

Case Study: Helping to smooth the integration as arch rivals merge

Background Our client approached us two weeks after they had successfully acquired their arch rival. They wanted to run an organisational change programme to engage people in the transition process and to allow employees to 'experience, share, and live the common vision of how to work together, be productive and be excited about the new organisation'.

Our Approach We worked with representatives from both companies to explore and hone the objectives. We designed an apparently light-touch intervention to match the informal, 'can do', fun spirit of both organisations while working appropriately with the critical change issues they were facing.

Over a period of 4 weeks, 170 employees, in groups of up to 20, took part in a highly interactive and engaging half day experience that helped them understand the nature of change and support them to make a positive contribution to the integration of the two organisations.

Managed Change™ was the fundamental but unseen framework used throughout the assignment. The event was designed to enable key change agents to gather real-time information about what was happening in the organisation as well as to address participants' individual needs. By feeding critical information back to the Transformation Team on a regular basis it became possible for the organisation to make informed decisions about how to progress with the change and communicate more effectively with those in the organisation most affected by the acquisition.

Outcomes

- Participants described the experience as extremely positive, and they were able to develop strategies for dealing with their own change issues.
- For the Director of Transformation, the programme became key in helping him and the Senior Management Board make timely and effective decisions about how to direct their limited change resources.
- On a personal level, our main client contacts found it easy to work with us on an interactive basis, rather than us telling them how we do things. They described us as very accommodating, flexible and professional and would recommend using us again.
- In line with our client's company philosophy, they reported that the input we gave was a cost-effective solution.

On Reflection This was a fantastic project to be involved with. It was undertaken in a reasonably short space of time and required high levels of focus and energy. We were able to make a genuine difference to the organisation - in terms of its ability to respond appropriately at a difficult time during the change, and to many people who were feeling the pain of the change and needed support to deal with it.