legal education & training group

Newsletter Spring/Summer 2009

In this edition…………Development in a challenging climate

We are acutely aware of how difficult the current economic situation is making our lives as training professionals. Most of us will know of people who have been directly affected by the downturn. In this edition, we look at positive ways that our members can address the challenges their departments face. Why not take a look at some of the **findings from our recent Breakfast Briefing on "Managing L&D in a downturn"** to give you some food for thought. Or read one of the articles: for example, **"Surviving a recession"** was written from the point of view of one who's been through a recession before and provides some tips for us from a trainer's perspective. Finally, find out from Peter Carrick, our Chair, how **the LETG is working hard to support its members** through a range of initiatives – from commissioning research on senior level development and its effectiveness, through to the smaller things – like a **"lean, mean" Annual Conference this year,** and an **LETG lecture and awards evening** that still delivers know-how and networking opportunities for half the price of last year!

We are constantly striving as a Committee to offer our members a range of development and networking opportunities – please do pick up the phone to any of us with your ideas and thoughts that can be shared among us all.

Inside

Your LETG committee

(In alphabetical order)

Karen Aubrey
Dorothea Bannerman-Bruce
Liz Bryne
Peter Carrick (Chair)
Tracy Clegg
Trevor Comyn
Joanne Gubbay
Pauline Holland
Victoria Johnston
Kathryn Lippert
Shalini Sequeira
Nigel Spencer

Jane Cochrane, LETG Administrator

Remember, you can email any of us via the "contact us" feature on the website.

www.letg.org.uk

LETG News

Committee update!

Did you know there are now 12 of us working tirelessly to keep LETG events and activities current and relevant to our members?

We have recently bade farewell to Jenny Hughes-Webb and Margaret Dunmore, but have welcomed back Karen Aubrey from maternity leave and have the two fresh faces of Shalini Sequeira and Joanne Gubbay who have joined the crew.

The three sub-committees, under Peter Carrick's watchful chairmanship, are spending a good deal of time ensuring that we deliver value and substance to our members in these challenging times. To remind you, the sub-committees are:

Events: Tracy Clegg, Victoria Johnston, Kathryn Lippert, Joanne Gubbay

Governance: Trevor Comyn, Pauline Holland, Peter Carrick

Representation, Research and Publicity:
Dorothea Bannerman-Bruce, Liz Bryne, Nigel Spencer, Shalini Sequeira, Karen Aubrey

Do keep providing us with your views and feedback.

A word of support and encouragement - Peter Carrick, LETG Chair

These are difficult times for everyone.

Most of us know of colleagues either at our firms or at other firms who have been victims of the current economic conditions. At the same time, the work seems to increase. As well as grappling with smaller budgets to provide the same development opportunities within firms, we have to try to anticipate possible changes in work-related supervision for trainees, the training impact of firm-wide regulation from the SRA and the newly appointed Legal Services Board as well as many other things flying across our desks.
We, at the LETG, would like to be able to help with this as much as we can. We are planning the following **new LETG activities:**

NEW! Valuable research into the effectiveness of Leadership Development programmes in PSFs. We are very pleased to announce that the Moller PSF Group in Cambridge will be conducting a research project for the LETG into the current levels of activity and impact in Leadership Development Programmes across Professional Service Firms. This will take a look at different approaches from internal coaching to programmes run by Business Schools and how various initiatives are integrated. We plan to publish and present the outcomes of this research during October. It would help us if you would assist the researchers if they come to you. Equally, if you have any views about particular aspects you would like covered, please contact Dorothea Bannerman-Bruce or me.

NEW! A one-day conference to be held in London on Thursday 19 November. The theme for the conference will be the changing nature of the profession as it impacts learning and development. Professor Richard Susskind OBE has agreed to be one of the speakers. Richard specialises in the use of IT by lawyers and other professionals and in the impact of technology on government. He has recently published a book called "The End of Lawyers? Rethinking the nature of legal services". For more information have a look at Richard's website www.susskind.com. More details of the programme for this conference will be circulated shortly. Again, if you have any thoughts, please do get in contact with Jo Gubbay, or me.

NEW! Better L & D know-how. We are trying to re-organise our links with external training providers through the website and other means. If you have any thoughts on what would be useful to you, please contact Liz Bryne or Shalini Sequeira.

NEW! Support to "lost" LETG members. We are offering free continuing membership for next year for those members who have lost their jobs as a result of the current economic conditions and reduced rates for events. If this affects you or you know anyone who has been affected and who might like to stay in touch with members, please contact or ask them to contact our administrator, Jane Cochrane.

NEW! Simplifying our constitution. We are working on simplifying and updating the Constitution of the LETG to make it more useful in guiding what the LETG does and what it offers to members. We will highlight proposed key changes to all members with a view to getting approval for the new Constitution at the AGM on 20

October.**NEW! A Credit Crunch format Awards Evening 18 June – same networking, better value!** Finally, if you have not signed up already, it would be great to see as many people as possible at the Awards evening on Thursday 18 June. This should be a very informal but fun event – a chance to catch up with people. On top of this, **Alan Hodgart** will be speaking. As many of you will remember from his talk at a past conference, Alan is sure to get us all thinking again about how we do things.

Finally, my thanks to all the speakers who took part in the breakfast panel session on 21 April – David Whitney, Peter Smith from Addleshaw Goddard, Wendy Tomlinson from Linklaters and Carol Ashton from DLA Piper. This is reported in more detail elsewhere in this newsletter but was brilliantly organised by Kathryn Lippert, Jo Gubbay, Victoria Johnston and Tracy Clegg.

Peter Carrick,
Chair of LETG Committee

Regional Groups

The South West group meets every 3 months to discuss current issues and to share best practice. We are currently arranging visits to each others' firms to see best practice in action – for example, course management, 360 feedback, L&D branding and junior lawyer development.

Later in June we are hosting a coaching workshop, entitled "Maximising performance through coaching". This session is being run by Harcup Consulting and Sherwood PSF Consulting. The workshop will concentrate on how to get the most out of coaching in the current economic climate, supported by the research that Harcup Consulting recently undertook, and will also look at how coaching in law firms is most effective in changing behaviours.

Contributed by Rose Walker

Interested in setting up a regional grouping in your area? Contact Peter Carrick or Pauline Holland

LETG Matched, Hatched and Dispatched

Congratulations to Lorraine Macal (formerly Prior) of Kennedys Solicitors, on her marriage in November 2008. We wish you every happiness for the future.

Other News...

PLEASE NOTE: The LETG does not endorse or recommend any particular publication. This is by way of information only and editorial is lifted directly from the publisher's website.

Solicitors Regulation Authority

New-style LPC providers authorised

Would-be solicitors will be able to pursue a new type of Legal Practice Course (LPC) from September 2009 with around half of the current training providers, who have been given the green light by the SRA. All providers will be validated against the new requirements for courses from 2010, and some will operate their existing courses for the 2009 academic year.

cipd

Management and leadership development taking priority in the downturn

7 in 10 employers say that L & D remains a high priority in spite of the economic climate. But the squeeze on budgets means that the need to prioritise is crucial; top of the priority list is management and leadership.

The CIPD found (23 March 09) that only 32% of employers surveyed have had budgets cut, which is an interesting finding to compare with some of the discussion we had at the recent LETG breakfast briefing (see LETG events section below). Click here to see the full CIPD press release.

Graduates fearful of depressed job market

Personneltoday.com
Human resources news, strategy and community

A recent Personnel today article refers to a state of paralysis among graduates, who are put off applying for UK jobs because of the perception of hiring freezes.

Such is the concern that the big PSFs Deloitte and PriceWaterhouse Cooper (PwC) are calling on recruiters to combat the hype and advertise their graduate vacancies.

Are there drawbacks if graduates seek work abroad? This question is an interesting one for those of us at the sharp end of graduate recruitment. What is the medium term impact of the current jobs crisis? Click here for the full article.

Trends in Professional Development in the accounting profession

A fascinating analysis of professional development trends in the accountancy profession (against the backdrop of the current climate) is set out in a report by ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants). It explores the demands for skills vs. technical training, which medium of training is the most popular and regional variations from around the globe. Well worth a read to compare the ACCA's findings to what we find on the ground in our own firms – click here to download the full report.

Sainsbury's "tough love" programme leads to improved mystery shopper ratings

Three days of workshops with senior management at Sainsbury's led to them identifying 3 core behaviours – honesty, openness and simplicity. Some managers then became accredited "master coaches". The "Tough love" programme, developed by Lane 4 (Adrian Moorhouse spoke at a past LETG Conference in 2006), is outlined in more detail in the full People Management article – click here.

LETG Events

WHAT YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

"How not to get shot!"
A novel lesson in dealing with different people

28 January 2009 at Charles Russell

I have to confess I wasn't really sure what to expect from this training which was entitled "How not to get shot". I wasn't much more reassured when I got into the training room at hosts Charles Russell to see a slide of a pack of Alsatians apparently about to pounce on a fleeing cat. If that wasn't bad enough, as I ventured to the back of the room to grab a coffee, the presenter was regaling some fellow LETG members with the true story behind the picture which the aforementioned cat came to an untimely end at the paws of the very same pack of dogs. I did momentarily consider making a swift exit but then I spotted the orange club biscuits and decided I might as well stay.

And I am very glad I did. For the next couple of hours we were by turns enlightened, entertained and on more than one occasion, reduced to helpless laughter (and even tears – you know who you are!) by the antics of the presenter **David Willis of cmt** (see picture, left) as he took us on a whirlwind tour (mainly by

way of role play which given his background as an actor he carried off brilliantly) of a behavioural approach to dealing with people. The approach works around the basic principle that you can use the different characteristics and behaviours of cats and dogs as a metaphor for understanding and predicting how people behave differently within organisations, and then moderate your approach to your colleagues to appeal to the dog or the cat in them. In the first part of the session we learned how cats and dogs operate in the workplace, the types of behaviours they are likely to exhibit and the way they tend to deal with people. I could not begin to do justice to the concept in the couple of paragraphs available to me here but the following illustration will give you some idea of what it is all about:

> **When you feed a dog, the dog says to himself: "Wow! You provide me with food and shelter and care for my every need. You must be a god."**
>
> **When you feed a cat, the cat says to himself: "Wow! You provide me with food and shelter and care for my every need. I must be a god."**

(Have you got a colleague in mind for each of these types? I know I have!)

Having given us some tools to identify cats and the dogs in our workplaces, David talked us through some strategies we could use to get a difficult message across to these different types which we were asked to try out in a series of role plays. In good LETG tradition, all of the attendees threw themselves into the role plays with real enthusiasm and I think we all came away with some ideas to try out the next time we have a potentially tricky encounter scheduled – whether it be with Puss in Boots or Lassie!

Contributed by **Clare Wooldridge, Harbottle & Lewis**

cmt specialise in Business Management Development training
www.cmt-london.co.uk

"Managing in a Downturn – how L &D can add most value"

LETG Breakfast briefing, 21 April 2009 at Ashurst

LETG Chair Peter Carrick led a diverse and experienced panel from backgrounds in law firm HR, L & D and executive decision makers through an interesting debate on the current climate and its impact on what we can deliver to the business that adds value. He was joined by guests Carol Ashton, HR Director, EME & Asia of DLA Piper; Peter Smith, Chief Operating Officer of Addleshaw Goddard; Wendy Tomlinson, Head of Learning & Development of Linklaters and David Whitney, training consultant**. For full speaker biographies, click** [here]()

We opened with a series of straw polls on some key questions –which ranged from how much budgets had been cut, to use of strategies such as cancellation charges to focus firms' minds on best use of training spend. Follow this [link]() to see all of the straw poll questions and the results. As many as 71% of participants had recently experienced a downsizing of the L&D function in their firms, and some 50% had cut their training budget by 20% or more. 87% anticipated a drastically reduced budget in the next financial year.

During a lively panel discussion chaired by Peter Carrick, we touched on the **main L&D priorities for our firms right now** and how we anticipated these would evolve going forward.

We concluded with **some key 'takeaways' for L&D professionals.**

NOW

- It is vital to **identify what your firm values**, and to align the L&D offering to firm expectations accordingly.

- Take advantage of the downturn (and 'downtime' in some practice groups) to **introduce lawyers to colleagues across practices**, form new working relationships and to make the most of on the job learning opportunities, for example, by helping senior lawyers become better supervisors and coaches. Lawyers consistently state that they learn most when working alongside a more experienced lawyer, and receiving regular constructive feedback.

- Some of the **key training needs** that firms identifying now are: gaining the confidence to win work, maintaining client relationships, cross-selling, brand enhancement, substantive training (especially in transactional practices), often combined with key work and people management skills, fostering ability to adapt legal skills to other practices, increasing work effectiveness (e.g. ability to manage with fewer resources), and effective sharing of knowledge and best practice.
- It is helpful to **think of the L&D function like any other business function with a business plan**, to measure progress against that plan and report on progress using the measures identified in the plan. Now is the time to demonstrate the value that L&D adds – for example, ask how much new work did lawyers win as a result of business development training rather than how many attended the course, and how they rated it in their evaluation forms. It can also be helpful to create internal 'peer pressure' among practices/ departments to create more momentum.

- **Strengthen relationships with practices** so that they understand what the L&D team offers, but also to enable you to gain access to vital resources, e.g. to encourage more fee earners and senior business services professionals to contribute to internal training programmes. Are we making the best use of our internal trainers rather than spending money with external organizations? Also measure their contribution to training, for example in annual performance reviews.

- **Re-evaluate our spend** – are we getting real value from investments that we have already made? For example, are we making the best use of technology? How complex does the technology need to be to achieve our learning objectives? What is vital vs. 'nice to have'? Can we get more out of our face-to-face training by incorporating pre-and post-coursework online? We also need to think about what will make us more efficient in the future (e.g., should we consider investing in an LMS?)

LONGER TERM

- In L&D and Talent Management, we need to **prepare for the upturn in order to retain the best talent** – for example, we need to ensure that we maintain technical skills to ensure that we deliver quality to our clients; we need to maintain business-critical programmes to ensure that we have the best leaders and managers to take the firm forward when the upturn comes.

- We need to **equip our partners to (re-)energize the firm brand** – business development will continue to be important when the upturn comes, as the market has undergone a fundamental change.

- We need to be ready to **support our international business** (where relevant), and not be 'location centric' in our approach.

- **Enable lawyer mobility** – we need to be able to redeploy lawyers across our firms and work in virtual teams. There may be less mobility in some firms at present due to the downturn, but this will become more important once workflow increases.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR L&D PROFESSIONALS

- **Ask business leaders what is top of their agenda**; better still, ask what will provide the 'wow' factor?

- **Partner with leaders of key firm initiatives** and gain sponsorship from key partners in the firm for major L&D initiatives and programmes

- **Apply the principles of CRM** that we cover in our training programmes to our internal clients, firm and practice leadership. We need to be trusted advisers to key decision-makers, maintain regular dialogue with the business, and align ourselves with the structure of the business, which may require us to re-think how we are organized (compare the business partner model).

- **Take a more business-focused approach** – what is our business plan, how can we be more consistent and cost-effective, how will we manage consolidation of resources and funding?

- **Identify credible internal experts to deliver training**, and provide them with appropriate support. Try to lay the foundations for this to continue when workloads return to 'pre-downturn' levels.

- **Invest in knowledge-sharing** for the long-term health of the firm, including tapping into expertise in informal ways -e.g. 'meet the partner' sessions for new lawyers to introduce them to senior lawyers they might not otherwise meet.

LAST WORD

To find out more about what firms are doing to weather the downturn, see the recent article in Legal Week (published 07.05. 2009) contributed by our panellist, David Whitney click here.

Contributed by Kathryn Lippert

COMING UP: EVENTS NOT TO BE MISSED!

LETG Lecture, Awards and Network evening

Sponsored by Kaplan Law School and H4 Partners

Thursday 18th June 2009 (from 6pm) Staple Inn Hall, High Holborn, LONDON, WC1V 7QJ

Guest Speaker: Alan Hodgart of H4 Partners (see left)

Have you booked yet for our Lecture, Awards and Network evening? We've really worked hard to make this as accessible as we can to all of our members, particularly those of us who are under severe budgetary constraints. We're looking forward to an evening of drinks, canapés and a talk from Alan Hodgart on the current issues facing the profession. And we'll be recognising law firm L & D excellence with the Annual LETG Awards. We hope to see as many of you as possible; this will be one of the key LETG networking events of 2009 – for just £25. Click here for a booking form, if you haven't already replied!

LETG AGM: 20 October Watch this space

Put the date in your diary now – 20 October, where we will review the year's activities, and outline our plans for the forthcoming year.

LETG One day Annual Conference!

Thursday 19 November 2009
Put the date in your diary now!

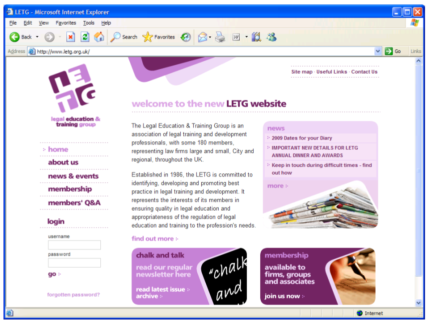
It might seem a long way off, but we're already lining up a great action-packed and business-relevant programme for LETG members!

Our key note speaker will be leading legal technology strategist **Richard Susskind (right)**, who will no doubt set us all thinking about where the future will take us as a profession, something on all our minds at the moment.

More details will follow from the Events team, but keep the date in your diary!

LETG Website

Don't forget to **check out the LETG website** to see the really useful answers to LETG member newsflash queries – there's a wealth of helpful hints and recommendations from other members there!



We are about to trial a new live members' forum which will act as a bulletin board to which members can post live training queries, and receive live responses. Watch this space!

Want more from this newsletter?

If you'd like to see a particular L&D theme covered, would like to be a "Member in the Spotlight" or have any other contributions to offer for future editions, please let us know.

Contact Karen Aubrey

Article 1

Advice for Training Managers on Surviving a Recession

By John Trimbos of Trimbos Training Ltd

Some of us are old enough to have a feeling of deja vu at the news headlines. In fact I was made redundant as a real estate lawyer in the property crash of 1993, and that event bounced me into training work. Having mulled it over, here's some advice for you which follows the acronym **SCRIBE**.

S Squeeze your suppliers – this may sound like odd advice coming from a training mercenary like me, but some training organisations charge eye-watering rates which you ought to challenge. If necessary, hold a competitive tender.

C Contacts within your firms – use them. The fee earners who have always been too busy to attend or contribute to training will now be free to offer seminars, and do other activities to keep themselves busy.

R Relevance – you should tailor your training programmes to the new economic reality. The obvious area to explore is business development. When I set up my business in 2006 no one was interested in my course on writing newsletters and press articles – but they are now. Other possible areas you might like to address are negotiating fees, preparing tenders and pricing new work for profitability.

I Investigate – go and see partners to ask what their departments' training needs are, or send out firm wide questionnaires to make sure that people know they are being consulted. This will help you to maintain your profile too.

B Barristers are a fruitful source of legal update training, and they will almost always do it for free as a way of promoting themselves. In fact, make it an article of faith never to pay for a legal update lecture!

E Exchange favours. A few years ago when I was working as an in-house training manager I negotiated a training exchange with a large set of barristers' chambers. In return for twelve monthly lectures, I provided them with management skills seminars for their senior clerks. Perhaps you could try something similar with other commercial organisations.

Good luck in 2009.

John Trimbos

www.trimbostraining.co.uk

Article 2

Learning 2.0

By Phil Gott

Web 2.0 technology, coupled with new thinking, has the potential both to lower training costs and improve learning effectiveness? Perhaps this recession, with its inevitable focus on containing costs, will prove to be the catalyst needed to force new and better approaches.

As part of a training course on Developing People I ask delegates to think back over their careers and to list both the positive and negative influences that have helped make them what they are today. As a trainer I cannot fail to notice that "training" rarely features on the list of positive influences and even when it does it is almost as an afterthought. (Thankfully it doesn't appear on the list of negative influences either!)
People generally learn best through a combination of:

- being made aware of best practice and how good role models have achieved success
- being pushed outside their comfort zone
- learning by doing
- constructive feedback and self-reflection
- interaction and focused discussion with others.

Well designed training courses can provide all of these but most can also be achieved, at least partially, through day-to-day informal learning or "learning on the job".
There is a move towards supported informal learning. The key word is "supported" because without some support day-to-day activities may teach us little. This support may be provided through coaching or mentoring but there is increasing buzz in learning and development circles about how new web technologies (sometimes known as Web 2.0) can be used as learning tools. These are different from e-learning with which some firms have experimented with varying degrees of success. Most e-learning, at least in its current state of development, can seem quite pedestrian and can fail to hold learners' attention for long.
Intelligent use of these web tools can lead to a reduction in more costly trainer-led training. So as training departments in law firms come under pressure to trim training budgets, rather than simply doing less of the same, there is an opportunity to reinvent and improve the way things are done.

Here is a quick run down on the main technologies and how they can help:

- **Blogs:** There are some excellent weblogs (web sites, usually written by experts, that provide short regular updates on topical issues). They can prove an excellent way to help learners keep up to date on a topic. For those in your firm who see themselves as thought leaders, writing a blog is also an excellent way to consolidate their knowledge and raise their profile.

- **Podcasts and web video:** Similar to blogs but for those who prefer audio or video. The big change with video is that instant downloading makes it much more usable. Podcasts and video can be great for disseminating expert information both within and outside your firm.
- **RSS feeds:** Whilst there is some excellent material freely available on the web, there is also a massive amount of dross. The key is finding and filtering the information available. RSS feeds and feed aggregators provide users a flow of selected updates. I use Newsgator (www.newsgator.com) to stay updated on more than 200 selected blogs and websites.
- **Wikis:** These web sites can be collaboratively constructed by learners and experts alike and can be used to develop an evolving repository of information. Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) is a leading example of a wiki site but firms can easily create their own wikis using the same technology.
- **Social networks:** Social networking sites can provide a convenient and inexpensive way of interacting with other learners. Facebook (www.facebook.com) and MySpace (www.myspace.com) are popular social networking sites but firms can create their own internal networks using free services such as Ning (www.ning.com).
- **Virtual worlds:** Trainers can now create web-based simulations, perhaps in virtual worlds such as Second Life (www.secondlife.com), which can appeal particularly to younger generations of learners.
- **Email:** OK, it is not a new technology, but it can be used to push bite-sized information to the desktops of learners. The key is to use technology to focus on the learning needs of each individual.

However, these are simply new tools and they need to be blended with other approaches to get the best from them. For example, I am currently running a series of development programmes for a law firm which involves bite-size seminars, coaching, mentoring, action plan implementation, individual monthly emails, and a tailor-made virtual academy using Web 2.0 tools. It is a million miles away from just sending someone on a training course. This is not about adopting the latest fad, nor is it change for its own sake. There are real opportunities for driving significant improvements in learning and with the potential to save costs. There has never been a better time to do it.

Phil Gott (philgott@peopleism.co.uk) provides law firm training in communication, business development and leadership. He recently founded www.FirmAcademy.com to provide virtual academies tailored for law firms. You can visit Phil’s blog at www.philgott.com.

Article 3

If I learn - we all learn?
How individual coaching leads to team learning
By Joy Harcup, Harcup Consulting

1. Introduction

Lawyers can of course be sceptical by nature – their analytical legal training lends itself to this frame of mind! It is not surprising then that, when I recently researched the effects of partner development coaching programmes in two law firms, partners confessed to an initial perception of coaching as e.g. “self indulgent pondering” and “mumbo/jumbo psychobabble”. None the less, once they had experienced coaching first hand they were positive and enthusiastic as to the individual benefits of coaching. They described changes in the way that they personally thought and acted as a result of the coaching. These included increased self awareness, being more focused in their approach, more flexible in their communication and management style and more positive in their thinking. Often research into the benefits of executive coaching concentrates on these individual affects of coaching. I was interested in analysing whether the coaching of partners led not only to individual learning but also to collective changes in attitude and behaviour in their teams that benefited the firm. In which case, this would show a greater return on investment from coaching.

2. Team changes following partner coaching

Those interviewed as part of the research, (coaches, coachees and members of their team, who had observed the effects of coaching) provided examples of how the individual coaching of the partners had led to collective changes at team level.   These included:

2.1 A more organised and systematic approach to project management in the team. For example, associates were better at planning transactions up-front, breaking matters down into smaller tasks and delegating where appropriate.

2.2 More emphasis by team members on people management. They reported working on building relationships within and across workgroups to interact and work together better, rather than solely being “task focused” when managing transactions.

2.3 Greater team motivation and involvement in generating ideas and action plans for departmental initiatives e.g. concerning strategy, business development, know how capture and learning and development.

3. The process of team learning

There was evidence of two processes that helped individual learning lead to collective change in attitude and behaviour. Following the coaching these were:

3.1 *integration* of the learning at a practice group level through the new style of communication and leadership used by the coachees; and

3.2 *institutionalisation* of the learning through the introduction of new routines and structures by the coachees to their practice groups.

3.1 *Integration*

Interestingly there were two aspects to the integration process.

3.1.1. *Change in partners' management style.* The process of being coached themselves changed the partners' mind set when managing their teams and communicating with their fellow partners. They became "a sort of amateur coach" and "coaches for each other," either through their coaching style of leadership or by explicitly "sharing what coaching is about". This stimulated the partners to keep coaching, rather than training, at the forefront of their minds when supervising others. They managed people in a less directional way, asking for suggestions and solutions and encouraging associates to find the answers themselves. Further, communication between partners improved. Where coaching was successful it changed the partners' attitudes and assumptions when dealing with their peers. It created an atmosphere between partners where they were more open to each other's point of view. They tried harder to understand each other and to persuade each other during discussions.

Although most had received leadership training on the use of the coaching style of management, most commented that it was mainly as a result of being coached themselves that they instinctively mirrored the coaching process when managing others. It was through their coaching experience that they really understood that this style of management increased motivation and commitment.

3.1.2 *Mirroring of partner's management style by associates.* The second aspect of the integration process involved the associates in the team also adopting the coaching behaviour role modelled by the partners. Again in workgroups where this worked well there was evidence of the "trickling down" of positive behaviours to associates. There were examples of members of the coachees' team mirroring the partners' attitudes and behaviours and being more positive and motivated. They were also more proactive in coming up with suggestions as how to make workgroup improvements.

3.2 *Introduction of new routines/institutionalising*

Changes at team level also took place through the process of institutionalising.

Where coachees, such as Practice Group Heads, were in a position to do so, they started to introduce new routines and structures to embed in their team what they had learnt through coaching. These procedures might include i) initiatives that helped team building (e.g. prioritising team meetings and away days), ii) the introduction of new business development initiatives, or iii) new recruitment criteria and reporting structures involving the whole team. Sometimes similar initiatives had been tried before. Yet, following coaching, the partners were more motivated and effective in using these as successful tools in managing and motivating their team, because they more clearly understood their value.

4. Barriers to team learning

Not surprisingly, there were barriers to collective change taking place in some teams. The "chargeable hours culture" was sometimes mentioned by partners as a block to investing time in using a coaching style of leadership and communication. Others commented on the friction between the junior partners' willingness to learn and be coached and the reluctance of some senior partners to try coaching and to change. Junior partners commented that it was much easier to communicate with their fellow partners who had been coached and understood and used the "coaching language". Such barriers can be overcome by the use of respected senior partners, who have been coached and are enthusiastic supporters of the process, as champions to convert the sceptics. These champions can also act as role models to illustrate that it is feasible to run profitable practice areas and adopt a coaching style of leadership. Further, it is also important that the appraisal and reward criteria reflect this leadership approach in order to surmount the obstacles to team learning.

5. Conclusions

This research shows that the consequences of developmental partner coaching are more far reaching than just improving individual performance. There was evidence that partner coaching programmes could have a cascade effect, resulting in a positive change in team attitudes, behaviour and culture. This was a result of more emphasis on a coaching style of leadership and a freer exchange of ideas at all levels. The research results especially highlight the importance of role modelling and mirroring behaviours by the partners and their associates in this process of team change. Thus, as the title of this article suggests, in the right conditions, coaching can be a tool whereby – "if I learn we all learn", leading to greater return on investment.

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With over 15 years' experience of learning and development in the legal sector Joy runs her own consultancy, Harcup Consulting, specialising in executive coaching, management training and learning and development consultancy. An accredited coach with the International Coaching Federation, Joy's coaching client base includes partners and senior executives in law firms and other industries. Much of her coaching covers topics such as leadership, managing change, team building, personal effectiveness and mental resilience. Joy's coaching style is supportive whilst also being practical, motivational and challenging.

Previously Joy had management and strategic responsibility for learning and development as Head of Training at Berwin Leighton Paisner, where she introduced and managed partner coaching programmes. She is a former chair of the LETG, has sat on a number of Law Society learning and development committees and is an author of academic text books and a speaker at learning and development conferences.

She has recently researched how coaching leads to individual and organisational change as her dissertation for her MBA (Distinction) from Bath University.

Article 4

Managing in Tough Times

Gordon Cooper Associates Ltd has recently completed a survey amongst legal practices to identify trends in learning and development. Twenty firms took part in the survey and were asked questions regarding:

- The current environment – this gives a helpful context in which learning and development professionals are working.

- Changing priorities – where are people putting their scarce L&D budgets both in terms of who are the recipients and what topics are high priorities?

- Related activities – covers other areas that impinge on learning and development.

Detailed analysis in contained within the survey report however some key findings include:

Current Environment

It is a tough economic climate to be managing the delivery of learning and development programmes.

Over 85% of respondents described the current environment as "Challenging" and "Has become tougher" as the year progressed.

The great majority of firms are facing significant cuts to their learning and development budgets and over two thirds of respondents expect their budgets to decrease in the financial year 09/10.

Learning and Development Managers are having to make tough choices and strive to do more with the resources available.

Changing Priorities

There is a shift in priorities with more emphasis being placed on certain subjects/skills and particular target audiences.

The subjects seen to have high priorities for most firms include:

- Managing Performance
- Managing Client Relationships
- Business Development
- Leadership

The high priority target audiences include:

- Senior Associates

- New Partners
- Partners

Other topics covered in the survey include:

Coaching
360° Analysis and Psychometric Questionnaires
Career Coaching
Use of Internal Team v External Consultants

To read more about the survey results, including at a glance graphics that give relevant statistical data together with a commentary on practical advice regarding "managing in tough times" you can download a PDF of the report from the Gordon Cooper Associates website at www.gordoncooper.co.uk.

Article 5

“Has my harpsichord arrived in Florence yet?”

….were the words, which the rather refined gentleman sitting next me on the train uttered in to his phone. Quite possibly the most intriguing, beguiling sentence ever spoken on public transport and one that told me in an instant, that we were – quite literally, in this case – from opposite sides of the tracks.

I was departing from Manchester Piccadilly, having spent the day helping lawyers to get better at selling, on my way to London, to help yet more lawyers do much the same thing and there in lies the theme of my working life right now. For it has taken a severe down turn to make many in the profession realise that whilst you can, entertain, wine, dine and woo those with whom you’d like to do more work, there comes a point when you simply have to ask for their business. And it is that crucial point, which many find terribly difficult.

Aside from the 7 months when I was a lawyer with what was then Hammond Suddards in Manchester, I have been selling and developing business since I was 14 and started up a car-washing round. Indeed it was my frustration at not receiving a percentage of my monthly fee income that gave me reason to move on from a potential career in law and go back to being self -employed again. I simply could not get my head round not being paid on results and, if honest, missed the thrill of selling.

Allied to this desire to understand more about the art of sales is a readiness to become a far more effective networker, for it is at the networking event, be it external or internal, that seeds of relationships are sown, cultivated and nurtured in the hope that ultimately they will bear the fruit of business.

So, what is that fee-earners want to know when I am training them as part of a group or providing one-to-one coaching?

Well, like most of us they struggle with the usual stuff such as breaking in to a group, remembering names, moving on etc but their biggest concern is how to follow up once they have met someone that they’d like to meet again. Far too many have little compost heaps of business cards squatting on the edge of their desk or nestled in a corner of a drawer, harvested from those they have met but can neither remember when or where. Even if they are ‘fresh’ they worry about how to make the next contact:

Phone, email or write?

Often doing none of the above, preferring instead to send an article, invite to a seminar or another networking event, all of which have merit but are simply a barrier to the inevitable point at which they will have to ask for the business.

For too long now many in the profession have sought sanctuary under the mistaken belief that if they invite contacts to enough seminars, bombard with them with sufficient e-newsletters, delight them with sporting events, rounds of golf and complimentary umbrellas, they will, by a process if osmosis, win new instructions from the client. They won't.

At some point, when all the seminars are done and the Pinot Grigio consumed they have to seek commitment and in order to do that they must arrange a follow up meeting where they can learn more about the prospect, her business, who she instructs at the moment, what she likes about her current supplier, when she's thinking of changing and what her ideal relationship with a law firm would feel like.

So I'm spending a great deal of time giving them the tools and techniques that they crave in order to make that follow-up happen.

The secret is to set up the follow up whilst still in conversation with the prospect, to then contact them within an already agreed time frame and use what we in sales call the 'Alternative' and 'Assumptive' close, to secure commitment.

Lawyers love practical solutions to tricky problems – after all it is what they do for their clients!

I have to admit that I have recently taken to phoning prospects with whom I'd like to do business, during the training session, in order that the delegate (s) can hear, first hand, what I say. One prospective client of mine has insisted I go a step further and have each partner phone two prospects right there and then in the session!

Nick Davies
The Really Great Training Company

Article 6

New Whitepaper – How to successfully implement a 360 degree process within your organisation

The intended audience for this whitepaper is HR practitioners, Learning & Development practitioners, consultants, facilitators, coaches and any other party who finds themselves tasked with working on 360 degree appraisal.

The complete whitepaper expands on the principles described here and more importantly provides a step-by-step checklist of actions to help in the implementation.

What follows is a summary of the whitepaper which can be requested in full via our website at www.bowlandsolutions.com.

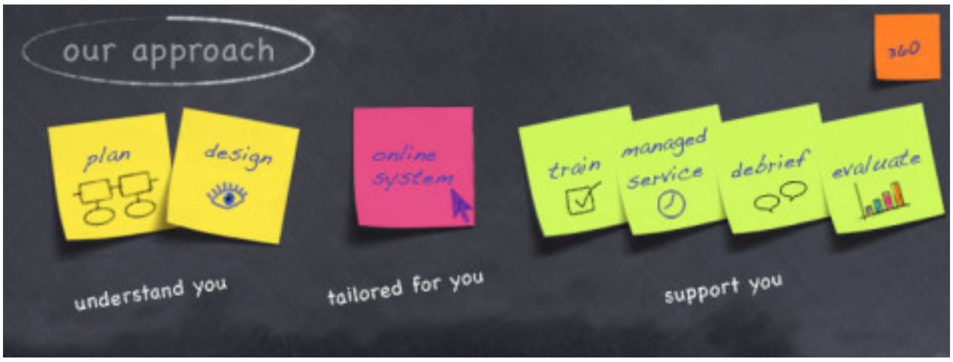
Introduction

360 degree appraisals are now popular across organisations large and small.

They were invented through a desire to gain feedback from peers who were perceived to give more accurate feedback than managers.

Such a project is often a concerted effort over a reasonable period of time. For organisations introducing 360 degree appraisals for the first time it requires an investment in communication, training, and co-ordination as well as the administration of the 360 process itself.

The diagram below provides a simple picture of the key areas that should be considered.



360 degree feedback is not complicated but if you want the recipients of the feedback to have the best possible experience and to gain the best possible feedback then a careful, well thought out approach will give you the best results.

A 360 process should not be an isolated piece of work – it should be recognisably part of an overall plan for the individual and for the organisation. It can be a one-off exercise to support one manager's development or it can be a widespread initiative to improve an organisation.

In either case it should be in context and a little planning and consideration will go a long way.

Summary of suggested approach:

Plan
360 degree appraisal initiatives are successful when the key stakeholders understand, believe in, and contribute to the 360 plan.

Design
The design phase covers reports, competencies, and questionnaire design with a suitable rating scale. We try to start with the report - by doing so, you recognise that it is the output of the process that is important.

The competencies are very important, but if you start with how the report will be structured, it focuses the mind on how these competencies will be used.

The On-line system
Choosing an on-line system is much more about ensuring that the system serves you rather than the other way around, than it is working to a checklist.

You are looking for a system that is geared to meet your requirements rather than forcing a way of working upon you.

Communication

Communicating effectively will reduce anxiety and increase participation.

We believe everyone needs to understand the context of a 360 degree feedback process and so well-written, timely communication at the beginning of the process will make the rest of the process smooth.

Training

We do not believe there should be any need for training in how to use the 360 system. We do however often find there is a need to train people in how to give feedback, how to receive it, and how to debrief a 360 report.

The better trained individuals are in giving and receiving feedback the better the 360 process.

Debriefing

We like to use the term 'debrief ' to refer to the session where a recipient receives their feedback. It is not a coaching session - its focus is simply to ensure that the report is understood and the recipient has the opportunity to ask immediate questions.

Our first principle is that the recipient should not receive the report prior to the debrief session.

The 360 report can be powerful and has the potential to be misunderstood. The ability to place feedback in context, avoid misunderstanding, and spot potential issues is a core skill of the debriefer.

About the author and Bowland Solutions

Brendan Walsh

Brendan Walsh is a founder and director of Bowland Solutions. Brendan has a set of principles and values that have driven Bowland's practice over the last 8 years of providing 360 degree appraisals.

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Bowland Solutions

Bowland Solutions has been providing tailored on-line Performance Reviews, 360 Degree Feedback, Surveys and HR consultancy since 2001. Its directors have extensive experience within Learning & Development, IT and Performance Management, offering clients practical advice and robust system solutions.

Article 7

Business Development Skills Training for Lawyers

As a Principal Trainer at Kissing With Confidence I've worked with many law firms across the UK and internationally to help improve the business development skills of their lawyers. Almost half our business over the past nine years has been in the legal sector, which makes it our largest sector. But we also work in many other areas, too, which informs much of what we do.
Here are my thoughts on the essential elements of a good BD skills training programme.

1. Fear: the current economic climate

Every week I meet lawyers who are scared of business development, such as senior associates who have grown up in a climate where the work just landed on their desks. Now the desks around them are empty, the work on their own desk isn't exactly piling up and the partners are telling them to go out and get some work in.
The problem is that those who have grown up in that environment just don't know how to do that: they've never had to. In fact I also meet partners who are just as intimidated as associates by the prospect of having to bring new work in because their career so far has been defined by their technical ability and they arrived when business was plentiful. So, many in the law are really afraid of owning up to the fact that they don't have a clue where to start when it comes to business development.
Now fear is a feeling, not a fact. But it is a fact that if you feel the fear when doing the magical dance of mutual attraction that is selling, you'll hardly be appropriately memorable.

2. The magical art of rainmaking

The magical powers of rainmakers are held in high esteem in most cultures, sometimes because it is believed they can actually make rain (which of course they can't). It's pretty much the same in law firms. No-one else really understands how it is that they do it, but these rainmakers seem to possess the ability to make the heavens open when required. Those who have the secrets of successful rainmaking might be reluctant to share with lesser mortals, for their exclusive knowledge provides them with status, power and wealth. To be fair, in some less hierarchical firms with less of a silo mentality I've actually found some rainmakers who are willing to share their secrets (and where you involve these people appropriately in the BD skills training it can reap huge benefits for the delegates).

3. Beware the cynics

You've all met them, you've all trained them. They tend to think of BD skills training as a waste of time for a variety of reasons. Some think it'll be all basic networking/working a room stuff that they've heard before (it shouldn't be – there's a lot more to it than that). At the opposite end of the scale others assume that any "sales" training will be delivered by someone who's more used to persuading people to buy that plastic porch over the phone at tea-time. Of course the training should be delivered by people who understand what's involved in selling high value professional legal services and that the use of gimmicky sales techniques will undoubtedly result in them being shown the door.

4. Lawyers' key challenges

In training thousands of lawyers over several years there are some key fears and challenges that they bring up time and time again. Here's a selection:

- I don't have enough time to do any BD;
- I don't understand the BD process;
- I don't know where to start;
- I've got a whole bundle of practical fears and challenges in relation to networking (so I don't do any);
- I'm OK at the networking but I know I don't follow up;
- I feel like I'm probably just annoying people if I keep getting in touch with them;
- I'm really scared of cold calling (in fact, I'm not too keen on warm calling);
- I've built up some good relationships with some decent contacts but I don't understand how to convert them into clients;
- I seem to be stuck in an endless loop of lunches; I find the whole thought of "selling" difficult.
- And the best one? I didn't do a law degree to become a salesman; "selling" will involve me having to behave like those salesmen I've encountered in my life and who I hated.

5. Sticking Points

Every lawyer has their own sticking points in the BD process but the main ones I encounter in lawyers are:

- Setting that person's expectation for follow up and then actually doing it;
- Being persistent enough (persistent is okay, pushy is a pain. But if you don't make the call you won't get the job);
- Having enough ways of getting in touch with their contacts to keep the relationship going;
- Crossing from the relationship building zone into the selling zone – appreciating when they're at the right stage to ask for the business.

6. Key elements of comprehensive BD skills training

A comprehensive BD skills training programme really has to cover the three main elements of the BD process: networking; relationship building; and selling. It's got to tease out and address the delegates' main fears, challenges and sticking points because that puts the whole nine yards in context. It needs to explain the BD process to them. The key communication skills and behavioural attributes of a fantastic business developer have to be developed. And there has to be some "reality practice" (everyone hates when you tell them there's going to be role play!) to give them the chance to try things out in a safe environment. It's got to be bespoke to your firm's ethos and culture so if you're using an external training provider then you'll need to build in some pre-course development time. And it goes without saying that the training delivery has to be inspirational, motivational and delivered by someone who has credibility with the delegates (Or they simply won't listen if they even turn up in the first place).

And finally......

7. Objectives, outcomes and action

Any BD skills training really has to be outcome focussed. However your chosen training provider achieves this you need to ensure that the delegates are clear in advance what they're aiming to achieve. They need to leave knowing specifically what they have to do. And it shouldn't last for days and days or they will get bored and resentful. This involves:

- appropriate pre-course work (not too onerous or it won't be done);
- use of practical exercises to help delegates link theory to their practical day-to-day work with clients and prospective clients, and to identify specific personal challenges;
- personal action plans;
- post course follow up to ensure that the required action is being taken to achieve results.

The added advantage of course is that you're going to be in a better position to negotiate a bigger training budget next year if the BD skills training you run this year can really be seen to improve the bottom line.
The upshot of all of this, if you're successful, is that business development training (or you can call it by its proper name, selling) should lead to the process of generating work for your business being a terrific little dance of mutual attraction, leading to happiness all round.
Now there's a goal that reaches for the stars.

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