

ADARE INTERNATIONAL: THE FIVE BEHAVIOURS OF A COHESIVE TEAM

THE DESTINATION:

Adare International, Global Marketing Services organisation, was experiencing significant change. It had been acquired by a PE and with this came a new CEO, CFO and HRD. In practice, this meant that 3 members of the Board were totally new to the team; the IT Director had only been in post for 6 months and the other 3 remaining members of the Board had been with the organisation for an average of 15 years. The situation was ripe for conflict.

In addition, there was the need to articulate a new strategy for the ensuing 3 years, around which would be built a reinvigorated workplace culture committed to the vision and a renewing and updating of the company Values.

The CEO was immensely keen to build his team and strategy using a swift, effective and collaborative approach. Sticky Change was commissioned to design and deliver a structured team building programme based on the 5 Behaviours of a Cohesive Team model, wherein the team would work through the model and embed its tenets, while simultaneously working on the strategy.

The 5 Behaviours of a Cohesive Team Model



AS A RESULT OF THE PROGRAMME, PARTICIPANTS:

1. Have articulated a 3 year strategy for success in a wholly collaborative style
2. Have built a senior team with the winning mindsets and First Team attitudes required to deliver on the strategy
3. Understand, differentiate between and practise the behaviours aligned to each level of the model and that result in a truly cohesive and productive team
4. Understand each other's strengths and weaknesses and skills gaps and how to maximise the former and work with the latter
5. Have a language with which to discuss any issues that they might have with each other's approach

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- An effective leadership team, where higher levels of trust were established in a *significantly* shorter time than the norm and where opinions are genuinely respected and listened to
- Team members who value each other, their differences and understand what is important to their colleagues, reducing the possibility of intrapersonal politics and unproductive conflict and competition



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- A strategy identified and owned by all Board members
 - Swifter integration of new team members into the organisation
 - A feeling that it was time well spent even when it took people away from ‘business as usual’
 - An infinitely more open and collaborative team spirit, combined with an understanding that it is as important for them to work on the ‘how’ not just the ‘what’ when they are together
 - Development for both the team and the individual members simultaneously
 - A language for the team and the business to use when framing team work

THE INTERVENTION

Sticky Change adapted the 5 Behaviours programme to include the identification and articulation of the 3 year strategy. The programme consisted of:

- At the outset, all members took the 5 Behaviours with All Types (aligned to MBTI) Assessment. This serves as the benchmark for measuring behavioural improvements and progress towards a high performing and cohesive team and a tool for encouraging self-awareness around personal behaviours.
- A series of workshops which blended discussion and activities around the 5 levels of the model. The team discussed what a level meant in practice, how they were currently performing as evidenced in the assessment results and what they needed to do as a team - and individuals - to improve on the score.
- Individual understanding and sharing of their All Types profiles, exploring their strengths and differences.
- Practise of the behaviours in real time as they worked to identify and articulate their vision and strategy going forward.
- The Assessment is repeated after a 9 – 12 month period, to measure the teams’ progress against the 5 Behaviours. At this point, any new members are able to be included in the team results.
- Quarterly follow up sessions are held to maintain the work on the team dynamics and to constantly measure progress towards being a high performing cohesive team.

THE FORMAT

While this programme was combined with the strategy identification, it is generally run as a standalone programme, focusing purely on the team building dynamic.

It is highly versatile and can be used for developing teams at all levels of an organisation. The proviso is that it must be a team of 3 and (ideally) no more than 8. The team should also have at least 3 months experience of working together but is equally as effective if they have been together for years.

OTHER SO WHAT FACTORS – BUSINESS BENEFITS IN DETAIL

- **Fast team building**

In the words of the CEO, this has been the swiftest and most effective team building he has carried out – and he’s carried out a few! In addition, there is now a 3 year strategy, created and articulated by the team whose responsibility it is to deliver it – but with a level of personal ‘weighing and buying in’ that no individual member had previously experienced or ever been invited to participate in.



- **Team members who value each other and their differences**

The programme requires people to take risks and to be vulnerable. This led to much deeper levels of trust, allowing team members to really ‘hear’ each other and not just ‘listen’. To understand what was of importance and value to their fellow team members and to be understood in return. This has resulted in key members of the team having conversations with each other, about their working relationship, that they ‘had never had in 20 years of working together.’

- **New team member integration into the organisation**

It has led to the newer members being more rapidly integrated and their opinions listened to and accepted, despite their lack of experience of the business and industry.

The forming, storming and norming has been swifter and more impactful. Increasingly, the language of the model and the associated behaviours operate in the daily workplace environment and not just the controlled one of the workshops.

- **Time well spent**

In doing the exercise alongside the articulation of the strategy, the process of team building was carried out as people worked ON the business. In doing so, it also embedded the relationship of team work into the real time business of working together. This was much appreciated by the pragmatists.

- **A collaborative team that understands the need to consistently work on the team dynamic**

Often people see the ‘how’ of working together as being detached from ‘what’ they are working on when together. They tend to place far more importance on the ‘what’ than the ‘how.’ This process married the two and people really understood the value of how they were having the discussions as much as what they were talking about. They clearly recognised that focusing on the ‘how’ achieved a much better result; the ideas that came out, the actions decided upon... all were deemed to be of a far better quality and, therefore, inspired a much deeper accountability and commitment to the follow through.

- **Self and team development**

Finally, the programme developed the individuals not just the team. The process did prove personally disruptive for some members of the Board, who did not feel that this was the team or culture for them in the future and who subsequently decided to leave.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS ON THE PROGRAMME

- *“This was the swiftest and most impactful team building intervention I have done – and I’ve built many teams (CEO)”*
- *“It was an enjoyable process 100% worthy of the significant time investment that was made”*
- *“The framework provided a relatable platform to address key issues facing senior teams day in day out (conflict is healthy and holding colleagues to account also OK to challenge) and without it I fear we would not of had the open dialogue we achieved as a team ultimately”*
- *“Definite benefits considering the dynamics of the team, with new people joining old Board members. Spending time together and doing the exercises has broken down some barriers and has made the environment much more open & collaborative”*