

## Managing People Risk – Impact and Influence

### Description

### Challenge

Our client, a leading financial services regulator, faces significant challenges fulfilling their strategic objectives. They are in an industry with thousands of firms to regulate, from one man bands to multi-million dollar global banks with complex and dynamic products, and are under constant scrutiny by the government and media. Their regulatory supervisors not only need to understand the system in which they operate, but they must also be able to identify, analyze, and mitigate risks inherent in organizational structures, systems and processes, culture, and governance.

Their work is highly technical. Added to this, they must be able to establish and build constructive, professional relationships across the management spectrum. Whether in leadership style, personal and group decision making, or informal networks, they need a sophisticated level of communication skills in order to detect where the real risks lie and bring their influence to bear to ensure these risks are addressed and managed.

Our client has a comprehensive and-up-to date agenda of technical development for their supervisors. Yet, experience has shown that without the behavioral skill and confidence to deal with the people they regulate, their ability to get the results they need is seriously constrained. The program we were engaged to design and deliver was to help develop the personal impact, relationship management, and influencing skills of regulatory supervisors.

### Action

We have been delivering this program for the past eight years with considerable success. The style and shape of the program have changed over time to meet the client and industry shifts in culture and context, but the skill development has remained constant.

It is a 2-day program preceded by individual learning and reflection, a focused line manager conversation, and followed up with manager or specialist coaching. The program recognizes that behavior is largely situational, and that these skills need to be deployed in the context of the technical work being done. The program is designed around a bespoke competency framework with four key elements:

- Relationship management and influencing
- Preparing for and managing meetings
- Identifying issues, probing and listening
- Communicating with impact and clarity

The first day offers a series of quick, practical activities around each of the competency areas conducted in small groups.

On the second day, individuals engage in intensive practice and feedback in the morning session in groups of four to six with an experienced coach/facilitator. The afternoon session provides further practice using a technical case study based on a real-life scenario. Pairs of participants prepare for a meeting with a CEO, Chair, CRO, or CFO and then conduct the interview. The senior manager is played by an industry expert, and the meeting is observed by one of the coach/facilitators. Tailored feedback from the practical sessions feeds into each individual's development action plans.

The design of this program means the first day can be run for groups from different technical sectors, and the second day provides practice in a relevant case for all participants.

## **Result**

The program has been consistently rated as the most relevant and immediately useful of the Supervisory Development Program and has stood the test of time. It also provides a fast track to competence for new supervisors.

### **Date Created**

September 2018

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