



# SUCCESS STORIES – LEARNING TO IMPROVE

## CASE 1 THE CADRE WITH POTENTIAL

A management learning programme was designed for managers with potential from both the Head Office and Retail Operations of a building society. This combined experiential training, action learning sets, project work and personal coaching. The outcomes of the experience included a more united group of managers, greater understanding between different parts of the organisation and managers willing to take responsibility for their own development. The model was repeated with the layer of managers that report to this group.

## CASE 2 EVALUATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LEARNING NETWORKS

An infrastructure body was funded to set up action learning networks for social enterprise leaders in the South East. An evaluation was commissioned on the formation of the sets. The principle was accepted that a valuation approach would be taken, i.e. helping to identify what people had valued and wanted more of. Telephone conversations were held with sponsors, facilitators and participants as well as the compilation of appropriate data. The report formed the basis of advice given to new areas that wanted to set up such learning networks.

## WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID

I just wanted to write formally and thank you for your work on the Peer 2 Peer. I don't think the group would have survived if you hadn't taken over the reins...I personally have learnt a lot from your style of working.

**Director of Social Enterprise Infrastructure Body**

Roger created the right balance between allowing space and controlling discussion, and also commented professionally on the style of interventions.... There is a strong atmosphere of mutual trust and support.... Very approachable...I like his in-depth experience.

**Members of Action Learning Sets in a government agency.**

For more information on this service or to discuss your needs contact me on 07710-415894 or [rwythe@learningconnection.co.uk](mailto:rwythe@learningconnection.co.uk)

**Roger Wythe, the Learning Connection**



# SUCCESS STORIES – A BETTER WORKFORCE

## CASE 1 OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

The Leadership Team of a Creative Consultancy faced a dilemma – stick with a major customer who had dominated their work or take a real risk and branch out. Each member completed a visual template to express their desired outcomes and the issues they faced at the moment. The SOAR model was used to develop their thoughts about the future through identifying their Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results. A map of their relationship with their major customer was generated which was very revealing. A scenario was then developed to see how they could move on without that major customer.

## CASE 2 GROWING OUR MANAGERS

Prompted by an Investors in People Review a professional services company were keen to define the expectations of their managers in relation to the management and development of their staff. The company, a successful seller of companies, has a very distinctive culture which it does not wish to lose as it grows. An appreciative inquiry was conducted into management and leadership at its best and through a number of facilitated meetings involving the managers and directors the expectations were defined. This led to a number of development actions to strengthen the way in which the company is run.

## WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID

*“Again, many thanks for helping us to think through our strategy and offering relevant and sympathetic input. We found it very worthwhile.”*

**Managing Director, Accountancy Practice and Development Consultancy**

*“You are very unusual as a consultant...you really helped us come to our own solution”*  
**Operations Manager, Professional Services Company**

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## SUCCESS STORIES – DEVELOP YOUR TEAMS

### CASE 1 CREATING A REAL TEAM

The ‘team’ at the HO of a child car company needed help to form more of a unit than just all working in the same place. Before the session all had done the strengths profiler, Strengthscope, and a team report was also produced from the individual reports. On the day, these strengths were shared and the clear strengths of the whole group were identified. A Brand Pyramid was then developed to show what they wanted to be known for. The session ended with identifying what they could do to improve their working environment.

### CASE 2 ACHIEVING AND SUSTAINING A FOCUS

The new leadership team of the European Province of a religious order needed help with preparing for their responsibilities. At an initial away event, the team worked on the key issues they needed to face and developed an outline action plan. They also looked at how they wanted to work together and how to present themselves to their colleagues in the dispersed Order. This event led to a sustained relationship including how they prepared for a ‘good end’.

### WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID

The Strengthscope reports, and especially Roger’s facilitation of the group session, have made a big difference to our working relationships and teamwork within head office. We now have a much better understanding of each other’s strengths and ways of working and are a higher-performing team as a result. Roger was, as always, insightful and challenging, but in a tactful and diplomatic way!

**MD, Childcare Company**

So often during the preparation for handover we have referred to our beginnings (and middles) with you – how we got off to such a good start. Take a bow! Many thanks again for all your help. You really made a difference to us as a team

**Provincial Leader, European Province**

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## SUCCESS STORIES – COACHING THE LEADER

### CASE 1 CHANGING ROLE

The MD of a successful communications agency wanted help to change his role in the business. Despite having team leaders reporting to him for each function of the agency, he found that his desk was overloaded with decisions on small but important matters that used his technical skill. Over a number of sessions he was able to see what was required to enable his team leaders to take on their roles more fully. This allowed him to devote more time to the strategic leadership of the business.

### CASE 2 FINDING A NEW JOB

A Senior Training Advisor in a bank wanted help with moving jobs as she saw that promotion would take her into a role that would not suit her personal circumstances. A ‘strengths’ approach was taken to re-enforce her capabilities as, being improvement focused, she was very self critical. Strengthscope, a strengths profiler, was used to provide that awareness and personal insight.

### WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID

*“The sessions with Roger forced me to step out of the business and allow time to consider a more sustainable route forward. His approach was to let me work it out for myself, prompting me to identify issues and think constructively about solutions. I would like to thank Roger for his valuable contribution which is enabling me to put my business on a much sounder footing for the future.”*

**MD of a Communications Agency**

*“Just a quick note to let you know that I have secured another job. Applying for the job was made much easier as a result of the conversations that we had over the 6 months that you were my mentor. The sessions definitely increased my self-awareness and an understanding of how I utilise my strengths as well as what I need to do with my weaknesses.”*

**Senior Training Advisor**

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## SUCCESS STORIES - FACILITATING MEETINGS

### CASE 1 THINKING TIME

The Trustees of a local CVO needed time together to consider how to respond to changes in their operating environment over the next few years. The morning session was designed using a World Cafe format, the question being ‘How should we respond to proposed changes and what do those changes reveal about the principles and values that guide us?’ In the afternoon, three different scenarios were developed for where they might be in 2015. These were generated using collage and provocative propositions, a technique used in the Dream Phase of Appreciative Inquiry projects. The Plenary shared the work and generated actions to be taken.

### CASE 2 A VISION OF 2020

I was invited to be the Graphic Recorder for an event organised by a colleague for the Operations Manager of the European Division of a Japanese manufacturer. The purpose was to gather the ‘young talent’ from across Europe and let them explore what the company might be in 2020. My role was to draw what they were thinking on a large wall so they could literally see what was evolving through the day. The picture was developed using simple graphics, colour and lettering.

### WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID

- *“Thank you for Monday...those present found it very helpful and feel able to move forward. To inspire a group with confidence at the end of a day...definitely a success”*  
**Secondary Head Teacher**
- *“You are very unusual as a consultant...you really helped us come to our own solution”*  
**Operations Manager, Professional Services Company**
- *“The office was buzzing on Wednesday which is testament to the amount of energy stimulated by the activities of the day”*  
**Director, Volunteer Agency**

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