

Gartmore

Gartmore is a respected independent fund management company whose sole focus is asset management. With over £24bn under management, they have offices strategically located in London, Tokyo, Boston, Madrid and Frankfurt. In 2006 and 2007, Gartmore's achievements were recognised with over 40 industry awards including a Gold Standard Award for Fund Management for both years.

The Challenge

In June 2008, Gartmore hired Phil Wagstaff as Global Head of Distribution and gave him a brief to rebuild the firm's UK retail business, which had posted flat sales for three years. Phil Wagstaff arrived with a strong track record, having built New Star Asset Management's UK retail funds from £6.4bn to £11.1bn within two years.

One of Phil's strategies to counter the shrinking retail business was to improve the performance of one of his key assets – his top team. Phil inherited ten senior staff and quickly realised that although they were all individually successful, they were not working together effectively. Each business strand operated in a silo, with little communication or respect between the divisions.

Enabling Visions

Enabling Visions is a performance development company that works with leaders and teams to maximise their success. In particular, **Enabling Visions** specialises in taking teams of high performing individuals and enabling them to work together so that whole is greater than the sum of its parts. They achieve this through a combination of team coaching, leadership coaching and psychological profiling.

Nine years previously, Phil Wagstaff had found himself in a similar situation at another company. Back then, Phil's team also worked in silos with little communication between departments. Together with his former HR department he had commissioned **Enabling Visions** to help. Between

1999 and 2002 they delivered a series of highly bespoke interventions. The results were exceptional, with Phil's staff going from a fairly successful but dysfunctional group to a highly successful team.

It is a testament to the success of the project that when they moved on, many members of Phil's original team employed **Enabling Visions** to work with their new teams. And when Phil found himself once again working with a team whose lack of unity was undermining their effectiveness, he immediately thought of **Enabling Visions**, and commissioned the company to help him turn the Global Distribution team around.

The Intervention

Trayton Vance, Managing Director of **Enabling Visions**, worked with Phil to plan a two-day event at an off-site location. However, it was only when Trayton and Phil gathered the full team together in one room that they realised the extent of the challenge. Every single individual had their arms folded in front of them, and stated outright that Gartmore had commissioned so many failed team courses that they no longer believed change was possible.

However, over the course of the event, Trayton and Phil proved them wrong. A shift occurred within the group, with one member of the team even stating that the two days had "*changed her life*". Phil puts this down to the difference in approach between **Enabling Visions** and other training organisations. Many trainers take as their starting point that you can form an effective team simply by observing and improving a group dynamic. **Enabling Visions** believes that to understand and work well with others, you have to first understand yourself.

Enabling Visions therefore began transforming the Global Distribution team by coaching all team members and undertaking in-depth psychological profiles. Afterwards everyone - including Phil - had to share their personal profile with the group. Good facilitation was needed, as the exercise opened individuals up to tough criticisms. However, once the group began to understand what motivated and



hindered each other, they were then able to learn how to operate better as a united team. The event ended with everyone making public promises about how they would interact with each other in future.

The Effects

The team coaching has had a profound effect on the behaviour of the Global Distribution department. Before the event, each member of the team would undertake their work without communicating. Now they are not just talking, but actively seeking second opinions from their colleagues. And when overseas members fly into London, the team even arrange social events together, something which would have been unthinkable in the past. This improved behavioural awareness has been noted throughout the business. One of Phil's junior staff even asked why a manager who had been difficult to work with for ten years had suddenly begun to operate in a cooperative and respectful manner.

As the group has begun to work as an effective team, the difference in their behaviour has had a knock-on effect on Phil's leadership capacity. Before the team coaching event, whenever there was any problem – no matter how small or trivial – team members would approach Phil and expect him to solve it. Now they are far more likely to approach their colleagues and solve problems together without Phil's intervention. This has freed up Phil's capacity so that he can concentrate on strategies for growing Gartmore's retail division.

Success Factors

For Phil Wagstaff there were two factors that determined the success of the project. The first was the use of an external provider. If Phil had tried to develop his team without help, they would have followed his instructions but he would have still been playing the role of an authority figure. However, when he used **Enabling Visions** the facilitator became the authority figure. This allowed the whole team – including Phil – to participate as equals undergoing the same development process, dramatically improving the results.

The second factor that made the project successful was choosing **Enabling Visions**. Phil Wagstaff finds many other training organisations prosaic but appreciates **Enabling Visions** unique slant on team development. **Enabling Visions** works with managers' inner personas and leads teams to develop their own outputs. This makes the events draining, but far more effective. Had he chosen another provider, Phil does not believe the intervention would have been so successful.

The Future

Phil Wagstaff knows that you can't have all your problems solved within a two-day event. Developing the Global Distribution team will be an ongoing process. However, now that they have experienced the first green shoots of success, Gartmore plan to continue with the project. They have another event planned in near future and Phil feels sure that, having already removed barriers between team members, they will be able to produce exceptional results.

As for the future, as someone from the finance industry, Phil knows the final proof will be in the numbers on the bottom line. Has the team coaching made a monetary difference so far? Yes. Has it made anything like the difference it will make in the fullness of time? Nowhere close. And though Phil has worked with a lot of great teams over the course of his career, he believes that - together with **Enabling Visions** - he can transform Global Distribution at Gartmore into his strongest team yet.

