

CASE STUDY

Consolidating an empowerment and accountability culture

LAYA HEALTHCARE

The Business Need

Laya Healthcare management wanted to consolidate their culture and integrate a focus on empowerment and accountability across the business.

Laya Healthcare evolved from BUPA Ireland. Quinn Insurance bought the business from BUPA and subsequently went into administration. After the administration, the management launched a successful buyout and rebrand.

Laya is now recognised as Ireland's second largest health insurer. They have an excellent record as an employer of choice, with positive employee engagement results.

“As an executive team, we hadn't given ourselves the time or space to think on a developmental and personal level. We wanted to see how we could support the strategic direction of the company; and we needed to pause - to reflect, to see how we could help each other more...” Dónal Clancy, Executive Director



Our Approach

NDC started evaluating the current culture by:

- > meeting John Keane, Director of HR to understand the business context and needs.
- > meeting the executive team to explore each of the executive's perspectives on the culture and the behaviours they wanted to develop more in the future.

Executive Effectiveness

Following this, NDC began a benchmarked 360-degree assessment for each member of the executive, with coaching sessions tailored for each individual.

Once executives had begun to recognise their own strengths and gaps that they needed to address, a two-day executive retreat was held.

At this retreat, they had time to reflect on themselves and their respective roles in the business, as well as to share each other's assessment feedback. We examined their collective profiles and the commonalities that defined them as leaders and the likely culture this would create.

Together they identified the immediate steps they could take to reduce some of the unintended consequences in the culture. Each executive continued to have individual coaching on increasing constructive behaviours to promote a culture of accountability and empowerment, without losing their focus on customers and respect for people. NDC introduced the concept of having regular 'check-points' during meetings and with each other to ensure alignment. The executive saw this as simple and helpful input to make them more effective.

Strategic Management Development

At this point we also began to work with the next level leaders.

They each undertook a positive psychology-based self-assessment with feedback from colleagues (Strengthscope®). Each team member received an in-depth debrief and coaching meeting tailored to their needs. Subsequently, we held a series of workshops to develop constructive communication and conscious business behaviours.

To consolidate the work with both groups, we facilitated an articulation of the culture as perceived by this group and reported that to the executive. Following further team workshops with the executive, we brought both groups of leaders together to establish improved ways of working to promote 'working as one' and foster greater accountability, and empowerment.

The Outcomes

“The biggest change was on the behavioural side and getting everybody to interact together. The biggest improvement I found was the executive talking to each other more... communication lines opened up and silos were broken down...”
Dónal Clancy, Executive Director

- > Behaviours of individual executives **began to change almost immediately**. Those who were often quick to challenge or oppose began to ask more open and curious questions, and listen better to colleagues and reports.
- > Each member of the executive introduced having a formal personal meet-up to align and connect with each other more fully every three months. This promoted **greater joined-up working** and **reduced misalignment** at executive meetings.
- > Their **shared understanding of the unspoken culture**-shaping messages they send to the business increased, and they were able to prompt and support each other about this.

- > The next level of leaders gained the **courage** and **confidence** to challenge upwardly robustly and to influence processes and ways of working that improved ‘working as one’.
- > **Opportunities** were identified to make **some business operations more efficient** and to begin to address mindsets that were not fitting for the future culture they require.
- > **Key behaviours** that promote engagement and empowerment were **linked to key performance indicators and reward structures**.
- > Their annual **employee engagement survey results**, while already above average, **showed marked improvement** in some departments.
- > Meetings became more **efficient**, key decisions were made in a timelier manner and there was a **substantial reduction in time** spent preparing reports.

Feedback on results from Laya

“I like the fact that the process was straightforward and engaging. The connection made in the relationship helped. I heard the conversation and could relate it to something that was meaningful and practical.” Dónal Clancy, Executive Director

“Over the past few months, I feel that having adopted some of the conscious business skills, I have had better outcomes from various interactions with team members, managers and senior managers throughout the business.” Programme Manager

“We took on board to have one-to-ones with each other and we found that to be hugely successful. We also we took the time out to have a more agenda-less conversation at executive level... to develop our thinking together and become tighter as a group.”
Brenda Ryan, Company Secretary, Director of Operations

“I feel my listening skills have improved and I am consciously adopting a ‘learner approach’ when appropriate.” Senior Manager

“I have attended a number of management training sessions in the past, but this one stood out for its focus on the person and the fact that all relationships are between two or more ‘people’ – not managers and reports.” Senior Manager

“My skills have improved in understanding other points of view. In the course of the past number of months, I have found that the key to resolution of conflicts has been in listening to all points of view, and collaborating with all parties in order to reach resolution. Allowing time for successful conclusion is key.” Senior Manager

How did NDC work with you?

“Very proactively, it gave appropriate prompts. Very accommodating and very practical. ...a smooth implementation manner.” Dónal Clancy, Executive Director



How can you release the potential in your organisation?

Please contact us! We can arrange an introductory chat to explain any of our services, our approach and discuss the challenges your organisation faces.

We look forward to speaking to you! Call us on +44 (0)1582 227 620 or you can email us at info@newdirectionconsulting.co.uk



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