



Bespoke consultancy training for new recruits

Mouchel is the largest independent management consultancy working primarily for UK public services and their suppliers

From client side to consulting

Mouchel has grown rapidly since its inception in the early 00s and prides itself on recruiting not only seasoned management consultants but also experienced people from the heart of the public sector. However, whilst the latter undoubtedly possess deep technical knowledge, they are often new to a client facing role and the consulting arena, and need to develop different skills in communication and negotiation that are crucial to winning new business and managing client relationships. Mouchel's HR Director Liz Archbold said her organisation wanted to find a way to help its new recruits develop these capabilities, in a format that could be easily repeated when the business expanded.

“We identified some gaps in the skills of some of our new recruits and were keen to engage an expert trainer who would act as coach and be able to speak from a background of experience,” tells Liz. “There was a lot of new information for our recruits to take on board. Firstly, consultants tend to work on the ‘outside looking in’ to an organisation, and skills like time management and influencing the client are absolutely critical. Time management is extremely important because as a consultant you don’t only need to work independently and organise your own delivery, but you also need to report and bill your time effectively so that your firm can invoice correctly. Plus there is the need to estimate the value, time and resource required for future client work to enable your company to forecast it’s future pipeline.

Liz continued: “Secondly, being good at your job and mastering the admin side of things is just the start! Personal presentation, adaptability and good communication skills are all important too. Clients buy people and need to imagine you fitting in easily with their teams and ways of working.

“Our new consultants were all raring to get their teeth into some interesting client work, so we were eager to get some training designed for them the quicker, the better.”

Bespoke consultancy training

Mouchel asked consultancy training experts Elevation Learning to design a three day course for new starters that they could run on a regular basis. The course covered the following areas:

- Listening and questioning skills
- Client interviewing
- Body language and voice
- Workshop facilitation
- Presentation skills
- Team presentations
- Managing stress as a consultant
- Feedback and co-coaching
- Personal image advice

“The course is designed to enable participants to understand the core skills required of consultants and to build their competence and confidence in using them,” tells Calvert Markham, managing director of Elevation Learning.

“Taking a real life Mouchel case study as the learning vehicle, the new consultants work over the three days to understand the client’s business and environment, meet and interview various client representatives and present back to the client to convince them they wish to work with Mouchel on the assignment. Here we can test and advise on their selling, management, communication and negotiating skills.

“One of the main challenge for people who are new to consulting is adapting to the change in lifestyle,” Calvert continued. “You suddenly find yourself working away from home, independently or as part of a disparate team, and you are required to project manage or deliver in a pressurized environment, but well removed from the face to face support of head office, support functions or your line manager. The first few months can be tough. In training we offered advice and guidance on how to cope and adapt.”

Creating a support network for new recruits

In the last two years, over 50% of all Mouchel’s new recruits have taken part in the training and it has been very successful in helping to build their understanding of the world of consulting. Plus, the new recruits who train together inevitably build up their own mini support network as they bond and spend time together. Liz continues: “Our consultants tell us that this early sense of a ‘consulting community’ really helps them settle into their roles.”



Tapping into wider industry knowledge and experience

“Its true that clients buy consultants who they can learn from and want to spend time with and we chose Elevation Learning as our training partner for the same reasons,” Liz explains. “Calvert and the consultants that deliver our courses, Cynthia Pexton-Shaw and Monica Hernanz, are extremely credible. They have worked as consultants with a number of Big Four firms and understand consulting life at the cutting edge - the problems that arise, and how to deal with them. During training, they share war stories with our new recruits, which really helps bring the development ‘to life’ for them.”

A true partner in training

Liz concluded: “Another great benefit of working with the Elevation Learning team is that they are very inclusive. Calvert is an ex Chair of the Institute of Business Consulting, serves on the Executive Committee of the International Council of Management Consulting Institutes, and is a Professor in Consulting at the CASS Business School. For us he is a great link to the wider consulting community, and he always shares the latest news, networking opportunities, and industry hot topics with us. To have a relationship with a partner who is so pro-active is incredibly helpful. It means we can pass on all the latest news and knowledge to our new consulting community to help their continued learning and development.”

Additional Information



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ustries. For more information contact www.mouchel.com



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