

## **Tackling performance and team dynamic issues in a small entrepreneurial team**

### **Focus:**

Improving communication a team; Clarifying responsibilities; Balanced Scorecard; Facilitation and management team dynamics; tangible results.

### **Client**

The client was a small, entrepreneurial profit centre and team within a large Utility.<sup>1</sup>

### **Client need**

We were asked to develop a Balanced Scorecard for them as a part of the overall corporate initiative to ensure teams had clear objectives.

From the discussions with the management team it quickly became apparent that, even in this close team of 12 working in the same office space, there were problems with team dynamics, concerns over who should work where, mis-matches of workload and some ambiguity over areas of responsibility.

### **Overview of project**

By working through the drivers of performance with the management team, different potential reasons for the underlying causes were identified.

However whilst the dynamics caused some friction and problems, it was not discussed, or being resolved. In the management team discussions it was decided to confront the issue head on by bringing the team together to work together, discuss the issues and seek the root causes.

Together, we designed a full day away from the office and a series of sessions to bring the issues out. This began by agreeing the drivers of performance of the group as a team, agreeing responsibilities for each area (joint if necessary).

We then facilitated a group exercise to explore the interactions and dependencies amongst the team and to get the group interacting to seek help with their responsibilities and to offer help to each other.

As the energy of the group rose to respond to the interactions, it became clear that three deeper causes were at work.

- Clarity about what was important
- Assumptions about the motivations of others in the team
- Fear of talking about the issues

Tackling these meant some people confronting their own demons. By getting explicit agreement that there would be no repercussions within the group from discussing these issues, the group setting and the environment meant they were willing and able to do this. As soon as the issues became explicit the team

supported the individuals and pledged their help to the both them and the team as a whole.

## Results and Benefits

In the wrap-up, the senior manager declared the sessions to have been the most effective he had experienced in his time with the company.

The opening up of the issues meant that they were able to talk about them more openly and better understand people's underlying motivations.

Today they are a profitable and successful unit. Further, the management team are more open and have tools and skills that they can use to openly discuss and monitor the issues that were submerged.

## Want to know more?

This is one of a series of case studies and discussion papers published by Excitant Ltd.

About *Excitant Ltd*

Our name represents what we do:

***Stimulate and improve organisations to perform better.***

We are a niche consultancy. We specialise in helping Management teams:

- Develop, clarify and agree their strategy
- Communicate the strategy so the whole organisation is mobilised
- Work more effectively as a team, learning together, as the strategy evolves
- To bring about change in organisations, by developing the beliefs, culture and behaviours of high performance
- Ensure strategy and performance leads to results.

For more information, contact:

Phil Jones, Managing Director  
M 07 711 711 123  
[phil@excitant.co.uk](mailto:phil@excitant.co.uk)

*Note:*

*1 This engagement was carried out by Excitant staff, prior to Excitant being formed. The client still maintains a relationship with Excitant.*