

Direct Business Benefits from Profiling Field Engineers



Background

- We were approached by the field operations division of a telecommunications plc to produce a career development framework for their field engineers
- Research during the first 4 weeks of our engagement helped unravel the history of the project and re-clarify the drivers and associated business case. The hoped for outcomes included: staff retention and attraction, better utilisation of engineer resource and engineer upskilling to meet business needs.
- Working closely with an in-house team we were able to shape the scope of the project in a way that enabled maximum integration between different organisational processes and benefits beyond those initially anticipated.

The Purpose of Our Work

- To develop a competency framework to describe the range of technical and non-technical skills required for effective performance as an engineer, now and in to the future
- To develop a robust process for profiling engineer's current technical and non-technical skills against the new framework
- To produce a process map showing how an agreed skill profile for each engineer would inform a variety of core business activities, including:
 - Strategic resource management
 - Appropriate allocation of engineers to jobs in the field
 - Appraisal and performance management
 - Training and personal development plans.

The in-house team carried the responsibility for putting the newly developed processes and tools into practice, via their intranet.

Our Approach

We worked closely with the in-house project team, field engineers, technical experts and line managers. Our main contributions were in the areas of data gathering / research, concept development and delivery of the profiling process and associated tools.

Our research methods for this project included field observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups and hands-on mapping sessions.

The profiling process was designed to combine rigour with elegance and was written to maximise engineer engagement. It brought mapping and data together with real conversations between engineers and their line managers.

The Benefits

For the first time, the field operations division had good visibility of its engineers' technical and non-technical skills, at the individual level and in aggregated form. This made day-to-day resource management more efficient and effective and informed strategic resource planning.

At the individual level, engineers and their line managers now had a structured framework within which to discuss current strengths, training needs and career aspirations. Information was available to all about the full range of roles available within the organisation and career paths made development options clear.

What Our Clients Said

'We wouldn't have achieved such a great outcome without you. Your incisive thinking and commitment to taking a broader view on our situation meant that we were able to achieve so much more than a career development framework. The flexibility you showed, incorporating the skills and energies of our in-house team as well as tolerating the numerous staff changes we had, was especially appreciated. Thanks again for delivering this fabulous piece of work.' Project Lead, Engineer Development, Field Operations