



Organisation wide change at Dimensions

“The training has made a major contribution to harmony within our teams, reduced grievances per year by 85 percent and all of the time and the stress associated with handling them”, - L.Timms, Organisational Director



Over the years, Dimensions has absorbed via TUPE multiple NHS departments and care charities to create the organisation we know today.

The acquisition of multiple contractual arrangements meant a significant amount of variation between employees' contracts and benefits. One of the outcomes was a cause of conflict and discord between teams within the organisation as well as confusion for service users.

Dimensions needed to implement the new terms and conditions to create harmony and equality between its employees. This process would affect all levels of the organisation nationwide. The changes would benefit over 40% of its employees, but a further 50% would lose some of the additional benefits they were previously receiving.

The biggest challenge facing Dimension's management team was communicating the new terms and conditions to its 5,000 employees without generating a significant amount of grievances or industrial unrest.

Overcoming this challenge would allow Dimensions to create a fair working environment for its employees and potentially save £1,000,000 a year in grievance procedures and employment tribunals.

As a result of a stringent tender process, with four companies bidding for the contract, TCM was selected as partner for the project.

Dimensions received a team of dedicated consultants to identify the specific organisational needs which

needed to be addressed.

The main focus for the training was negotiation and critical communication skills comprising of active listening, responding to critical feedback, de-escalating strong emotions and de-personalising problems

TCM used its training need analysis to design the programme in line with the needs of the organisation. A pilot course was run for 12 senior managers from across the UK.

During the TNA and the pilot, the theme that was emerged was 'The Garden Shed'. This was a metaphor for a place where handy tools could be stored and used and a place where people felt safe.

Gardening also provoked positive feelings amongst the pilot group and it was easy for people to draw parallels between gardening and managing a team.

“The course has given me more confidence when dealing with conflict and difficult conversions.”
- E.Peart, Service Manager, Dimensions

Dimensions had used management trainers before but felt that the courses were out of the box and one dimensional, our brief was to make the training interesting and engaging and 'The Garden Shed' seemed to work on every level.

The one-day training course was rolled out to all of Dimensions' 175 managers nationwide over a 15 day period.

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TCM's expert trainers equipped Dimensions' managers with the skills to take responsibility for the organisation's changes, whilst showing empathy and using a collaborative problem-solving approach. {}

Managers were given a 'toolbox' of skills to use in response to the new terms and conditions that were implemented. This 'tool box' included the methods to deliver difficult messages, non-defensive responses to criticism, and how to manage strong emotions constructively.

The training included an opportunity for them to reflect on how they had been affected by the changes. This gave them the chance to share any feelings they had in order to support their staff confidently and effectively.

The win-win outcome, as part of our comprehensive post course follow up and support, we measured the impact of the training using the Kirkpatrick evaluation system.

Feedback and evaluation data collected after the courses suggested that the desired benefits of the training were achieved. TCM created the conditions for a safe

environment where all of Dimensions' managers could feel confident in having honest conversations with their managers; conversations which resulted in constructive outcomes:

- Over 90 percent of managers felt the training helped in managing their employees during the organisational change.
- Over 90 percent of Dimension's employees accepted the new terms and conditions of their contract. Without a single instance of industrial unrest and only a handful of grievances were raised. Each grievance was treated on a case-by-case basis and resolved using mediation, without going to tribunal.

TCM have continued to work with Dimensions, supporting the organisation and supplying mediation skills training for its managers.

If you would like more information on how your organisation can benefit from mediation and negotiation skills training, call today and speak to a member of the team.