audits for all Placemakers across the entire PwC UK portfolio of offices. This was an impartial and confidential way to shed light on issues such as shift timings, break structures and other workplace conditions that needed urgent attention. Redefining language by referring to cleaners as ‘housekeepers’, introducing new career roles such as housekeeping associates to encompass all areas of the housekeeping service and provide a sense of value and purpose, and deploying certified training programmes from the British Institute of Cleaning Science were other significant steps. ISS also developed an enhanced pay rate scheme and redesigned employee uniforms in collaboration with PwC One team, using ethically sourced fabric made from recycled plastic to help reduce the harmful effect of disposable plastics on the environment.

“By integrating a people strategy and emphasising social value, ISS has successfully challenged prevailing industry standards, forging an inclusive, rewarding environment for its ‘Placemakers’”

## Outcome

By adopting a people-centric strategy, ISS managed to achieve remarkably high staff favourability and retention rates. It also reduced its turnover rate to 9.6% – significantly below the UK average turnover rate. The social value generated by these initiatives was another significant accomplishment, demonstrating tangible evidence of ISS’s commitment to its employees. Using a tailored framework created with the National TOMs calculator (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) ISS can accurately demonstrate and report to its clients quarterly and has implemented

social value as a KPI. In 2022, its first calculation of social value, it returned a near 7 figure sum.

Its employee net promoter score was +98 for the first quarter, greatly exceeding the national average. Other positive outcomes included significant volunteering contributions, improved mental health circumstances and several team members receiving awards and recognitions. All these outcomes have underscored the

importance ISS places on its workforce, its wellbeing and dignity and the continuous drive to challenge and improve industry standards.



## CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

# RMP PIONEERS NET ZERO BRAND AMBASSADOR CAMPAIGN, ACHIEVING 60% REDUCTION IN CARBON EMISSIONS



## Background

RMP is a student careers company that helps students take their first steps in their career by partnering with employers across the UK. It uses digital and face-to-face products to provide students with valuable work experience alongside their degrees. In line with its commitment to sustainability and after becoming net zero in 2022, RMP aims to reduce carbon emissions by 10% per year and become carbon negative by 2024.

Law firm Clifford Chance shares the same commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and aims to reduce its emissions by 80% by 2030. In 2021 RMP and Clifford Chance came together to run the first ever net zero brand ambassador (BA) campaign. BAs represent a firm across various campuses throughout the academic year.

Existing BA campaigns contributed an estimated 2.5-3 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e through various activities such as interviewing, travel, producing and distributing marketing materials plus all head office and people contributions. RMP was faced with the perfect opportunity to make lasting change while ensuring it could run a net zero campaign with Clifford Chance.

## Approach

RMP recruited, trained and managed 20 BAs across 20 campuses. The campaign involved 80% digital promotion and only 20% face-to-face interaction compared to the usual 50/50, significantly reducing the carbon footprint. Virtual interviews were conducted to eliminate travel emissions and train or tube travel was used for in-person training days. Traditional activities

like distributing brochures, pizza and water bottles were replaced with creative assets for online sharing and trackable links for in-person discussions. RMP commissioned climate experts Supercritical to calculate expected carbon emissions for all activities, travel, giveaways and consumables.

“ The impact on the environment was significant. By focusing on the largest carbon emissions contributors, such as travel and hoodies, the campaign achieved a 60% reduction in emissions compared to traditional campaigns ”

## Outcome

The campaign was a resounding success. There were zero BA dropouts, exceeding the typical dropout rate of 1-5 per year and saving some 30% in time rehiring and training students. A key campaign goal was to promote Clifford Chance and drive students from across the UK to the event sign up and application pages. Student engagement was exceptionally high, with over 11,000 students visiting the pages, surpassing the target of 4,000. Five out of the 20 BAs secured graduate training contracts, with three more at the interview stage, resulting in a 25% BA to hire conversion rate compared to an average of 20%.

The impact on the environment was significant. By focusing on the largest carbon emissions contributors, such as travel and hoodies, the campaign achieved a 60% reduction in emissions compared to traditional campaigns. The success of the campaign has inspired both RMP and Clifford Chance to make further sustainability commitments. RMP aims to make all 30+ BA campaigns green for the next year, potentially removing around 40 tonnes of carbon emissions. Clifford Chance has already signed up for next year and views this campaign as a direct contributor to its greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

## LEARNING

# DFDS GETS FIT FOR THE FUTURE WITH UPSKILLED PEOPLE-FOCUSED LEADERS

## Background

DFDS, a leading European transport and logistics company with more than 12,000 colleagues worldwide and more than 10,000 freight customers faced a critical challenge in 2018. Despite ambitious objectives to double its revenue and profit by 2023, the company recognised that its culture was not conducive to achieving these goals. In particular there were gaps in the People division and a lack of focus on talent attraction, development and retention, while the HR service was reactive with insufficient emphasis on the overall culture, engagement and employee value proposition. Coupled with external factors like the COVID-19 pandemic, a shortage in drivers, an ageing workforce and Brexit pressures, the company realised it was imperative to transform its learning and culture strategies.

## Approach

DFDS developed a strategic people plan, which entailed reorganising the people's division into specialised centres of excellence and business partnering teams. The company also invested in colleague engagement, development and talent attraction. A Culture Champions network was introduced across the UK and Ireland.

Significantly the company recruited its first learning professional in 2021. It has developed a talent development framework, including a suite of development programmes to develop a stronger internal talent pipeline and improve retention by providing opportunities for all. By identifying where talent at every level is based and cross referencing this with available roles, DFDS finally has visibility of its talent and can map out development needs.

In light of this it implemented a graduate scheme, opened a driver academy for internal and external employees to address the HGV driver shortage and

launched Equally Yours, an interactive diversity, equality and inclusion training programme based on gamification principles, which it is rolling out to every colleague. In 2022 it brought all its different programmes together in a UK&I learning brochure and introduced an interactive learning calendar with a click-to-book function, making it easier for managers to support the learning needs of their teams. That year it also joined the Generation Logistics movement as a Gold level sponsor to encourage young people to consider a career in logistics.

In addition the company has brought recruitment in-house to improve the candidate experience and evolved its employee benefits.

“By identifying where talent at every level is based and cross referencing this with available roles, DFDS finally has visibility of its talent and can map out development needs”

## Outcome

The focus on learning and culture has positively impacted the overall business results. Despite the adverse economic climate, DFDS's overall revenue increased by 47% in its Cold Logistics business alone, for example. It has steadily attracted diverse talent, with several departments having over 40% of women in a male-dominated sector. Headcount has risen by 1,200 in the UK and Ireland over just the last nine months and the company has increased the rate of internally filled promotional opportunities, leading to cost savings and better talent retention. Engagement scores are up. DFDS is now fit for the future, with upskilled people-focused leaders ready to take the company to the next level.



## LEARNING

# GATEHOUSE BANK UNLEASHES FRONTLINE MANAGEMENT POTENTIAL TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## Background

Gatehouse Bank, a Shariah-compliant, ethical UK challenger bank, recognised that having top-tier, first line management was critical to attract the best talent, accelerate growth and positively impact the bottom line, while also creating a culture of feedback and growth. At the time, Gatehouse Bank had a 50-strong line management population largely made up of colleagues with less than 3 years' service. Of this group, between 30%-50% were where the Bank aspired for them to be from a skills/knowledge perspective, meaning there was a great opportunity for both personal and business growth.

“ The programme sparked a perceptible increase in skill and knowledge levels within the line management population, pushing the manager readiness marker from 30 – 50% to 70% - 80% ”

## Approach

Gatehouse Bank's CEO, Charles Haresnape, recognised that top quality first line management is critical to the culture of an organisation and believed that this would support increased engagement and deliver efficiencies. Taking a collaborative approach, the Bank's former Head of HR and consultancy ETS worked together to start by redesigning its behavioural management framework. The new approach centred on clarity and ensured the articulation of expectations before designing training content.

A crucial part of the approach was an 'MBA style' programme for all line managers over a six to nine month period to craft and progressively scale their skills. The programme was implemented over several stages, with content designed one module at a time so that subsequent modules could be shaped by learnings and feedback from the previous module. This process allowed the programme to evolve and form in line with business and colleague needs.

Interview briefings for participants explained the rationale of the programme, while a personalised 360

feedback exercise gave line managers a baseline measure and offered an overview of collective strengths. Training was then led by an ETS senior consultant based on various inputs and covered coaching, communication, team development, resilience, adaptability, and feedback habits. After each module, delegates reflected on what they had learned, while action learning groups were established so that delegates could discuss and practise learnings in everyday scenarios between modules.

## Outcome

The programme sparked a perceptible increase in skill and knowledge levels within the line management population, pushing the manager readiness marker from 30 – 50% to 70% - 80%. Since the programme's launch, 30 colleagues have secured a promotion, 14 of whom were existing line managers. Additionally, this initiative had a significant impact on employee satisfaction, with the majority of colleagues agreeing that the new approach led to more transparent goals and open communication. To maintain this momentum, a condensed version of the programme is now run regularly for new hires and newly promoted managers. Gatehouse Bank's CEO, Charles Haresnape, says the programme has been an integral aspect in developing the bank's culture and has “undoubtedly enhanced our line managers' competence, making us well-poised to move into the future and exceed our strategic business objectives.”



## LEARNING

# IMPERIAL BRANDS REVOLUTIONISES CORPORATE CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT THROUGH 'CONNECTIONS' JOURNEY



## Background

Imperial Brands, a global tobacco company with a portfolio of over 160 brands, had a fragmented culture due to years of mergers and acquisitions, leading to an ‘us-them’ culture seeping into all areas, locations and functions. Business performance and investor confidence began to falter and employee engagement scores languished below the global average. A new CEO was appointed with the vision of transforming the company into a responsible and innovative challenger business.

## Approach

To change the company’s culture and unlock innovation Imperial Brands launched one of the most ambitious learning programmes in its 120-year history. ‘Connections’ aimed at cultivating a set of common behaviours among the company’s 26,000 employees across 120 markets. Independently mediated focus group discussions and surveys were conducted with hundreds of colleagues globally (spanning all roles/grades) to identify the biggest challenges and improvement areas.

Based on the collected insight, five behaviours – Start with the consumer, Collaborate with purpose, Take accountability with confidence, Be authentic, inclusion to all and Build our future – were developed and introduced at every level in the organisation. Each behaviour had clear definitions, along with dos and

don’ts, to help everyone understand how the behaviours apply to them: leading yourself for everyone, leading others, leading managers and leading the business for the executive leadership team and their direct reports.

A comprehensive range of methods, such as role-modelling, training the trainer, workshops, executive sponsorship and a My Connections hub were used to embed these behaviours in every colleague in the company, whether in the boardroom in Bristol, on the factory floor in the Philippines or a sales rep in the States. This meant creating a consistent learning experience across 43 countries and 23 languages.

The programme secured unprecedented commitment from senior leadership to invest more than 115,000 hours on learning in just 12 months, ensuring every single person went on the same journey together.

## Outcome

In two years, the programme has transformed the company’s culture, leading to higher employee engagement scores now surpassing global norms. The sense of belonging increased, contributing to turnover rates less than half the global norm. Behaviours are now role modelled and the culture change is so important to the business that the CEO and CFO talk about it to investors. Imperial Brands also saw an improvement in business performance and innovation, with a 10% increase in the sales of innovative non-combustible products.

“ The programme secured unprecedented commitment from senior leadership to invest more than 115,000 hours on learning in just 12 months, ensuring every single person went on the same journey together ”



## LEARNING

# GREAT WESTERN RAILWAYS CREATES GREAT EXPERIENCE MAKERS TO REIGNITE POST-PANDEMIC CUSTOMER SERVICE



## Background

Great Western Railways (GWR), which has been hosting travellers since 1833, was determined to turn the pandemic into an opportunity for service transformation. With a vision to create distinct and memorable customer experiences, the CEO of GWR spearheaded the idea of a unique learning initiative aimed at transforming employees into 'Great Experience Makers.' The idea was to emotionally connect all colleagues with the ever-evolving needs of customers in the post-pandemic world and inspire them to leave customers actively seeking out new adventures.

## Approach

GWR brought onboard the Happy Consultancy Group to help it achieve this. Using its 3E approach – explore, enable and engage – a comprehensive understanding of the current service experience and assessment of competitor performances provided the base upon which solutions were built. With on-ground workshops no longer feasible due to restrictions, learning interventions were designed by combining effective digital learning with the science of happiness at work.

Inspired by GWR's well-known Famous Five adverts, film and CGI were used to portray employees as explorers unearthing the 'gems' of service experience excellence. This journey enabled individuals to apply the six service experience

signatures in simple yet effective ways and was wrapped in entertaining and engaging content similar to a Netflix series. Among the solutions provided were personalised invites, customised film-based learning experiences, digital toolkits, internal communication campaigns, guides, workshops and impactful branding efforts. All these aimed at reinforcing the 'gems' of service excellence in the minds of the employees.

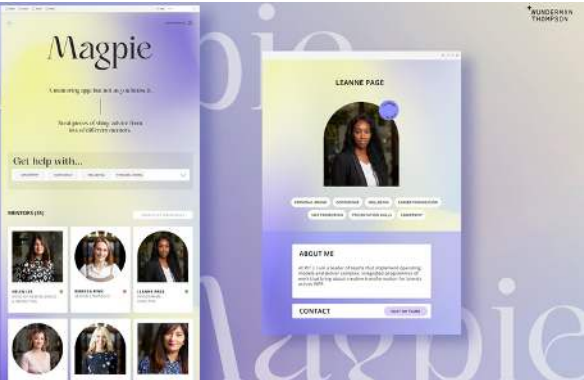
“The learning initiative transformed GWR's service culture and elevated its position to 3rd out of 14 rail operators in Customer Experience Excellence”

## Outcome

Despite tight timelines, the interventions were launched within three months. Within 18 months the goal of 75% completion rate was surpassed, with over 4,500 colleagues having completed the programme. GEMs now feature in every leadership meeting at every level and form part of the strategic KPIs. The campaign left an enduring impact on employees and, such was its popularity, it was even extended to Network Rail colleagues. Customer net promoter scores improved and the collateral from the programme is now being leveraged in other areas of the business. Moreover the learning initiative transformed GWR's service culture and elevated its position to 3rd out of 14 rail operators in Customer Experience Excellence. And it has created a new approach to learning within the business, making meaningful learning accessible to all through the creation of an empowering self-directed approach that gives people flexibility to learn in smaller chunks and in the time that suits them.

## COACHING & MENTORING

# WUNDERMAN THOMPSON'S MAGPIE APP SHAKES UP MENTORSHIP IN ADLAND



without the need for lengthy application forms or long-term commitments. It integrates with the agency's existing workflow platform, Microsoft Teams, and offers a directory of mentors based on various themes, ranging from maternity and motherhood, leadership, building your personal brand and managing stress. The mentor profile is inspired by the Top Trumps game, allowing users to explore their options and connect with the most relevant person to start a conversation.

## Background

Adland is facing a recruitment challenge as the number of people working in marketing and advertising has fallen by 14% between 2019 and 2022 (Carroll, 2023). It is crucial therefore for ad companies to invest in talent retention and growth, and this was no different for global integrated marketing agency Wunderman Thompson. With research showing that mentorship is important for professional development a mentor-based programme seemed a good way to foster this growth. But mentorship schemes in the advertising industry were often not delivering, with a gender imbalance in mentoring relationships, as fewer women have female mentors compared to men with male mentors. Plus the process was often lengthy and mentees often ended up disappointed. Wunderman Thompson knew it needed to develop a more flexible and inclusive mentoring solution.

## Approach

Wunderman Thompson looked to one of its six business employee resource groups to help it achieve this. RISE is its women's network which aims to empower and build a community for the women who make up 50% of the agency's talent. RISE's co-founders developed Magpie, a self-serve mentoring app designed to connect women within the agency and provide ad hoc support. The idea behind the name is that the agency's talent steals pieces of shiny advice from lots of different people with different experiences across the agency. The app allows users to connect with the right person based on their needs as and when they want,

“Magpie was launched on International Women's Day in 2022 and immediately engaged 50% of the agency's women, with 20% continuing to use the app weekly”

## Outcome

Magpie was launched on International Women's Day in 2022 and immediately engaged 50% of the agency's women, with 20% continuing to use the app weekly. The success of the platform led to a 15% increase in female mentor sign-ups since launch. The app gained substantial PR coverage and was so successful it opened to everyone within the UK/EMEA agency in February 2023. The peer-to-peer mentoring model has been embraced, with positive feedback on the ease of connecting with mentors and the valuable insights gained. The app has also received support and investment to be scaled up across Wunderman Thompson's 20,000 people global network. The agency also plans to address additional topics such as the menopause, fertility and returning parents. As app co-founder Helen Lee says: “Ditching the application forms and not forcing people to commit to a long-term process that's not right for their situation is the epitome of peer-to-peer mentoring.”

Citations:

[Carroll, N. \(2023, January 25\). Employment in marketing and advertising has fallen 14% in three years. Marketing Week.](#)

## COACHING & MENTORING

# COACHING THROUGH CONVERSATION AND EMPATHY SHIFTS TALENT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AT TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

## Background

Transport for London (TfL) grappled with numerous challenges as the pandemic struck, including a 95% plunge in revenue and ridership. However, the team spirit, openness and humanity demonstrated by colleagues was inspiring. Yet post-pandemic it became apparent that issues around fairness, transparency, support, and inclusivity pervaded the organisation, with employees voicing dissatisfaction at its existing performance and talent approach. TfL needed to reinstate confidence, reinforce organisational culture, and improve overall performance. A new strategic people vision was created: “To be a great place to work for everyone to thrive”. Now there was an urgent need to equip leaders to deliver on this.

## Approach

TfL embarked on an ambitious journey to align its talent/performance management strategy with the values of being Open, Caring and Adaptable. It launched Conversation Matters – an initiative centred around fostering active listening, empathy/inclusion and effective feedback mechanisms within the system that was sponsored by the Chief People Officer and listed as a corporate priority.

Diagnostic activities beforehand involving employee surveys, employee listening groups, existing data and senior leader interviews provided valuable insights into the barriers to open dialogue and steps to facilitate this. A model containing three key ingredients was established: Be open, Be brave, Be connected.

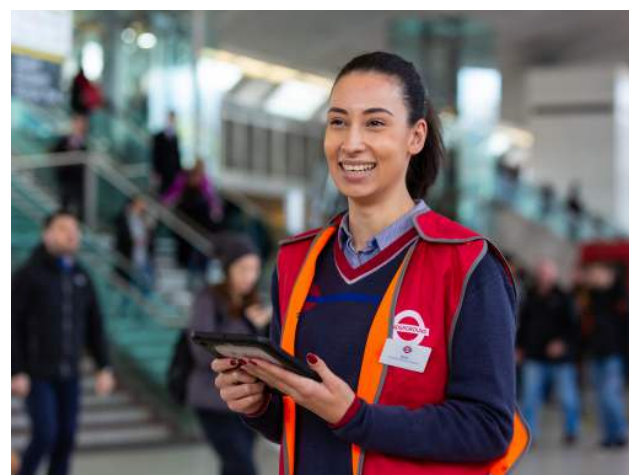
A group coaching model was implemented, where colleagues could collaborate, share experiences and learn from one another in a safe and empathetic space. This provided clear goals of accountability for leaders and included interactive toolkits on conversation prompts and key models, a nudge campaign to embed learning and digital platforms for sharing challenges and successes. By taking a top-down approach role modelling from the top was ensured. Some 642 leaders went through the programme within nine months.

“TfL embarked on an ambitious journey to align its talent/performance management strategy with the values of being Open, Caring and Adaptable”

## Outcome

The initiative achieved a major success with a 97.6% net promoter score and similar metrics to denote its value to employee time. Proven by an 86% goal completion rate, the programme impacted areas like quality of 1:1 conversations, openness and inclusivity. Employee feedback on improved conversation with people leaders was also positive, with a 74% agreement rate of those surveyed.

This intervention helped improve the organisation's performance appraisal process and supported key strategies to enhance the internal talent pipeline, with a 4% increase in internal recruitment. Employee engagement scores also exhibited a significant rise of 3.7%, further consolidating the value of Conversation Matters. A similar coaching programme is now being expanded to the next level of leaders, reinforcing its indispensable role in TfL's talent and performance management strategy.



## WELLBEING

# LLOYDS BANKING GROUP TAKES RESEARCH-BASED ACTION TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES WITH CANCER

## Background

Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) became a founding member of the Working with Cancer Pledge initiated by media company Publicis Group in December 2022. With support from top executives LBG aimed to create a workplace culture where employees impacted by cancer could feel supported and bring their whole selves to work. By carefully crafting pledges that incorporated the respective journeys of people with a diagnosis, their caregivers and their managers, together with research-based actions, LBG demonstrated its commitment to address cancer stigma within the organisation and provide a psychologically safe environment for their employees.

## Approach

LBG initiated a comprehensive communications campaign creating awareness of their pledges within the organisation and beyond, including at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2023. Just that simple act of showing that the bank cared and was listening resulted in an outpouring of support and personal story sharing, the likes of which were unprecedented in the bank.

In partnership with a range of stakeholders, LBG carried out a three-month research project into its colleagues' experiences relating to cancer. To immediately support colleagues the organisation launched several initiatives including a peer support community, monthly colleague support calls and a dedicated information hub. Training programmes to educate managers on how to sensitively support individuals affected by cancer were also initiated.

## Outcome

The cancer initiative had a significant impact within



## Safety, Health & Wellbeing

the organisation. More than 600 employees shared their stories. There are 250 active members of the affected by cancer community and it grows daily with more than 80 colleagues participating in private chat to support one another. For example, one group executive shared his own cancer journey with their business area of some 28,000 people during an all-colleague call and included further updates in quarterly newsletters.

A three-year strategy based on extensive employee research was developed to further support individuals affected by cancer. Manager training for all managers launched in July with the aim of training all 15,000 people managers

within a year. Training for 40 support buddies who will deliver 1:1 support to colleagues going through a cancer journey is planned. These buddies will act as a critical friend during this key moment that matters.

With research-based action and commitment from top leadership, LBG has made significant strides to create a psychologically safe and supportive work environment, encouraging open dialogue and support for those affected by cancer. The initiative earned LBG the position of UK lead partner for the Publicis Group's Working with Cancer Pledge, and other major financial institutions and charities have reached out to LBG to learn from its approach and commitment to breaking down workplace cancer stigma.

“With research-based action and commitment from top leadership, LBG has made significant strides to create a psychologically safe and supportive work environment, encouraging open dialogue and support for those affected by cancer”

## WELLBEING

# ZOPA BANK INVESTS IN WELLBEING AND BELONGING TO SECURE A ROUTE TO BUSINESS SUCCESS

## Background

Zopa Bank, a fast-growing hybrid digital bank, is committed to creating an excellent employee experience, leading to excellent customer service with a market-leading NPS score of 83. The company recognises that an organisation's success relies heavily on the wellbeing of its workforce, especially during turbulent moments such as the cost-of-living crisis. Therefore, Zopa Bank's priority to be the 'Customer Champion' is also highly reliant on it being the champion for its employees, creating an environment that cultivates physical, mental and financial wellness.

## Approach

In 2022, Zopa Bank invested in a new People Experience function. This team's role is to create an exceptional employee experience. It designed and implemented a complete overhaul of benefits, which meant that the people proposition was instantly more distinguishable in the market, including a 120-day work from abroad benefit introduced to enable Zopians to spend more time with their loved ones post-pandemic, and cost-of-living actions like raising the entry-level wage to 16.8% above London Living Wage and giving a cost of living crisis winter bonus to all those on less than £50k salaries two years in a row.

Zopa Bank also launched a health cashback initiative, financial detox Lunch & Learn sessions and free mortgage advice. The People Experience team continuously gauges the impact of these initiatives through regular feedback and revises the benefits where necessary. Notably, it nurtures a sense of belonging among the employees by dedicating some company meetings to non-business-related topics like mental health support and LGBTQ+ inclusion and engaging employee resource groups, who have come up with innovative suggestions around menopause and menstruation among other areas.

“ The company recognises that an organisation's success relies heavily on the wellbeing of its workforce ”

## Outcome

Zopa Bank's active engagement strategy has resulted in attrition rates dropping by nine percentage points between April 2022 and April 2023. The enhanced co-parent leave was used by 20 new male parents. Investors, encouraged by the company's people-focused approach, have invested an additional £150 million in 2023 alone, emphasising the tangible value of building a great workplace culture.

Finally, in its recent engagement survey, 89% of Zopians said they would recommend Zopa Bank as a great place to work, and the company also has an impressive 4.5/5 satisfaction score on Glassdoor – among the highest in the UK financial services industry. These results highlight the benefits of a successful investment in employee wellbeing and culture.



## WELLBEING & BELONGING

# ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY FOSTERS BELONGING BY PRIORITISING EMPLOYEE WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT



## Background

For more than 40 years, Alzheimer's Society has been a powerful force for change, improving the lives of people living with dementia. The charity has remained committed to serving those living with dementia despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. While it's been a tough period, its 1,800 employees and 6,000 volunteers have gone above and beyond to help people through what is a frightening time for them. To keep their people engaged, healthy, happy and motivated the society has delivered an extended programme of health and wellbeing, fostered inclusivity and flexibility, and provided a safe space for people to connect and support each other.

## Approach

Faced with the new reality of remote work and a focus on work-life balance, Alzheimer's Society reviewed its working environment and employee policies, relying on feedback and insight from employee surveys and forums as well as competitor analysis. Initiatives such as a pay increase weighted towards lower paid employees an employee support fund and enhanced policies concerning health, wellbeing and work-life balance were brought in. These included paid volunteering leave, Take Stock days with no meetings or emails on the first day back in January and a Wellbeing half-day leave. Taking heed from engagement survey results and insights through the established Employee Forum, the society worked on fostering a sense of 'belonging'. This was achieved by launching network groups led by those with lived experience and included an Equity network, Menopause Matters and Neurodiversity network. The initiative was so successful that it led to the appointment of a

new Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) function to support these networks and our overarching approach to EDIB. During 2023 additional networks have come or are coming onstream, including Disability and Long-Term Conditions, Endometriosis/Menstrual Health, LGBTQIA+, Grief and Bereavement, Domestic Abuse and Settled in the UK.

“The society has not only improved hard metrics but also developed a safer environment where colleagues openly discuss personal challenges and feel valued”

## Outcome

The new measures not only transformed the organisation, building trust, mutual support and recognition, but also boosted culture and productivity. Policies were well-received and led to more effective work arrangements and improved employee satisfaction. Engagement rates increased significantly, with a boost from 74% in 2021 to 80% in 2022 in employees feeling a sense of belonging and from 62% to 84% in believing there are opportunities to give genuine feedback and feel like your voice is heard. There are more than 500 members across the lived experience networks and the society was independently verified as a Menopause Friendly Employer due to its effective network here. Significantly, Alzheimer's Society's Glassdoor score has jumped from 2.3\* to 4\*. The society has not only improved hard metrics but also developed a safer environment where colleagues openly discuss personal challenges and feel valued. And it doesn't stop there. The Society is now appointing a new full-time Wellbeing Lead to continue embedding wellbeing across the organisation and was pleased to recently feature as a Sunday Times Best Places to Work which acknowledged its focus on wellbeing.

[View Alzheimer's Society Transformation Case Study.](#)

## LEADERSHIP

# BE CARING REVOLUTIONISES HOMECARE THROUGH LEADERSHIP, FINANCIAL STABILITY AND A VALUED WORKFORCE

## Background

When Sharon Lowrie was brought in as interim finance director at the then named CASA Homecare she uncovered a litany of issues. The organisation was months away from liquidation, with significant debt, an isolated and disengaged 750-strong frontline workforce and branches operating as if they were separate from the organisation and leadership team. The situation was dire.

## Approach

In 2018 Sharon was appointed as CEO to achieve short-term financial stability and transform the organisation's culture. A six-month plan was implemented to stop the organisation losing money, including payment plans, a review of local contracts and restructuring the finance team. The leadership team was restructured, and a rebranding initiative involved employees in co-designing a new vision, mission and values. With the opportunity to 'start again' the organisation changed its name to Be Caring in 2019 to reflect the move to a values-based approach.

In addition, local management structures were established to share accountability and reduce the burden on individual managers, and the organisation implemented a new model of homecare with shift pay to value and reward the workforce. All care workers are now employed at their contracted hourly rate for the full time they are out at work, including all contact and travel time and training. As Sharon says: "If we value our workforce and pay people properly, then we can transform homecare."

## Outcome

The results of the new strategy are outstanding. Be Caring has transformed its financial position and organisational culture as well as implementing a

successful new model of homecare and improving care quality and employee satisfaction. It achieved financial stability by repaying debts and generating profits for the first time in its history.

The organisation has improved colleague satisfaction and engagement over four years, with high Net Promoter Scores as both a care provider and a place to work,

with scores in each regarded as 'excellent' in the sector. The new shift pay model in Leeds demonstrated increased earnings, improved care delivery, better time management and increased carer continuity and length of service. Be Caring became the best-performing homecare service in Leeds, successfully keeping people out of

“Be Caring has transformed its financial position and organisational culture as well as implementing a successful new model of home care and improving care quality and employee satisfaction”



the hospital for longer compared to other providers. Service user feedback in Leeds showed high ratings for care quality, dignity and respect, independence support and confidence in the care team, while colleague feedback indicated improvements in training, feeling valued, having their opinions heard and receiving necessary support. No wonder Be Caring is now implementing the new model of homecare across all its services, enhancing the now-embedded values and culture.

## LEADERSHIP

# MORTGAGE ADVICE BUREAU BUILDS A NOURISHING AND ENGAGING CULTURE

## Background

In 2021, Mortgage Advice Bureau redefined its company mission and vision. After pandemic restrictions were lifted, the company wanted to motivate people to return to the office to reinforce the culture and further enhance collaboration and communication. At the centre of this strategy was the renovation and repurposing of MAB's head office to support a hospitable environment for permanent hybrid working and cater to employees' neurodiverse needs.

The driving commitment was to foster a workplace that encouraged wellbeing, embraced diversity, facilitated open communication and collaboration, and heightened employee engagement. This was more important than ever during what has been a high pressure environment for not only the company, but the mortgage market as a whole.

## Approach

The then People & Culture Director, Claire Smith, spearheaded several initiatives aimed at reinforcing the company value system, embodying MAB's DNA behaviours, and cultivating an inclusive culture. Instrumental to this was 'Breakfast with the CEO' (which aims to break down communication barriers), the launch of a revamped induction programme, and the hiring of key personnel, including an L&D champion and an Internal Communications Manager for improved company-wide engagement.

Recognising the diversity of needs among MAB employees, the company formed an activity-based working concept, transforming the office into an inclusive space, accommodating focus pods, quiet areas, collaborative zones, and a wellness space that employees can use for purposes such as prayer, nursing, or meditation. A mentoring programme was launched to provide all employees with opportunities for personal and career development.

MAB have a mix of aspiring and existing managers on a Women in Leadership Apprenticeship, and a number of existing female leaders are members of



the WLA (Women's Leaders Association), in support of addressing and closing the gender pay gap. A Performance Excellence framework has been introduced to ensure employees remain focused on embedding the company's stated behaviours in their roles, all while engaging with business goals/objectives.

“Claire Smith, spearheaded several initiatives aimed at reinforcing the company value system, embodying MAB's DNA behaviours, and cultivating an inclusive culture”

## Outcome

The new way of working has spurred collaboration, boosted staff performance, and enhanced employee wellbeing, paving the way for robust market share and profit growth in the future. In addition, MAB's commitment to ESG (environmental, social and governance) has gained momentum, with the office's ESG rating improving from D to B, and the appointment of an ESG consultancy to advance its sustainability journey. Since 2021, the firm's culture building efforts have won MAB 10 awards.

We also now have a fully established DEI group (MAB'U'nity), and new policies relating to dependent care and study leave have been introduced.



## TEAM

# BT TEAM DRIVES GLOBAL DATA ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE THROUGH A HUMAN FIREWALL OF 'DATA HEROES'

## Background

As a leading global data-driven communication company, BT faces ever-evolving challenges navigating the complex network of data laws across 137 of the countries it operates in. Operating in diverse sectors that are integral to today's world, such as telecom networks, critical infrastructure protection and technology innovation, the company's 130,000-plus employees support millions of customers across the globe. To keep up with and get ahead in this complex environment, BT is undergoing the biggest transformation in its history. It realised it had to create a stronger data framework to protect itself and its customers amid global pandemic, significant cutbacks and competitiveness in recruiting privacy professionals. It also needed to combat the development of solo mindsets with competing objectives and behaviours across its many jurisdictions and business units.

## Approach

To address these challenges the company created a Data, Legal Compliance & Assurance (DLCA) team, with a core focus on creating a culture of accountable privacy and driving BT's purpose: 'we connect for good'. The team brings together data privacy and security lawyers along with governance, technology, security, project and risk management and behaviours and culture professionals.

This team has led the development of a data programme aimed at integrating data and security compliance across different lines of defence within the company. The programme is underpinned by a comprehensive data compliance maturity model, a risk-based Horizon Scanning process for new

“To keep up with and get ahead in this complex environment, BT is undergoing the biggest transformation in its history”

regulations and a DATA: PLAY YOUR PART campaign to boost data awareness, help people understand how to get more value from data and foster a culture of personal accountability. The idea is for employees to see themselves as 'data heroes', both in terms of 'data defenders' who protect and secure data and speak up when they've made a mistake/spot a potential problem and 'data agents' who understand and use data competently, know the importance of clean data and drive value from that data for the business.

The DLCA team also created a number of industry-leading tools and training for employees including a gamified training programme called Don't Feed the 'Ish', where employees take on a hacker to learn about the risks of, and how to defend against, phishing, vishing, smishing and poor social media behaviours. Also the Personal Data

Risk Radar where employees can check how risky their social media profiles are, learn why and what the fraudsters can do with their personal data and then how to make the changes on their social media to reduce their risks.

## Outcome

The DLCA team's efforts resulted in measurable data maturity progress. Its unique approach to engagement, education and communication, switching the narrative from 'guard dog' to 'guide dog', has made data and compliance personal and real for every BT colleague so each feels part of the data human firewall.

There has been an increased commitment to data compliance with more than 50,000 employees engaging with the DATA: PLAY YOUR PART campaign while the employee 'ishing' click rate has decreased substantially, and there has been an 80% vishing compliance improvement rate in retail stores. The icing on the data cake is that BT and regulator ICO are now working together to drive change across the telco industry, with the ICO acknowledging the DLCA team as an industry leader for data compliance.



## WORKING ENVIRONMENTS & PRACTICES

# CURRYS' TRANSITION TO HYBRID WORKING 'THE BEST THING THE COMPANY HAS EVER DONE,' SAY COLLEAGUES



### Background

In March 2020, when the pandemic mandated 1,500 office-based colleagues shift to remote work overnight, electronics retailer Currys faced the challenge of maintaining productivity, employee wellbeing and company culture amid the unexpected upheaval. Rapid adaptation was necessary, combining home office setups and virtual communication tools. However, remote work also brought challenges like lack of face-to-face collaboration and an exacerbated meeting culture. When society began to open back up, the feedback data from colleagues was unequivocal – they wanted to continue to have flexibility in their ways of working. Currys committed to addressing their employees' needs while keeping commercial interests in mind – a complicated task given the uncertain economic climate.

### Approach

Currys initiated a journey led by a dedicated team, colleague forums and the Executive Committee, leveraging colleague feedback, surveys and data to guide their shift towards hybrid working. In response to an employee survey revealing 90% preferred hybrid working, Currys initiated a partnership with Champion Health for wellbeing support and set up an online Hybrid Working Hub with resources and guidance to support its Hybrid Working Principles of Be Connected, Be Intentional, Be Inclusive and Be Flexible. It has implemented a Golden Hour between 1-2pm every day as a guaranteed meeting-free hour and Wednesday Mornings Unplugged, an extended meeting-free zone for thinking and planning rather than being on-screen.

To deliver a positive office experience when people did want to come together to connect and collaborate, the company decided to adopt a hub-and-spoke model in partnership with WeWork that began in August 2022

This came on the back of a survey finding that 77% of people rated Currys' Acton head office building and facilities as average-poor, with only 17% of people regularly attending the office. A decision was taken to leave Acton and use WeWork's Waterloo flagship building as the company's hub location, along with 15 regional meeting spaces across the UK. This was done to ensure in-person collaboration and attract top talent while maintaining safety and accommodating employee preferences. Additionally, Takeover Days were introduced in the Waterloo office to enable each corporate function to have a dedicated space and time for their team once a month to encourage team collaboration.

### Outcome

The flexibility offered through the hybrid model led to increased office presence without any forced mandate, indicating a successful transition. Closing the previous office space in Acton allowed Currys to fund the WeWork facilities while reducing the company's carbon footprint. Survey results post-transition showed overwhelmingly positive feedback from employees, with 92% feeling positive about the hybrid approach and 88% planning to use the new Waterloo site regularly. Words like 'game-changer' and 'the best thing the company has ever done' proliferate. What's more, the hybrid model has attracted more talent to the company, with at least 3,000 candidates applying to Currys because of the hybrid approach. Internal mobility also increased, with the hybrid model allowing people to move from retail to corporate roles, for example.

The transition to a hybrid model hasn't just been about the logistics but also about fostering a culture of trust by offering colleagues the opportunity to balance their professional and personal lives more effectively, providing them with the autonomy to work in a way that best suits their needs and the needs of the business. Currys continues to evolve by maintaining a dialogue with colleagues and focusing on their safety and wellbeing, thereby creating an inclusive, productive work environment.

“The transition to a hybrid model hasn't just been about the logistics but also about fostering a culture of trust”



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Working Lives:  
By celebrating and  
sharing outstanding  
business culture  
insights that  
accelerate  
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