



CASE STUDY: Team Development for the National Specialist Team, ConstructionSkills

ConstructionSkills is the sector skills council and the industry training board for the construction industry. It works to ensure a safe, professional and fully qualified UK construction workforce. One of the ways it does this is by providing advice, courses and funds for training to help improve construction businesses. Headquartered in Norfolk, ConstructionSkills employs over 1500 people across the UK.



Obsidian has been working with ConstructionSkills on a variety of assignments since the early 1990s, and has helped support the development of one particular team, the National Specialist Team, since 2004. At that time the team was 12-strong and there were concerns about the capability to manage relationships, both internally and externally. The team now has over 35 people working effectively as a cohesive unit.

Managing stakeholder relationships

In the early days the focus was very much on reviewing and developing relationship management skills. Workshops facilitated by Obsidian helped the team assess their strengths and weakness in this area, map key relationships and learn specific account management skills.

Understanding self and others

Profiling was used, including Belbin team roles and Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), to help individuals have an improved understanding of their own personality type and preferred ways of working - both individually and with others. This proved an important stage.



According to Stuart Littlefair, Manager of the National Specialist Team, *“The profiling gave the team a better understanding of themselves and others in the team. An interesting additional benefit was it also helped the team appreciate differences in people in general, which improved external relationships.”*



Adopting common goals

Within the National Specialist Team are 2 sub-teams, Delivery and Support. These teams traditionally worked in isolation and had little appreciation of each others' activities. Part of the team development process was to help these teams gel and support each other.

Stuart continued, *"During one session the 2 different teams wrote their objectives on a board. It was a real "eureka" moment when each of the 2 teams recognised what the other was trying to achieve – and how it was not that dissimilar!"*

A team journey



Obsidian has facilitated a number of team development interventions each year since 2004, supporting this team on a development journey. It has turned into a strong partnership.

"The feedback from different individuals in the team has been exceedingly positive. The sub-teams now understand each others' responsibilities better and, importantly, how they can help each other. We have seen a far greater degree of support and collaboration.

The last year has been tough. However the team has continued to perform effectively throughout these very challenging times"

Stuart Littlefair, Manager, National Specialist Team, ConstructionSkills.