

## **Entry for the Best HR/OD Change Management or Transformation Programme award**

### **Background**

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) is the official UK government body responsible for intellectual Property (IP) rights including patents, trademarks and copyright. The IT Directorate of IPO has grown to around 150 people. Over the next couple of years, it will face complex changes as the organisation develops a new strategic vision of end-to-end digital services.

### **What was the people-focused business transformation or change management programme?**

The aim was to professionalise our digital workforce by adopting the Digital, Data and Technology Profession and implementing the Capability Framework.

### **Why was the initiative developed – what was its purpose?**

Like all organisations, recruitment of high performing technical people is challenging and even more so for those skilled in leading in a technical environment.

As part of the Organisational Design and Development (OD&D) initiatives to address these challenges the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) were one of the first departments to adopt the Digital, Data and Technology Profession by implementing the Digital, Data and Technology Capability Framework. This first step has been the foundations to transforming our digital workforce and upskilling our people in readiness for digital transformation.

### **What did we do?**

Working closely with the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) and his senior leadership team the Senior HR Business Partner presented a persuasive business case outlining the benefits to aligning people to the framework which included, a common set of roles, skills and career paths that are visible and assessable, which will eventually be recognised and used by all government departments. With the data collated those leading the profession at Cabinet Office will have a holistic view of the 17,000 people working in this sector in relation to their current skills, any vacancies, inconsistencies around remuneration packages and common skills gaps. These will be addressed through a guided pay framework, learning and development programmes through the GDS Academy and specific recruitment activities to recruit the best technical people for government. The profession will also be able to track progress, measure success and iterate solutions resulting in a far more strategic digital profession recognised worldwide as the Best in Class.

### **Implementation**

The HR Business Partner recruited a small team of experts (Heads of Profession) to support her throughout the implementation of this project, which needed to be delivered within a three-month timeframe.

The slogan used by the profession is known as 'It's all about the people' therefore from the outset this was a people focused project which needed to be handled sensitively. It was important that trust was built and people felt engaged from start to finish. This was achieved through leadership, transparency, visibility and strong communication. The Heads of Profession provided support, coaching, mentoring and helped guide people by encouraging them to think about their future career and development needs. As well as identifying and creating a risks and issues log, once stakeholders were identified a communication plan was developed which included a variety of methods to reach out to everyone affected, for example;

- An overview to the whole directorate setting the scene and demonstrating a strong partnership and commitment to successfully delivering this project which included a joined-up Q and A session with the Chief Technology Officer, Deputy Director for the DDaT team at Cabinet Office, IPO Senior HR Business Partner and HR Business Partner from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).
- Engagement with business areas outside of the directorate, keeping them informed of progress
- Tailored presentations to individual teams to ensure they understood the impact on them
- Self-assessments followed by personalised discussions with the Head of Profession, Line Manager and individual to discuss role alignment and a tailored skills assessment
- Engagement and fortnightly meetings with the Departmental Trade Union Side
- Walk and Talks/Talk not Walks for people to come along and raise questions in an informal way, offering flexibility to everyone
- Fortnightly blogs from the Senior HR Business Partner, keeping stakeholders informed as the project was progressing
- Weekly updates to the senior leadership team, keeping them informed and highlighting progress, successes, risks and issues
- Regular opportunities for Question and Answer sessions

To ensure 'buy in' from stakeholders the implementation plan was very much a collaborative approach, seeking and acting on customer feedback throughout. Although some resistance was experienced this was overcome through excellent communication, dialogue and trust. By involving the Departmental Trade Union representatives showed people that we valued their feedback and it was important any concerns were raised so they could be considered or mitigated. There were number of occasions where feedback from our people was shared with the Digital, Data and Technology team at Cabinet Office, and as a result influenced some of their decisions. Because of our involvement our Head of Profession became a source for quality assuring guidance documents written by Cabinet Office before they were circulated across government.

Once everyone was aligned to a new role, the Heads of Profession collated information for our department which was shared with Cabinet Office so they have a

holistic picture of the overall profession across the UK. The Heads of Profession also developed and designed an assessment tool to evaluate people's skills and experience. Again, a collaborative approach as individuals self-assessed before discussing in detail with their Line Manager. This tool provided people with the evidence to highlight skill gaps, this has been beneficial for workforce planning.

### **Measurements and Outcome**

1. The level of engagement across the directorate was measured throughout July, August and September and each month a significant increase was recorded.
2. The skills assessment has empowered individuals to take control and develop a keen interest in their future career path. As a result, we have already seen 33% of the directorate gain progression, promotion, development opportunities and move laterally since implementing the framework.
3. Engagement scores in the 2018 people survey results showed an increase in people's satisfaction around pay, implementation of change, learning and development and leadership. This has strengthened the organisation's position to deliver our digital transformation.
4. Sharing best practice and collaboration with other departments has been key to the success of this project. The HR Business Partner initiated a forum across the region with stakeholders from other departments, decisions, actions and recommendations have been shared with the national forum which has helped shape the profession as other departments embark on their implementation journey.
5. The overall cost has been approximately £40k which has primarily been spent on resources to lead and implement the project within a tight timeframe.
6. Return on investment has not had a direct monetary value but hugely rewarding for all involved as the IPO has been one of the first departments to implement the Digital, Data and Technology Capability Framework, showing how it values its people by investing in them through upskilling, developing and professionalising them. Becoming part of the Digital, Data and Technology profession means our people are recognised as Best in Class worldwide enabling us to attract, recruit and retain technical skills within our department and more widely within the public sector.