

Engagement Brief for Managing Multi-cultural Teams

The Managing Multi-cultural Teams (MMT) programme has been designed and packaged to be delivered in two main ways:

 **Self-directed**- the learner is responsible for working through each module sequentially without other input from coaching, group workshops or webinars. In-built within the learning path of each module, however, are one or two opportunities to transfer the learning in online, telephone or face-to-face communities. Here we provide you with access to one package of all three modules for each learner

 **Blended** – the learner experiences a mix of online learning, with coaching, group workshops or webinars. Here we provide you our online material in separate packages that can be accessed at different stages of a broader programme. Please note that while we do not provide the materials for delivering in parallel with our online programmes, we will be very happy to suggest how to use other WorldWork tools during workshops and coaching sessions to get the best blend.

For the self-directed package special focus needs to be given to sustaining the motivation of learners who cannot depend on blended input from other sources but can benefit from the experience of other learners working individually and simultaneously though the same materials. For the blended packages special focus needs to be given to recommending how best to combine the advantages of online learning with other synchronous approaches such as traditional workshops, face-to-face/remote coaching, or webinars.

This document gives you special guidance around creating an Engagement Strategy for motivating learners going through either of these approaches. This will help internal and external stakeholders to understand how to design the best and most motivating path through the learning.

Engaging the learner in the Self-directed path

Research indicates that self-study online programmes with the lowest completion rates are those in which the learners only interact with the material. Completion of online programs is greatly enhanced when there is some interaction with others – like an instructor, moderator and/ or peers. The completion rates for these sorts of ‘solitary’ programs can be significantly enhanced by motivation. The best form of motivation is when some external accrediting idea is at stake... (you will get licensed to do something; you need it to maintain your credentials in some field.) But it can also be enhanced by strong personal motivation (the skills you acquire may enhance your chance at getting / keeping a desired position; strong personal interest in the materials, etc.)

The Managing Multi-cultural Teams materials have a varied and interactive means of presenting content, but what complimentary recommendations do we make for sustaining the motivation required to work through the materials in a self-directed way:

Key recommendations

1)

Ensure that you discuss with key learning & development stakeholders in the client organization to ensure that there are specific planned strategies in place to ensure that the ‘Cognitive Presence’ already within the materials package (the varied means of interacting with and presenting content) is supported by a ‘Social Presence’ (an opportunity to interact with peers and possibly instructors around key topics and areas of interest coming out of these materials). Please note that as there is an Instructor Presence (Louise Evans) already written into the materials, and thus perhaps the need for communication with peers is greatest.

2)

Ensure that there is an opportunity for a Social Presence at some or all of the 4 Learning Transfer moments included in the materials where the learner is requested to transfer learning back to their organisation. Here the questions already included can be supplemented or substituted by questions of greater relevance to the specific needs of the organization.

3)

Consider the use of one or a number of Moderators from within the organization to help facilitate discussion at these Learning Transfer moments. There can be a number of Moderators each operating within a different local office, and supporting the learners who are working through the materials there. Otherwise there is a danger that the data that the participant enters doesn’t go anywhere – except they can print it to save it.

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Engaging the learner in the Self-directed path Continued

Key recommendations

4)

The Moderator is selected on the criteria that they may have a stakeholder interest in learning & development, and thus have credibility as facilitators. They may have special experience of managing multi-cultural teams, and will need to have worked through the materials.

5)

In partnership with the Administrator who distributes the materials to individual learners, the Moderator is responsible for introducing the group to the programme and explaining the benefits within an organizational context. Where an internal Moderator is difficult to find, an external consultant with expertise on the subject-matter can also play this role. This can have the added advantage of providing extra instructor input to supplement the learning points in the material.

6)

The participants are told to complete Module One (or the whole course) by such-and such a date.. and they meet with the Moderator on-line or face-to-face as a group to discuss. (They could bring their printed pages) Or the moderator sets up an online Discussion Board or blog and people are expected to contribute to some discussion / thought issues related to their local context. In either case the discussion is a place to contextualize the learning in a given organisation, and an opportunity to address the adult learning need to contribute to the learning experience. In order to be considered by the company as having completed the program – learners must participate.

7)

To further support motivation it will be useful for some kind of accreditation to be provided for having completed the materials, and attended the peer reflection events. WorldWork can provide a certificate of completion to support this.

Engaging the learner in the blended path

For those participants following a blended path through MMT there are in-built opportunities for motivation through the kind of social and instructor presence provided by webinars, workshops and coaching sessions. The kind of Moderator-facilitated reflection on key Learning Transfer moments (suggested above) can also be clearly written into the blend.

Key recommendations

We would make the following recommendations in addition to the points made above:

1)

The learning objectives of each package of online materials is explicitly integrated into the overall programme, and thus the benefit of spending extra time between events working on the materials is made clear.

2)

The Learning Transfer moments at the end of online modules can be printed out and brought along to events where they are addressed with peers, and moderated by the Event Facilitator. Thus there is a real link at the level of activities between the online work and the workshops or webinars.

3)

Gavin and his team are referred to during the Events as a shared story of what can go wrong and where improvements can be made. This can be shown in the examples given by the trainer, and in the slides shown in the slide deck.

4)

Occasional 'teaser' moments from the film can be shown and discussed within the workshop - for those with access to the DVD of World of Difference. This can get participants interested in exploring what happens next.

5)

Ensure that the participants know that the Event Facilitator will have complete record of whether each learner has completed the online learning between each event.