

EVALUATION CASE STUDY: NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE & THE BEECH CENTRE WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER AN OD PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Northamptonshire Police (NHP) Force covers an area of 760 square miles which includes places such as Northampton, Corby, Daventry, Kettering & Wellingborough, with an overall resident population of 642,708 people. NHP has 1,343 employees.

Understanding the Challenge

Northamptonshire Police, like all Police Forces have been facing serious austerity measures at times when quality and performance of policing is expected to increase, whilst significant budget cuts are faced.

Supt. Dave Hill, Head of Organisational Development (OD) at NHP is working in partnership with The Beech Centre to help build internal capability and capacity to be able to respond to future OD requirements which will see continual change of the organisation. Beech were asked to design and deliver an accredited development programme for the internal change team Aspire, experts in a range of disciplines including HR, L&D and systems thinking. The aim was to establish a highly credible internal OD practitioner team who could individually & collectively work collaboratively for the benefit of the organisation.

Supt. Hill had, along with colleagues across the region, previously completed the Certificate in Consulting Essentials, offered by The Beech Centre and this had led to him seeing the value of building this into his own practice.

It was agreed that the learning from the programme could be specifically designed to help his Aspire team to “be at their best” as credible practitioners. Whilst the qualification outcome was important, it was important to ensure that the team learned more about themselves and their potential to perform for the organisation over a longer period.

Agreeing the Right Solution

Successful Implementation

The programme was designed to ensure maximum impact for the internal team and in turn for the organisation. This was achieved in a number of ways. Firstly, the delivery of the programme was designed to run alongside and integrate with a number of organisational initiatives which could bring about the biggest impact and return. Secondly, the assessment process for the qualification would be linked to a live organisational diagnostic, working with Beech’s own diagnostic model. This would enable the team to learn from the experience of completing a live diagnostic which would in turn, deliver high value for the organisation.

Facilitator’s Viewpoint

Steve Benfield, Managing Partner worked closely with Dave Hill throughout this initiative.

“It was a real pleasure to work with members of the internal team and colleagues who joined the programme from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The team were highly motivated and committed to the seven-day development programme, starting with a half day induction, followed by three, two-day modules & a half-day evaluation and graduation session. The whole philosophy of the programme requires individuals to “re-frame” the way they see how they can best utilise their expertise by developing collaborative behaviours that seek to balance questioning and telling”.



The Impact

From the evaluation session, delegates identified a number of features of the programme that together had the most significant impact against the desired results. Firstly, the programme has brought down many natural barriers that exist in police forces between the police and the OPCC.

Quotes from some of the participants

The consultancy/coaching trios, designed to provide a supportive and challenging dynamic to the programme, were seen as highly valuable; a place to test out approaches and reflect on actions/performance.

“The whole area of reflective practice is brought to the fore in this programme – noticing self and others in the moment and reacting to that data positively, it really encourages self-responsibility”

The use of the “contracting triangle” and OD practitioner (consultancy) cycle, is hugely beneficial in helping practitioners know where both themselves and the client are operating from.

“The contracting triangle enabled me to quickly get a clearer understanding of client requirements resulting in products being aligned to the client’s wants.”

Self-awareness and personal discovery through the use of MBTI Step 2, and Gestalt and Industry Practitioner Competencies were also valued to enable an assessment against a set of standards.

“The OD practitioner programme has encouraged me to reflect on myself and the impact I wish to make. Throughout the programme, I recognised situations from the past which would have benefited from my new found knowledge...”

The psychological dynamics in regard to power and influence between internal client & OD practitioner has contributed to creating further curiosity of how people work in organisational systems.

“This programme has helped me to sustain influence positively, the drama triangle shows the connection between responsibility and power and their relationship to boundaries.”

From an organisational perspective:

Dave Hill reports...

“The OD practitioner programme achieved exactly what I hoped it would. The high impact programme encouraged my team to be personally reflective on how impactful they are to the organisation as a whole. They have become effective OD practitioners and used the learning they acquired practically, applying it to everyday situations they come across. It’s also impacted on the wider organisation as our team are thinking of the ways in which they interact with others across the force, encouraging deeper and more collaborative relationship building”

Dr Bernadette Doran PhD,

Benefits Realisation Manager also comments...

“The cumulative effect across an organisation has many benefits. For me, the highlight of the programme was the opportunity to be part of a co-coaching group. This ensured learning continued to be sustained past the classroom through the sharing of experiences and also ensured responsibility for learning and development. I have observed changes in other team members reflecting on their reactions to situations and re-framing. Furthermore, the opportunity was given to the team to carry out an organisational diagnostic. This enabled us to put our learning into action through working directly with the client and managing relationships.”

What next?

Members of the team are looking to complete the organisational diagnostic work and ensure that the learning continues through progression to the Diploma level practitioner programme. The development of collaborative relationships between members of the Aspire team and the OPCC on major projects is now much more possible and productive.

For more information on our OD Practitioner Development programme, please contact Chris Leggett, Head of Programmes at The Beech Centre chris.leggett@thebeechcentre.co.uk.