

Case study
August 2014

Tackling the barriers to leadership

CRI (Crime Reduction Initiatives): restructuring the organisation to release leadership potential



WORK



WORKFORCE



WORKPLACE

Championing better work and working lives

The CIPD's purpose is to **champion better work and working lives** by improving practices in people and organisation development, for the benefit of individuals, businesses, economies and society. Our research work plays a critical role – providing the content and credibility for us to drive practice, raise standards and offer advice, guidance and practical support to the profession. Our research also informs our advocacy and engagement with policy-makers and other opinion-formers on behalf of the profession we represent.

To increase our impact, in service of our purpose, we're focusing our research agenda on three core themes: the future of **work**, the diverse and changing nature of the **workforce**, and the culture and organisation of the **workplace**.

WORK

Our focus on work includes what work is and where, when and how work takes place, as well as trends and changes in skills and job needs, changing career patterns, global mobility, technological developments and new ways of working.



WORKFORCE

Our focus on the workforce includes demographics, generational shifts, attitudes and expectations, the changing skills base and trends in learning and education.

WORKPLACE

Our focus on the workplace includes how organisations are evolving and adapting, understanding of culture, trust and engagement, and how people are best organised, developed, managed, motivated and rewarded to perform at their best.

About us

The CIPD is the professional body for HR and people development. We have over 130,000 members internationally – working in HR, learning and development, people management and consulting across private businesses and organisations in the public and voluntary sectors. We are an independent and not-for-profit organisation, guided in our work by the evidence and the front-line experience of our members.

CRI (Crime Reduction Initiatives): restructuring the organisation to release leadership potential

Case study

The CIPD report *Leadership – easier said than done* explores the barriers to leadership and good people management. This is one of a series of case studies that illustrates approaches to tackling these barriers in practice.

CRI (Crime Reduction Initiatives) is a social care and health charity working with individuals, families and communities that are affected by drugs, alcohol, crime, homelessness, domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour. It employs over 2,300 people in England and Wales, having grown from a small charity through mergers and expansion.

This case study describes how CRI defined its approach to leadership, and had to change the ways that jobs and the organisational structures were designed, in order to enable individuals to achieve the desired leadership state. The main challenge was in the rapid organic growth of the operations in response to the operational

demand, without a sufficient investment in consolidating processes and structures (HR, IT, finance) that would have supported the long-term health of the operation.

A senior manager says:

“The structure has not been fit for purpose because what’s happened as we’ve grown, as opposed to changing the structure to incorporate the growth, we’ve added bolt-ons and just put another one of someone else in that new role, just to help with the capacity. It doesn’t really create a structure that is designed to support people.”

Tackling the clarity of roles

'While traditionally leadership has been viewed as a necessary capability of senior staff, the new development initiative is targeted at managers at all levels, emphasising such competencies as coaching and emotional intelligence.'

The existing way of work organisation at CRI meant that managers had responsibility for delivering service as well as managing people, which made it challenging for the supervisors to avoid a hands-on approach to management. Considering that many individuals would progress to the supervisory levels from the specialist level, they sometimes found that their role in a context of pressing deadlines was to pitch in with a solution rather than to coach others.

One middle manager confirms that lack of time and the overwhelming number of responsibilities invites a directive approach:

Being collaborative and spending time coaching and mentoring is far more time-consuming than going into a command mode, or an autocratic mode. While I always try to make time to be able to coach people, and listen to people, to develop them and get the right outcomes, sometimes there are too many things to be mindful of and consider within my remit. /

As the organisation recognised that leadership capability at all levels of the business is key to its success, a new accredited development programme for managers was introduced. While traditionally leadership has been viewed as a necessary capability of senior staff, the new development initiative is targeted at managers at all levels, emphasising such competencies as coaching and emotional intelligence. The company also started offering two routes to progression: one is to progress to a manager, responsible for the service, but not delivering it day to day. The other route is that of a senior practitioner, who deals with complex cases but doesn't manage people.

Reviewing the organisational structure

The external pressures associated with the nature of work created an additional challenge for managers. This was, for example, increased reporting under the payment by results contracting, as well as the need to manage current operational demand and compete for future work at the same time. As a result, even where managers wanted to apply long-term 'leadership' they felt *'the leadership bit gets almost squeezed out because you've got to make sure you dot every i and tick every box or whatever, cross every t.'*

The organisational response was a complete restructure of the functions within a business to ensure that managers are enabled to focus on leading others. The organisation adopted a donut model, with operations on the customer-facing outside, while the central function took on compliance, quality management, and forward-planning. An HR business partner says:

/'The key barrier for our managers and our leaders in the workplace is they spend so much time doing administrative functions, they're not able to focus on service delivery or, even, people management – because they're filling out health and safety returns, filling out audits. We recognised that we no longer have experts. We have lots of people doing lots of little things and, probably, not doing any of it really well. /

An important consideration for the new structure, as highlighted by several front-line managers, is ensuring a two-way flow of communication between the central services and the operations, so as to avoid situations where the core functions overpromise on delivery without consulting on feasibility with the service delivery arm.

In order for the central function to be a credible service with enough decision-making power, the newly created roles are at the senior level, with a job specification prescribing a business partner approach to support the operations. This also meant upskilling operations managers, communicating directly with the central division, to ensure they are equally credible players. An HR business partner explains: *'The gap is potentially bigger now between the senior team and the operations managers team, so we are training our operations managers to help them raise their roles and bridge that gap.'*

In line with the changes in the way the operations, the HR function has also re-structured, recognizing the need for a discrete strategic role working to prepare for the future needs of the business. HR business partners will continue to support the operations on the day-to-day basis, ensuring that the managers are able to focus on their leadership roles.

'The external pressures associated with the nature of work created an additional challenge for managers.'

Key lessons

- Communication is key, and everything you do sends a message to the people in your organisation. It's best to have the full information before communicating to your staff, but equally to be honest if you make a mistake or don't know something. Communicate before, during and after.
- Although the restructure is in place to optimise operations roles, central functions such as HR, IT and finance require communications on what the process means for *them*.
- It is essential to balance the transitioning of people into the new role with the operational demand: the experience and the skills of those going into new roles may create a gap at the beginning, and enough support should be put in place for those bridging the gap.
- HR plays a crucial role advising on the impact of the restructure on people: it should have an input in strategy, communication, job and organisational design. Sometimes the organisational decisions create a significant wave of change, and the HR professionals can ensure that people are engaged in and are supporting the process.



Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
151 The Broadway London SW19 1JQ UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 8612 6200 Fax: +44 (0)20 8612 6201
Email: cipd@cipd.co.uk Website: cipd.co.uk
Incorporated by Royal Charter Registered charity no.1079797