

Case Study: Team Coaching

The situation

The client has a national remit, international reputation and is a leader in its sector. Strong demand for its services had led to the acquisition of two whole teams from other firms to provide additional capability and capacity, the last one having joined two years earlier. Despite an overall strong ‘nurturing’ organizational culture, the two teams had not integrated well into the acquiring organization and were not operating effectively as a whole. Working styles and values were very different. Team members expressed concern about a lack of wider leadership, control and structure. There was also a theme of needing to develop resilience in the face of uncertainties. Individual and sub-team performance varied and was being managed formally, and pay differences were causing frustration and anger. A culture of ‘us and them’ had resulted across the three fragmented teams, with low levels of cohesion and high mistrust. ZPD’s remit was to help rekindle team spirit and support it to become more cohesive, with a joint ethos and vision, while sustaining services and improving results.

Our approach

We started by clarifying whether the team needed to be a team at all. Once established, we proposed, to its leader, different options to work with the team. We were keen to ensure that leadership remained within the team to help the leader ‘take up’, and be accepted, in their role. To understand the situation from different stakeholders perspectives, we interviewed them and used an on-line team diagnostic profiling tool. We shared the interview data and profiling results openly with the teams (to build trust), particularly highlighting its strengths as well as acknowledging the areas of difficulty. We explored the 3 teams’ attitude towards the current status and required changes. The team created a new vision and identified practical steps to move them towards it.

The result

Through working with the whole team, members were able to see they were not alone, which overcame isolation and created unity. Mixing team members helped break down barriers and help them recognize what was common, as well as distinct, in their identity and contributions. A new vision enabled them to move beyond their siloed positions. Once communications and trust were established, team cohesion and performance improved.

About ZPD Consulting

ZPD is a leadership consulting company whose purpose is to develop global leaders and teams so they create better organisations for the future.

Contact

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Client quotes

“The Senior Management Team had honest conversations, which they had never had before. It helped us get to the hub of the issues between us and as a result our working style and performance as a team improved.” CEO, Media Sector

“This is real OD.” CEO, LoGov

“This is the best coaching I have ever received.” Managing Partner, Big 3 Consultancy

“We have been very impressed with ZPD’s approach to culture change. They introduced team coaching sympathetically during a time of change. ZPD enabled the senior team to increase performance to a level that would not have been achieved without them.” CEO, Retail Bank