



Institute for
**Organisational
Development**

Changing the Conversation

An Evaluation Case Study with
North Lincolnshire Council

North Lincolnshire Council

North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) is the local authority that governs North Lincolnshire.

The Adult Services Team* was a division of North Lincolnshire Council, dedicated to working with adults find the help and support they need within their day to day lives. They provide these adults and their families with relevant information to enable them to make the best decisions for their circumstances.

**The Council has undergone a significant restructure since this work took place and the Adult Services Team now exists in the Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing Directorate.*

Understanding the challenge

The Institute for Organisational Development (formally The Beech Centre) and North Lincolnshire Council have worked together in a strategic relationship over a number of years to develop capability within the organisation in three key skill areas; coaching, consulting and facilitation, with multiple members of staff achieving certificates in all three disciplines.

This approach had been implemented to provide sustainable outcomes for the Council by enabling them to both design and deliver their own solutions.

Considering this context, the management in the Adult Services Team were keen to develop a programme which would be personal to the needs of their organisation and provide the greatest return on investment for them.

They were keen that this would also be something that they could sustainably implement within the wider Adult Services Team in the long-term, independent of the Institute for Organisational Development's involvement, maximising on the coaching, consulting and facilitation skills they had developed previously.



Agreeing the right solution

A member of the now Institute for Organisational Development (OD) Team, a qualified coach and facilitator, worked collaboratively with the Council Directorate's Service Manager for Quality Assurance and Performance, to develop a bespoke intervention for their requirements.

Together, they decided that they would adapt the Institute for Organisational Development's existing two-day Coaching skills programme to fit the needs of the organisation. The Institute for OD's programme invites delegates to adopt a non-directive, coaching approach in conversations, allowing the other person to think for themselves, choose their own solutions and make sustainable commitments.

It was felt that this skill was particularly important for the staff in NLC Adult Services to be equipped with, given that the choices about the way that an individual receives care have now moved to being made by the individual themselves, as opposed to the care providers, which the Council refer to as "Personalisation".



Successful implementation

So how was the existing programme adapted to fit North Lincolnshire Council's needs?

The two-day Coaching programme was used as the starting point and was specifically adapted to focus on the Personalisation Agenda. The programme's title was renamed "Changing the Conversation", to reflect the focus on utilising a coaching style of dialogue to enable the conversations between staff at NLC Adult Services and their clients to become more productive.

Six installments of the programme were delivered in total, involving one facilitator from the now Institute for OD and a co-facilitator from NLC Adult Services.

A co-facilitation approach was initially used in this instance to support in the capability development within NLC Adult Services to enable them to deliver the programme independently going forward, with members of the NLC Adult Services Team now growing as competent facilitators.



Facilitator's viewpoint

A facilitator of a number of the “Changing the Conversation” programmes within NLC Adult Services said; “It was great to see coaching skills being adapted so easily to a very practical application within the sphere of social care. All of the participants received this enthusiastically and could immediately see how an approach of giving time and space to allow the other person to contemplate what they wanted resulted in much better outcomes for the service user and more sustainable levels of engagement”.

The impact

As with every Institute for Organisational Development intervention, the work was uniquely designed to have the best impact in the specific context of the organisation. In this instance, it was right for us to be still closely alongside the Council in order to support them in ensuring the right intervention was created, and to enable them to embed confidence in this programme and their abilities moving forward.

Each wave of the “Changing the Conversation” programme was evaluated in order to measure the impact and ensure that the programme was achieving the outcomes that it was designed to achieve. This led to tweaks to increase suitability and impact.

The evaluation identified that this coaching approach when working with others was having a very positive impact for both the individual participants and their clients.



Next steps?

Using the data gathered in the evaluation stage of the “Changing the Conversation” intervention, we, with the NLC facilitators modified the programme slightly to ensure that maximum impact was achieved and maintained through the programme moving forward.

“Changing the Conversation” is routinely offered to members of the Adult Services Team at NLC completely independent of the Institute for Organisational Development’s involvement, illustrating that the sustainable solution we were working towards has been achieved.

The Institute for Organisational Development’s reflections

One of our key reasons for existing and working with organisations in the collaborative way we do is to instil and grow confidence, skills, development, and enable sustainability.

Working with organisations to take learning they have with us deeper into the organisation and translating for their day to day context to create different experiences is so important in our work – knowing that this will significantly transform the options and control people have in their lives in this scenario is incredible.

With any Strategic Organisational Development Membership relationship, we seek to understand where the organisation is and work with the individuals there to ensure that they are in the strongest position to become sustainable. We aim to make the reach and impact of development as wide and as relevant as possible and in some instances, reach a point of joint development between organisations.

Acknowledging the influence and impact each organisation and individual has is essential in building true sustainability and accountability. We realise that integral parts of an organisation are driven through relationships, which are influenced by the behaviour and opportunity created within them. In this context of social care and the users of social care services, enabling people to have more control and responsibility in their care is a positive shift in the dynamic within, and potential outcomes that can come from, these relationships.

For more information on how your organisation could benefit from building sustainability and developing and implementing a bespoke programme through a Strategic Organisational Development approach, please contact the Institute for Organisational Development on membership@instituteforod.org.uk or call us on 0845 4303 021.



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