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## TUSP trains staff in the art of consultancy

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**Boutique management consultancy The Ultimate Solutions Partnership (TUSP), asked Elevation Learning to train its specialist staff in core consultancy skills that would improve their client engagement and help develop their growing business. One year on, we examine the impact that the training has had on TUSP as a business, and what has it done for the individuals who took part.**

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### From client side to consulting

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When TUSP began in 2000, it employed sixteen full time consultants, all plucked from line management and project management roles in sectors such as Transport, Defence, Finance and Technology. They were experienced people, experts in their own individual fields, who now wanted to use their understanding to help like-minded peers across a variety of industries. A gap analysis showed that whilst the staff had considerable knowledge and abilities, what they lacked were core consulting skills.

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### A bespoke training course to suit specific needs

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TUSP asked consultancy training experts Elevation Learning to help. Managing director Calvert Markham explains how they tailored one of their well known training courses to suit TUSP's specific needs.

"We run a course called Core Consultancy Skills which is a three day residential that covers all the consulting essentials, but the format didn't quite suit TUSP," tells Calvert. "For a start, they were a small firm who couldn't afford to have all consultants down tools at once for three days. Plus, they had identified that their people specifically needed help with planning, control and account management – so, we designed a course around those key areas that still lasted three days but which took place over three months so the consultants time away from their client projects was staggered.

"We then examined all the course content and presented it in terms of TUSP's core values and objectives, so that the team were confident that what they were learning was helping them achieve one consistent approach delivery that would help the business as a whole move forward."

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## Tapping into consulting industry experience

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Half way through the training, TUSP's Head of People Solutions Peter Sherratt, decided he wanted less 'chalk and talk' and more war stories on what it was really like consulting at the cutting edge. Calvert adapted the training to include more time for real life examples of client work and problem solving, and used role play to engage the team.

Peter said: "Elevation Learning have a deep knowledge of what it is really like working for the Big Four consulting firms and their customers. They shared war stories on what life is really like client side and how to deal with the many different and complex situations that arise. This really helped bring the training to life."

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## One year on

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One year on Peter says that the benefits of the time spent with Elevation Learning have been felt across his team. "They have absorbed the skills and industry knowledge that they picked up from this training programme, and it has become part of their every day practice. It has improved their confidence and ability and you can see it shine through in everything they do.

"The landscape is changing here with new clients and a new office, and we have just acquired a business that will broaden our offering and double our staff," Peter continued. "Our newly polished skills have played a big part in all this. We are all raring to go!"

