

Morley Fund Management: Training and Development Case Study

Background

Morley Fund Management is the London-based institutional and retail asset management business of Aviva plc, the largest insurer in the UK. Morley manages assets in excess of £100 billion with investment offices around the world. They have over 850 employees, most of whom are based in London.

The Morley vision is to become a world class fund manager, to deliver excellence in all that they do and to be recognised by their peers and clients as a market leader for global products in their chosen markets.

As part of their drive towards this vision they have four key themes, one of which is “achieving superior client satisfaction”. Therefore, how they service both their internal and external clients is a key priority within their business plan.

Training Needs

In order to fulfil their vision, Morley required a detailed assessment of their current personnel development needs. Therefore, Pentland were engaged to conduct a full Training Needs Analysis. Following interviews with 35 key personnel from Executive Director to Middle Management level, a full TNA report was submitted to the Morley Board. This included recommendations for an appropriate curriculum to support the Morley business over the following 12 months and beyond.

Training Solution and the Outcomes

One of the key areas identified for improvement was that of better management of both internal and external customers. Consequently, Pentland were requested to design, develop and deliver a fully customised Customer Relationship Servicing Skills Programme across all personnel within the Morley organisation.

The objectives of this programme were:

- To develop a clearer understanding of what internal customers want and how best to give it to them, whilst at the same time managing their customers’ expectations and thus deepening the relationship.
- To improve the perception of the role of different departments within the organisation and the added benefits that this awareness brings.
- To further develop the business relationship with the parent company to equal that of an externally focused relationship, whilst appreciating the internal structure, and therefore the nuances, of this relationship.

Pam Hutton, Learning and Development Consultant at Morley, explains: *“We wanted to encourage people to strengthen teamwork with colleagues from other areas within the organisation and provide them with the tools to negotiate win-win situations for each other.”*

The design process involved considerable input from various personnel within the business in order that both their individual and the organisational needs were addressed. This allowed the development of highly customised case studies, role-plays and exercises as part of the programme. Following successful pilots, the programme was rolled out to all employees over a 12-month period. Pam adds: *“People learn better if the information is relevant to what they do. Pentland constantly monitored and evaluated the sessions to ensure a truly customised programme.”*

Assessing the impact of this type of training intervention is always difficult, however, as Pam points out, significant outcomes have definitely been achieved, *“We have certainly seen an increase in self-awareness and confidence for individuals and a better awareness of the needs of others within the organisation. This has led to stronger business relationships within Morley Fund Management and the general level of communication across the business has improved. There is no doubt that the expertise and energy from Pentland has been key in encouraging people to learn and implement effective interpersonal skills to improve intra- and inter-team communication, and thus achieve their individual and organisational goals”*

Reinforcement - The Key to Ongoing Success

It is always a problem for any organisation, and in particular the training and development team, to ensure that skills and knowledge acquired on a course are not forgotten once back in the workplace. With the help of Pentland, Morley implemented a range of initiatives to reinforce learning. The most popular and effective of these has been a "Lunch and Learn" session. Held on a regular basis, these sessions allow staff to assess the issues covered in the course and refresh their knowledge and skills. Of course, the great advantage is that the sessions fit neatly within the working day, easing the pressure of balancing regular workload with continued training and development.

Pentland do not treat courses in isolation and therefore, while individual needs are met, the focus also turns to the needs of the team and consequently the needs of the organisation.

Getting the Right Supplier

Choosing the right supplier for your organisation is crucial to the programme's success. As Vicki Muddiman, Head of HR Services says: *"Finding a training provider who has a good portfolio of clients and who also works within a similar market is so important. It means they will have in-depth knowledge and experience of the market in which you and your competitors operate, allowing better customisation and design of learning programmes. We found that Pentland was a good cultural fit because, as well as bringing a positive and genuine enthusiasm to the project they became very much part of the team and brought out the best in people."*

Vicki goes on to further explain: *"Using an external provider for your training and development programmes means that in addition to professional expertise, you have a degree of neutrality which makes the delegates much more relaxed and comfortable during the learning process. Good training providers such as Pentland, also have the expertise to identify and monitor changing needs so that the courses can continue to be customised for both the individuals and the company. We knew Pentland had an impressive list of clients from our market sector, and we were keen to have a training provider who would be a trusted partner and be able to get the best out of our delegates and the training and development team."*

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