



The Business Psychology Centre

THE BPC

The BPC is part of the University of Westminster. It works in partnership with organisations in applying business psychology to the workplace, linking personal competence to organisational competence. It offers:

- Consulting services
- Conferences, forums and seminars
- Training - in-house, external workshops & online coaching
- Audit and evaluation services
- A resource centre
- Organisational research
- Alumni services
- Postgraduate courses

HISTORY

Following the success of the UK's first postgraduate course in Business Psychology, the University of Westminster created a centre to bring the course's innovative approach and expertise to a wider audience.

The BPC represents a practical approach to the application of psychology to various organisational performance objectives and attendant workplace issues, which although likely to be the result of global themes will impact upon an organisation at the behavioural and interpersonal level.

WHAT IS BUSINESS PSYCHOLOGY

What good is the organisational language of pushing through performance boundaries if the fundamental ingredient needed to do this, the individual, feels overlooked and misperceived? Organisational global demands mean that more and more is asked of the individual, this in turn generates an increasingly high set of expectations upon the interpersonal.

If new demands are being made, then new competences are needed. If organisations fail to support and develop a competence-base that has individual and interpersonal value, strategic change will be undermined through individual de-motivation.

Consequently, Business Psychology focuses upon the identification and resolution of cross-cultural and individual differences in conflict resolution, communication styles, decision making behaviour and personality preferences. This resulting in:

- a more productive and enjoyable working environment.
- improved conflict resolution, reduced stress, quicker decision making and greater consensus.
- enhanced creativity and innovation.
- improved cross-functional development.

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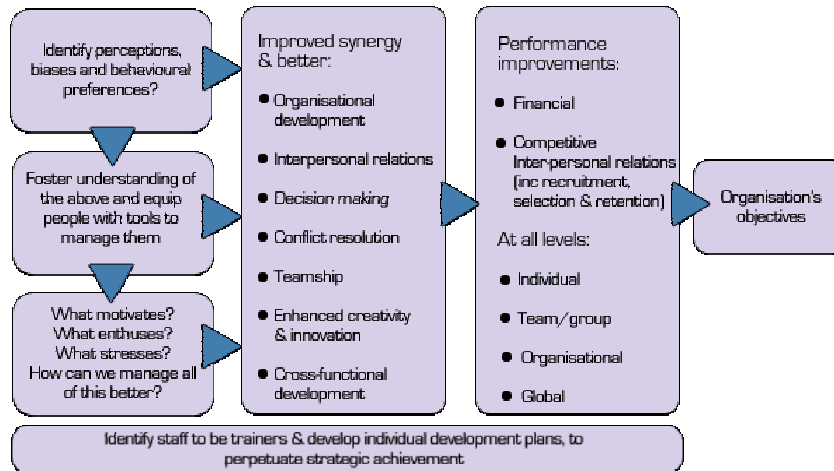
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HOW WE CAN HELP

Every organisation needs to align people and processes with their strategic objectives in order to support and develop performance, achieve goals, innovate and remain competitive. This is the process that we adopt:



TYPICAL ISSUES

Here are just a few examples to illustrate the typical issues and symptoms that can fundamentally affect business performance - and that the BPC has addressed.

Individual issues	Organisational symptoms
Colleagues have a biased "stereotypical" attitude towards me	Cross cultural "people" issues
I work with difficult people	Retention
I often feel we're duplicating roles, or work	Miscommunication within team
My boss doesn't listen to me	Blockages in team's ability to generate new ideas
I know I'm not very good at that part of my role	Perceived mismatch between people and tasks
My new responsibilities have put me under a lot of stress	Underperformance

The Business Psychology Centre: Consulting

ON TEAMS

The notion of teaming has been widely adopted as the fundamental building block for sustaining business success in our changing and volatile global economy.

Yet despite widespread recognition of the power of the team, many teams fail to be effective in delivering organisational benefits. In most cases team failure can be attributed to three key corrosive factors:

- misdirection
- failed recognition of another's behavioural intent
- miscommunication

The result is generally deconstruction of team vision, unity, and member commitment. When this occurs, the team environment fragments, enabling the debilitating effects of individual and team stress to set in. As always when the individual becomes stressed, so too does the team or teams, and potentially the whole organisation.

Our Effective Team-Ship programmes will benefit those organisations and individuals that wish to develop and lead advanced teaming initiatives, enhancing team processes, output and membership experience. We help them to establish shared visions and common goals, resulting in organisational unity based upon role differentiation, whilst fuelling employee growth in competence.

ON DECISION MAKING

Steps towards reaching a group consensus can be modelled by using one of many methods. Decision analytical methods have been shown to work effectively within a facilitated group session. It gives a framework within which issues and concerns can be explored by making use of expertise and judgement from members of the group. Competing 'solutions' can be examined highlighting strengths and weaknesses. It can also help to provide an overall organisational perspective by testing the sensitivity of salient issues identified at lower levels within the organisation, e.g. the essence of implementation.

In short, the above processes offer the following benefits:

- it allows individuals and groups to focus on the problem at hand, whilst an external facilitator manages the decision making process and helps to build a requisite picture based on input from individuals.
- it activates a creative process, enabling individuals and groups to examine the problem further through the emergence of new insights.
- it helps to dissolve misunderstanding and to resolve differences.
- it enables the evaluation of the impact of different viewpoints.
- it promotes teamworking, leading to a commitment and follow through to implementation.



The Business Psychology Centre: In-House Training, Workshops, Personal Evaluation, Educational Training

IN-HOUSE TRAINING

The BPC offers in-house training that is tailored to clients' needs.

Programmes are agreed upon in partnership with the client.

We always look at in-house training as a joint project, so it doesn't operate in isolation, but links with other organisational initiatives.

WORKSHOPS

The BPC offers a well tested generic workshop - *Insights into Business Psychology*, leading to more specific workshops in areas such as:

- negotiation and conflict resolution
- team-ship
- decision making
- bullying
- stress - the interpersonal dimension
- managing client relations
- implementation of HR survey findings
(paving the way for behavioural change)

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The BPC offers excellent tools and processes for individuals to gain a detailed understanding of:

- their working style
- how this impacts on their relationships with others in the business environment.
- how they might develop to improve personal and professional effectiveness.
- how to better connect with others

This process makes use of the Insights™ Discovery system.

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

The BPC offers two postgraduate programmes and we will soon be adding short courses - some of which will lead to accreditation.

The Psychology department is into its fifth year of running a MSc course in Business Psychology. Currently this is run over one year on a full time basis, or two years part time.

This unique programme has proven to be very popular both to a home-grown population and internationally.

The Department is also proud to announce an MA in Psychology for Project Management. It is already attracting much interest, and is due to commence in September 2003.



The Business Psychology Centre: Organisational Evaluation, Coaching and online coaching, Skills audit

ORGANISATIONAL EVALUATION

The effective organisational skills-base generates challenges to established practice. The ideal skills-base contains those behaviours that act to create new ways of pursuit and new routes to pursue.

In order to achieve sustainable strategic change, we often find that the behavioural base upon which it is to be based needs to be adapted or built. The potential may be present, yet simply in the wrong behavioural format.

The BPC provides an accurate diagnosis of any skills gap and the level and type of misperception as to what the task, role and organisational requirements are.

This organisational analysis produces strategically relevant and personally meaningful feedback that prompt and guide action.

COACHING AND ONLINE COACHING

BPC staff are competent in the delivery of coaching support. They are also fully accredited in the use of the Insights Compass™ system which is e-based and capable of delivery to both organisational and individual specification.

An e-learning personal development programme allows you to pick your 'learning pathway' through a wide selection of online modules on topics such as:

- setting personal goals.
- improving inter-personal skills.
- taking charge of your life.

You can choose to support your progress with personal coaching. If you work with a personal coach, the system offers powerful tools for personal change.

SKILLS AUDIT

A skills audit assesses performance from both a task and process management perspective.

We employ a range of psychometrics which provide a 360° profile of the individual skills base within the organisation and an assessment of its relevance to strategic objectives.

Analysis of any skills gap is made against identification of organisational change drivers, which establishes the direction and relevance of subsequent training and learning programmes.

A BPC assessment tool provides a combined competence and typological-base for profiling performance as well as learning points.

Our skills audit will provide clients with modular based options that permit a combination of assessments, in order to meet perceived needs in:

- Negotiation and conflict resolution style
- Team leadership behaviour
- Team membership behaviour
- Team decision making skills

Individual as well as team-based assessments in each of these modules are available.



The Business Psychology Centre: Facilitation, Knowledge review

FACILITATION

The process of group facilitation gives an organisation a method through which members of a team, often comprised of diverse personalities and views, can address issues and express ideas within a group setting. It helps to achieve a wider understanding of the issues surrounding the matter at hand and raises awareness of the detailed viewpoints of other team members.

Through this process, a shared understanding emerges. This achieves the following:

- it gives team members the facility to locate areas of concern within a shared problem space.
- it provides a forum for clarifying points of dispute, which in some cases may be based upon misconceptions and misunderstandings.
- it gives individuals a platform where they can register their presence – through enabling them to raise concerns/ desires/ preferences, and so on. This engenders buy-in and commitment. We also provide mentoring services to support individuals.
- it prompts innovation based upon the synthesis of views and the synergy from different personalities.

KNOWLEDGE REVIEW

The BPC offers action research that explores specific opportunities, such as the impact of new I.T. systems, by profiling up-to-date knowledge about the systems (options) and researching the behavioural consequences of the use of such systems. A knowledge review can also incorporate internal feedback, where appropriate.

For example, an electronic system for managing meetings may attract a senior director's attention, triggered by the complexity always experienced when managing meetings.

- However, how effective is it?
- How does an electronic system affect the interpersonal side of things?
- Does it inhibit innovative thinking and creativity?
- Does it distort the quality of information exchange?

Most companies lack the time and resources to explore the realistic use of such a system. But the BPC can deliver an accurate third party appraisal expeditiously, for this and other issues