

Solving Problems with $L = P + Q$

As we wait for the details of the Comprehensive Spending Review it is clear that government departments, firms and individuals will have to respond and adapt to “new “ challenges. Here I suggest a way to tackle this, a methodology , that combines ideas from Action Learning (Reg Revans) with the techniques used by Buffin Leadership International.

Addressing real life problems is one of the best ways for any leader or team to show their worth. Approaching this with an open mind (willing to learn and be challenged) means that it is also one of the most cost effective learning experiences possible. The concept is that

$L = P+Q$

Learning (L) is a combination of Programmed Knowledge (P , which we will call experience) plus Questioning Skills (Q, simply the ability to change experience in the light of new challenges). Add some expert facilitation and action planning and you’ll have a potent mix to resolve your issues!!

Historically a typical Action Learning programme could last some six months. In todays environment this seems a long time so here is a fast-track approach

Day 1 – form a problem solving team and jointly identify and agree the key problem statement. Using creative problem solving techniques (such as Buffin Leadership Bridge model) generate potential solutions.

Day 2 – investigate impact of potential solutions. What is cost/benefit of each? Which is easiest to implement? Which has greatest positive impact on customers? If you could combine a number of elements from each solution to form a “ super “ solution what would that be? Present the teams findings to all key stakeholders.

Day 3 – implement the solution and track the issues and benefits. If it’s not working as planned then change it (!) as long as you keep focus on the desired outcomes. Embed the solution.

Day 4 – review the solution and the methodology that generated it. What could have been done better? What do we now understand more thoroughly? Who else could we have involved ? What is the next issue we want to tackle? CELEBRATE SUCCESS.

If you are interested in finding out more about our Fast-track problem solving methods then please feel free to contact me.

Also If you are based in the south west and looking for an inspiring venue to hold a meeting or conference then take a look at the newly opened South Bristol Skills Academy.

<http://www.cityofbristol.ac.uk/find-us/sbsa/2.html>

Its a vibrant new site with state of the art audio visual equipment and highly competitive rates. To find out more contact Debbie on 0117 3125047 and mention this article.