inspire confidence

CASE STUDY | LEADERSHIP AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Two hundred people, one team

How we closed the gap between senior leaders and early-career staff, created awareness within the Execs of daily frustrations outside of the boardroom and built connection and confidence.

- **Client** Shooting Star Children's Hospices
- **Sector** Children's palliative care, charity
- **Reach** All 200 staff, the whole organisation
- **Programme** Four away days of continuous improvement training, followed by ten improvement champions, each building their own team to support them

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THE CHALLENGE

Silos do not close on instruction

The core problem

Two hundred people in separate parts of the organisation. Senior leaders individual contributors who rarely shared a room and had little reason to speak to each other. A lack of confidence and risk of attrition in emerging talent. The gap was not effort or goodwill. People had no real understanding of each other and no safe way to start.

Mixed, not massed

Playing a Lego game to demonstrate value and flow, is a great way to get people across depts collaborating. It also meant ELT heard about the daily frustrations that block people - the true Wastes that the Lego game showcases.

A real problem to share

People need something concrete to solve together. A shared problem gives a director and someone in their twenties a reason to talk that has nothing to do with rank. And real issues get visibility and support.

Somewhere to take it

Connection built in a room fades unless people leave with a project of their own, a cohort and a senior audience waiting to hear what they did. 10 improvement champions, each with a project that mattered to them.

WHAT WE DID

Connection first, then capability

Three stages, deliberately sequenced. Build the relationships, then the capability, then the leadership skills to carry it.

01

Four Away Days

Shooting Star chose to include all 200 staff across four sessions. Connection via exercises that put senior leaders and junior staff on the same terms.

02

Continuous improvement

Ten people taken through a champion programme, each of whom then involved their own team to help them deliver an improvement project.

03

Presentation and leadership

Modules that also strengthened people's ability to lead, present and communicate change, so improvement had a voice behind it.







WHAT IT DOES TO A PERSON

You can watch confidence being built

The same individual, across one programme. This is the change I am hired to create, and it is visible in the room.

AT THE START

Holding back

Quiet in the room. Does not speak to people outside their own team. Hesitates to collaborate and waits to be asked rather than offering.

IN THE MIDDLE

Asking, and being asked

Brings an improvement project of their own. Others in the cohort offer to help. They discover that everyone else has problems too, and that lowers the stakes for involvement and collaboration.

AT THE END

Presenting to the executives

Stands up and presents their work to the leadership team, supported by their line manager and in front of the people they would not have spoken to a few weeks earlier.

That is confidence built upon rather than talked about. The same person, now certain that what they know is worth saying - and holding the evidence that they matter.

WHAT IT CHANGES

Barriers came down, and stayed down

At Shooting Star

- Barriers and silos broke down across the organisation.
- People supported each other on their individual projects rather than working alone.
- Staff networked across functions and across levels of seniority.
- Ten improvement champions each built a team around them, so the reach multiplied beyond the ten.
- Coaching of senior leaders and leadership workshops.

What it unlocks anywhere

- Executives see their own leadership style reflected back, often for the first time.
- The generational gap closes, because a shared problem gives people decades apart a reason to talk.
- Early-career talent develops leadership and problem-solving in public, where executives can see it.
- It scales by multiplication: train a cohort, and each of them builds a team.

“Without doubt, the most accomplished improvement consultant I have come across in a long industry-spanning career. [As Head of the Continuous Improvement workstream] she has achieved more at UCL than all those that have come before her.”

Phil Harding, Finance Director, UCL

IN THEIR WORDS

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I highly recommend Paula Beattie for her expertise in improvement and her ability to develop others. Through a continuous improvement education programme, Paula combined strong methodological knowledge with practical coaching, helping participants build confidence and apply improvement approaches in their work. Her additional workshops on presentation and leadership skills further strengthened participants’ ability to lead and communicate change. Paula’s expertise, supportive approach and passion for improvement and confidence-building make her a real asset to any organisation.

Lisa Dennis, 2026

Director of Care, Shooting Star Children's Hospices