

IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE

Give your staff & teams
the tools to be
excellent

meta
working smarter not harder

IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE! **Giving your staff the tools to be excellent**

Most teams within organisations these days have at least one away-day a year. Often these become planning days, focussing on the strategy and business plan delivery rather than something to bring the team together and develop them as well.

Are you under-utilising your team days?

Getting everyone together as a team could be an opportunity to help grow and develop your people, so that they are able to deliver in a more effective and better way. What if you used the time on an away-day to build the skills and capabilities of your team? What if you used those away-days to actually follow a programme of development that over time would ensure that your business plan was delivered more effectively? What if you maximised the time you had with your team to bring it closer together, so that the team functioned at a much higher level?

Themes that help a team to become more effective

There are certain things that all teams at all levels within organisations face that inhibit their ability to deliver at their best. During the years since the last recession there has been a steady increase of workload, whilst organisations have become more streamlined, meaning that for most they are working harder than ever before. There is no doubt that there is more pressure to deliver than ever, and so now more than ever it's important to develop your teams so that they have the skills to deal with the increased workloads and the pressures and stresses that come with that.

We at Meta have created a series of 'one off' days around themes that come up time and time again in the work that we have been doing over recent years. These days are tailored to suit your needs as leader of your team, and whichever topic you choose you can know that the day will bring your team closer together, and up-skill them with tools needed in today's busy workplace. The wonderful thing about these days is that they work individually or, if combined, they can become a coherent development journey for your team.

Meta means 'beyond and at the next level' - these away-day workshop themes are designed to take your team beyond their current capabilities to the next level of team excellence. All Meta workshops are based on our research into excellence in people, teams and organisations. We've spent over 20 years developing this work, so we'd like to share our secrets with you in these one-day offerings.



THE EXCELLENT TEAM - A 6-DAY DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

Most people are not taught how to work well in a team, and the modern flattened structures of organisations means that teams may not be in the same office, or indeed the same country! So now more than ever it is important to develop a different, more effective way of working together. At Meta we have spent many years studying and researching excellence within teams. We have developed a unique 6-day development programme that pulls together all the essentials to excellent team working into one modular programme. We have refined and developed this programme as a result of work we have done within organisations that have gone on to become some of the top places to work in this country. We don't like to say that we're experts at Meta, but if there's one thing we truly excel at, it's helping you to get the most from your team, and our 6-day development journey gives every team the tools it needs to be excellent.

PROGRAMME OUTLINE:

DAY 1: THE EXCELLENT TEAM

DAY 2: SELF MANAGEMENT + EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION

DAY 3: WORKING SMARTER NOT HARDER + REDUCING STRESS

DAY 4: UNDERSTANDING CHANGE + INFLUENCING

DAY 5: ENGAGEMENT, EMPOWERMENT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

DAY 6: EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE

PRACTICAL DETAILS

- This programme would be run in-house
- The content of the days can be tailored to suit your individual requirements and easily extended or shortened dependent on needs
- Group size - between 8 and 15

Contact: Jo Clarkson, Chief Executive of Meta.

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META - A JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE CASE STUDY



In 2013 we were approached by Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) a local housing association whose inspirational leader, Mike Brown, was committed to making the organisation one that not only was extremely successful in every measure, but also one that his staff loved to work for. The year previously they had entered the Sunday Times Top 100 places to work and had got to an impressive 44th place in the not-for-profit top 100. This wasn't good enough for Mike who wanted to work on one of their key findings in the Top 100 survey, which was around becoming a more cross-functional team. Over 2 years we worked with Mike and BDHT on their 'ONE BDHT' and 'Journey to Excellence' leadership and staff development programmes.

In 2013 we did 4 days in total with the leadership team and 4 with the whole staff (145 in total). As a result of programme BDHT rose from 44th on the Sunday Times Top 100 to 9th

We followed up that work in 2014 with a further smaller development journey on 'engagement, empowerment and encouragement' - 2 days with the staff and 3 with the leadership team - that led to their highest ever placing in the Sunday Times Top 100, an amazing 4th and won them the 'best for learning and development' award.

Since then every year we have done a 4-day 'catch-up' programme with all new starters at BDHT to ensure that every new employee has the same basic Meta training. This year BDHT entered the 'Great Place to Work' UK's top 50 best workplaces, to measure its on-going commitment to being an excellent place to work, and came in at number 7 up against organisations in all sectors. BDHT has an incredible 93% customer satisfaction rating and very low staff turnover and sickness.

BDHT is a perfect example of how to develop a culture of excellence that allows its entire staff to flourish. Its commitment to the development of its staff has enabled it to continue to thrive as an organisation, despite significant reductions in government subsidy and cuts in local council funding. BDHT is an agile, dynamic organisation committed to the communities and customers it serves, an organisation that we have been proud to work in partnership with.

REFERENCE

We are more than happy to provide a reference for the work that we do:
Mike Brown - Chief Executive of BDHT (Bromsgrove District Housing Trust)



WORKING SMARTER NOT HARDER

Most of us are working harder than we ever have, and yet when we are working hard, we are not working at our best and ironically, working longer hours does not mean getting more done. In the speeded up world of work, we all need to develop practical strategies for dealing with our workloads, so that we can meet our targets without impacted our personal health. We all need to be working in a much smarter way. We all know that we are not being as effective as we could be at work and in this one-day workshop we will explain how to work in a more natural way that ensures that you are more effective, increase your efficiency and get more done without getting more stressed.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS DAY:

- Practical ways to keep your energy topped up
- Awareness of your own strategies and needs for having a good day
- Clarification of your signs that you're working harder not smarter
- Techniques for regaining a good state of mind
- Awareness of your peak times for energy and effectiveness in a day
- Simple ways to prioritise your work
- Ways to keep your work/life balance

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EFFECTIVE CROSS-FUNCTIONAL WORKING

There is no doubt about it, if an organisation is to maximise the effectiveness of its structure it must embrace cross-functional working. This requires a significant change in thinking as most people have been brought up in the traditional 'silo-working' culture that has been predominant up until recently. This workshop will explore how to enhance the way teams work together cross-functionally for the benefit of the organisation as a whole and is aimed at teams who regularly need to cooperate to be effective in their delivery.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS PROGRAMME:

- Understanding of the importance of cross-functional working
- A shared vision of what your cross-functional team will be like
- An agreed set of operating principles for working together
- Recognition of the part the teams involved have to play in producing good results
- Identification of joint strengths and ways of building on them
- Strategies for communicating more effectively cross-functionally
- Ways of overcoming obstacles to effective cross-functional working

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EXCELLENT TEAM COMMUNICATION

One of the keys to having an excellent team is how the team communicates with one another. With the email culture in many organisations rife, it's important that your team really understands communication and has practical shared tools and a common language that enable them to communicate effectively with each other and externally. This day will explore what makes excellent communication and give your team a set of advanced communication tools that will ensure that team communication improves in all areas.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS DAY:

- Increased awareness and understanding of each other's worlds
- Enhanced ability to pay each other proper attention
- Awareness of the significant role played by non-verbal communication in getting your message across
- Ways of enabling yourself to be in the right state to communicate as you intend
- Awareness of the importance of the language you use and ways of enhancing the positive use of language
- Ways to set yourself up to communicate effectively
- Ways of improving the way you give feedback

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STRESS AND WAYS OF OVERCOMING IT

Stress is a silent killer. Most of us are experiencing it but don't know its causes or what to do about it. In today's workplace, stress is a reality and we have developed a high tolerance to something that ultimately is very damaging to us as individuals and to the teams we work within.

Stress related illnesses are the number one cause of visits to the GP, and a high factor in increased sickness absence within organisations.

This one-day workshop helps explain the science behind stress and gives you some practical tools to help recognise the signs, combat and overcome stress.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS DAY:

- Recognition of personal causes of stress
- Ways of resourcing yourself to reduce likelihood of stress
- Awareness of the physical effects of stress
- Recognition of the various signs of stress before it becomes major
- Ways to improve our state of mind
- Ways to relieve the feeling of stress and allow yourself to recover
- Ways to help others when you notice signs of stress

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UNDERSTANDING CHANGE

Change is a constant. It's always there in the workplace, always a new initiative, a new organisational change in process. In this day we explore our personal relationship to change, helping participants to understand and deal with change in a new way. We explore the fundamentals of dealing well with change - choice, communication, engagement and influencing - so that your team can be more actively engaged in the inevitable changes they will face.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS DAY:

- Awareness of how much change we have dealt with already
- Understanding of the way change works naturally - as evolution
- Awareness of your own experience of handling change well and what makes the difference
- Understanding of how change is handled better when you can make active choices
- Increased awareness of what engages you with a change
- How to have an influence on change
- Ways of communicating about change effectively
- Ways of dealing with resistance to change

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OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS DAY:

- Definition of the ideal excellent team
- A shared vision of what your excellent team will be like
- An agreed set of operating principles for working together
- Identification of the team strengths and ways of building on them
- What the obstacles are to being that excellent team
- Ways of reducing the impact of those obstacles to excellence
- Techniques for bringing out the best in yourself

PRACTICAL DETAILS

- This programme would be run in-house
- The content can be tailored to suit your individual requirements and easily extended to become a more comprehensive two-day excellent team workshop
- Group size - between 8 and 15

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EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE

There are a thousand and one different programmes on customer service. But most forget that ALL of us are our own best experts when it comes to customer service. There is no doubt that if you are to excel as an organisation you must put your customers at the centre of all that you do. Want to know what the differentiating factor is in most leading organisations? It is that they have understood that going that extra mile for a customer is what creates loyalty and brings in business. Excellent customer service is essential for today's competitive business marketplace and don't forget our customers aren't just outside our organisation they are inside too. All too often we focus on the outside and forget our internal customers to whom we provide our service as well. This one-day programme brings a healthy dose of common sense back into customer service and ensures that in customer service, excellence becomes the norm.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS PROGRAMME:

- Awareness of the importance of customer focus to the progress of the business
- An understanding of what excellent customer service is
- An understanding of what excellent communication is and the role it plays in customer service
- Ways of overcoming obstacles to giving excellent customer service
- Strategies for dealing with challenging conversations
- Strategies for pro-actively establishing what the customer needs, both internal and external
- Strategies for offering excellent customer service in relation to their role

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WELL-BEING IN THE WORKPLACE

In the last few years' organisations have become increasingly aware of just how important the well being of their staff is to the success of their organisations. In recent years, with the flattening of organisational structures has come an increase in workloads for staff and an even greater importance to being able to deal with the inevitable effects of stress and pressure that comes with that. Now more than ever it is essential that staff can recognise their own signs of stress and have tools in their toolkit to enable them to work more efficiently without affecting their work/life balance. Much research has been done into the area of well-being at work in recent years and we at Meta use that scientific research to give simple ways that can enhance well-being at work, through self-management, stress reduction techniques, and practical mindfulness.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS PROGRAMME

- Awareness of the importance of caring for your own well-being
- An increased understanding of science of stress
- Techniques for reducing your stress levels at work
- Awareness of the personal triggers that can lead to stress related illness
- Techniques for taking care of yourself at work
- An improved ability to prioritise and deal with workloads
- Simple and practical ways to apply mindfulness to maintain your own focus and well-being

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TIME MANAGEMENT MADE EASY

In today's speeded up world, time is a scarce commodity. You cannot save it and spend it later and the most common problem expressed by people at work is that there isn't enough time. You can 'lose' time, waste it, or let it drift away, but you cannot hold on to it. Managing time is about developing effective ways of making best use of the time you have.

This programme will deal with the fundamentals of time management, i.e. the principles behind the effective management of time, and ways of adapting those to suit your own style of working. The programme will give participants simple tools and techniques that will help them manage their time better and work more effectively.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS DAY:

- Understanding of the different ways we have of managing and wasting time
- Ability to define their own way of using time effectively
- Effective planning of their day/week/month
- Ability to think of time usage strategically as well as tactically
- Strategies for managing time wasters
- Ways of working with others to increase the value of their use of time
- Action plans to improve their personal time management

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

‘Emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as a source of human energy, information, connection and influence.’ - Robert Cooper author of Executive EQ

It is widely acknowledged that emotional intelligence is vital to ensure the effective working of teams and organisations. An essential tool in an excellent communication toolkit, emotional intelligence can make the difference when it comes to how teams work together and organisations work cross-functionally. This workshop explores the different aspects of emotional intelligence from the original research and gives simple, practical techniques that anyone can apply in their working practice.

OUTCOMES YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS PROGRAMME

- Understanding of what emotional intelligence really means
- Benefits of emotional intelligence
- Ways of developing your self awareness
- Ways of developing your awareness of others
- Ways of developing your awareness of situations
- Enhanced emotional intelligence communication tools
- Ways of applying your understanding to common situations in the workplace

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