



HBOS General Insurance (GI) is the UK's fourth largest household insurer. With hundreds of insurers on the market for consumers to choose between and new internet based companies joining the competition every day, HBOS was not a brand that wanted to compete on price alone. Delivering exceptional customer service that reflected the HBOS brand would be the clincher.

Enabling Visible Leadership.....

"This leadership journey has not just changed how I do things, it has changed me. I am more open and honest with my team. I am empowering others and less directive than before. In this way I am achieving much better results. It has improved my work and home life. I have now been given the tools I needed and so am getting the job satisfaction I craved." (Manager, HBOS GI)

together" This meant that every level of the leadership team had to be in perfect alignment. They all needed to be clear about the strategy themselves and expert communicators, breaking down the big picture and giving context to staff. They needed to act as one voice, able to encourage contribution from accountable, responsible teams, manage gaps with advanced coaching and development skills and be able to maintain motivation to achieve the success they were striving for.

HBOS had a clear internal vision - "Winning customers

An internal training needs analysis coupled with the staff survey and business results showed that this was not how

the leadership team were currently operating.

HBOS knew they needed a leadership programme, designed and delivered by a partner who truly understood the organisation, the culture and the vision. Blue Sky was the obvious choice as the two companies share similar values and Blue Sky took the time to fully immerse themselves in the organisation, getting to know the people and the unique challenges prior to making any recommendations.

With over 1000 staff spread over multiple sites the logistics were never going to be easy. However, the strong HBOS and Blue Sky partnership meant that all leaders, from the top down, received a truly inspirational, tailored development journey, made up of six workshops, personal 1:1 coaching, group mentoring, and action learning; A journey to Enable Visible Leadership.

In the beginning...

"We got a sense that Blue Sky really understood our issues and they spent a lot of time in our organisation, understanding our culture and people. They put forward really innovative solutions to help us drive through the changes needed."
(Senior manager, HBOS GI)

A Blue Sky Performance Improvement diagnostic was carried out to establish what the root cause issues were, to understand what was required, how the solution needed to be delivered and what impact it needed to have.

The findings showed there were a number of challenges HBOS would need to tackle if they were going to succeed in their vision and "win customers together":

- ◆ Customer experience was viewed as the jewel in the HBOS crown, but the lack of ownership at management level meant this view was not always the reality.
- ◆ A small but powerful group of cynics was identified. They had the potential to undermine any programme of change and had done so in the past. Resistance to any cultural change would need to be addressed and not ignored.
- ◆ While most people were proud to work for HBOS, in some areas people were just turning up to do the job and not bringing any emotional connection. This meant higher commitment, energy and motivation was lacking in some areas of the business.
- ◆ Performance management activities that were currently in place were in danger of becoming tick box exercises and minimum value was derived from tell style coaching

and 1:1 sessions.

- ◆ People showed a lack of understanding or connection to the big picture and communication wasn't tailored. Corporate messages were delivered verbatim instead of being contextualised to influence positive reactions and ensure buy in.
- ◆ The organisation was already undergoing a high number of changes. Managers needed to be better prepared and more confident to ensure they could truly lead their people.

As Kayte Brook-Simpson, Director of High Performance Leadership at Blue Sky commented, *"The diagnostic found that culturally there was a strong can do attitude. However, this was often being shouldered at a senior management level with middle and first line managers not adopting the ownership or taking the initiative to drive changes through."*

Creating the wow factor...

Management training interventions had come and gone at HBOS which had failed to hit the mark, creating some cynicism and negativity in the business. The solution had to be a very different experience.

The diagnostic had showed there was not just a knowledge and skill gap in the team, but also a mind set gap. A shift at an emotional engagement level was required before any knowledge or skill gaps could be effectively plugged. And so the Enabling Visible Leadership (EVL) journey was born.

The journey was branded EVL and HBOS invested in an innovative internal communications strategy, including a teaser campaign, group and individual briefing sessions and communication to all from the most senior director, showing true commitment from the top.

The development journey was broken down into six parts delivered over six months. The first two parts focused on emotional engagement, who the leaders were as people and their own personal values and motivations prior to any knowledge and skill development, which came in the next four parts. The final part was by no means the end of the journey and leaders were encouraged to view the journey as continuous. This was a very different approach for HBOS, who had previously favoured one off interventions.

As Cathé Watson, Senior Manager responsible for People, Communication and Quality said, *"It is a truly evolutionary programme."*

Each workshop finished with an action planning session

and a month long gap to allow leaders to reflect on learning, test out new tools and receive 1:1 personalised

showing the transformation achieved by many in just six months.

Part	Focus	Content
Part 1	Inward on emotional engagement	Company vision, ownership and accountability of vision, personal leadership vision for team. Workshop asked tough questions of managers and paved way for change
Part 2	Inward on emotional engagement	Personal values and beliefs, understanding impact made as a leader
Part 3	Outward on people	Advanced coaching and development skills Personal 1:1 coaching session
Part 4	Outward on people	Leading through change Personal 1:1 coaching session
Part 5	Outward on people	Leading in difficult situations and managing challenging people
Part 6	Inward on emotional engagement and personal learning, outward on people and results	Personal learning presentations Celebration of success Graduation event

coaching observing them in the live environment and giving supportive feedback to ensure immediate transfer and practice of new skills. This was crucial to the programmes success.

As one Team Leader said, *“It was not until my personal coaching session when I was put on the spot that I fully appreciated how much I had to learn and the power of the tools we had been given. Although my feedback was quite tough to hear it was invaluable.”*

Other important aspects of the journey included group mentoring and self managed learning groups to ensure internal focus and support was maintained.

Throughout the journey leaders kept journey diaries. Part six was an opportunity for them to present their journey diaries to the senior team, reflecting on what they had learnt, how far they had come and results achieved with their people. Blue Sky and the senior management team were amazed at the creativity, passion and honesty that went into these presentations, really

Ensuring success...

The effects have been huge for the team on a number of levels impacting emotionally on self development, on team working, as well as driving up key customer service metrics.

Not only are managers coming up with solutions, they are also more proactive and supportive of business decisions, wanting to ‘own’ the solutions. They have also developed a real appetite for self-development and are prepared to stand out from the crowd and showcase their individuality whilst staying true to the team culture. This was proven in the latest colleague opinion survey which gauges views on issues within the organisation and how they could be solved.

“There is now a sense of unison – solidarity in the face of peak activity. 2007 saw the worst floods in UK history and as a result, the HBOS Insurance call centres saw a huge increase in the number of calls received. Despite this being the busiest period ever, there was unprecedented solidarity and a strength of leadership never seen before came through, which motivated the troops and successfully delivered the results needed.”

Senior Manager

The results were truly inspirational. For the first time, instead of saying problems were generated by everyone else, first and second line managers were recognising they had a key role in deciding whether to create problems or solve problems. This was a real paradigm shift and demonstrated that the managers were

truly taking responsibility for their own actions.

EVL has helped create a common language and reference points across the business to allow a smoother transition into inter-site working delivering a truly one team, multi sites culture. Delegates feel a sense of trust between them, not judgment, enabling them to behave as the individual they are when working with their peers and their teams.

The hard measures...

EVL has laid the foundations for a real shift in performance and is already delivering business results. A series of KPI's were measured pre, during and post the programme at both site and function level, consisting of a mix of customer experience and operational management measures to ensure there was a healthy blend of organisation and customer focus across the division.

Some of the key deliverables include:

- ◆ Improved all key management behaviours by as much as 5 percentage points
- ◆ Improved customer experience by increasing call quality measures by 3 percentage points
- ◆ Increased productivity by reducing 'Not Ready' time by 9 percentage points
- ◆ Contributed to a 3 percentage point uplift in policy renewal against a business objective to remain flat

There has also been a significant improvement in 'not ready' across all sites, with one site reducing 'not ready' by a third – proving staff are truly focusing on the customer experience now.

At another site the quality score has been improved by 3% whilst achieving the schedule adherence SLA for the first time.

These will all drive improved customer experience and satisfaction.

As Jill Wood, Operational Training and Development Manager commented *"These improvements clearly add value to the customer experience, and also operational efficiency, through agents being there for the customer more often and improved agent utilisation, which will ultimately reduce the cost to serve – so great news for both HBOS and its customers"*.

Flash in the pan?

Blue Sky and HBOS have worked together to ensure the skills to deliver the EVL journey remain in house with an in depth Train the Trainer programme. EVL has become a way of life for the HBOS leadership team, and EVL is now delivered to every manager that joins from Team Leader upwards.

For further information please contact:

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At Blue Sky we are passionate about delivering performance improvement across sales, customer experience and high performance leadership. Our award winning work delivers outstanding ROI by taking staff on an emotional and experiential journey and ensuring operations are set for optimum results. Visit www.blue-sky.co.uk to discover how you can benefit from our approach and learn more about the awards our clients have been winning; 23 in the last 4 years!