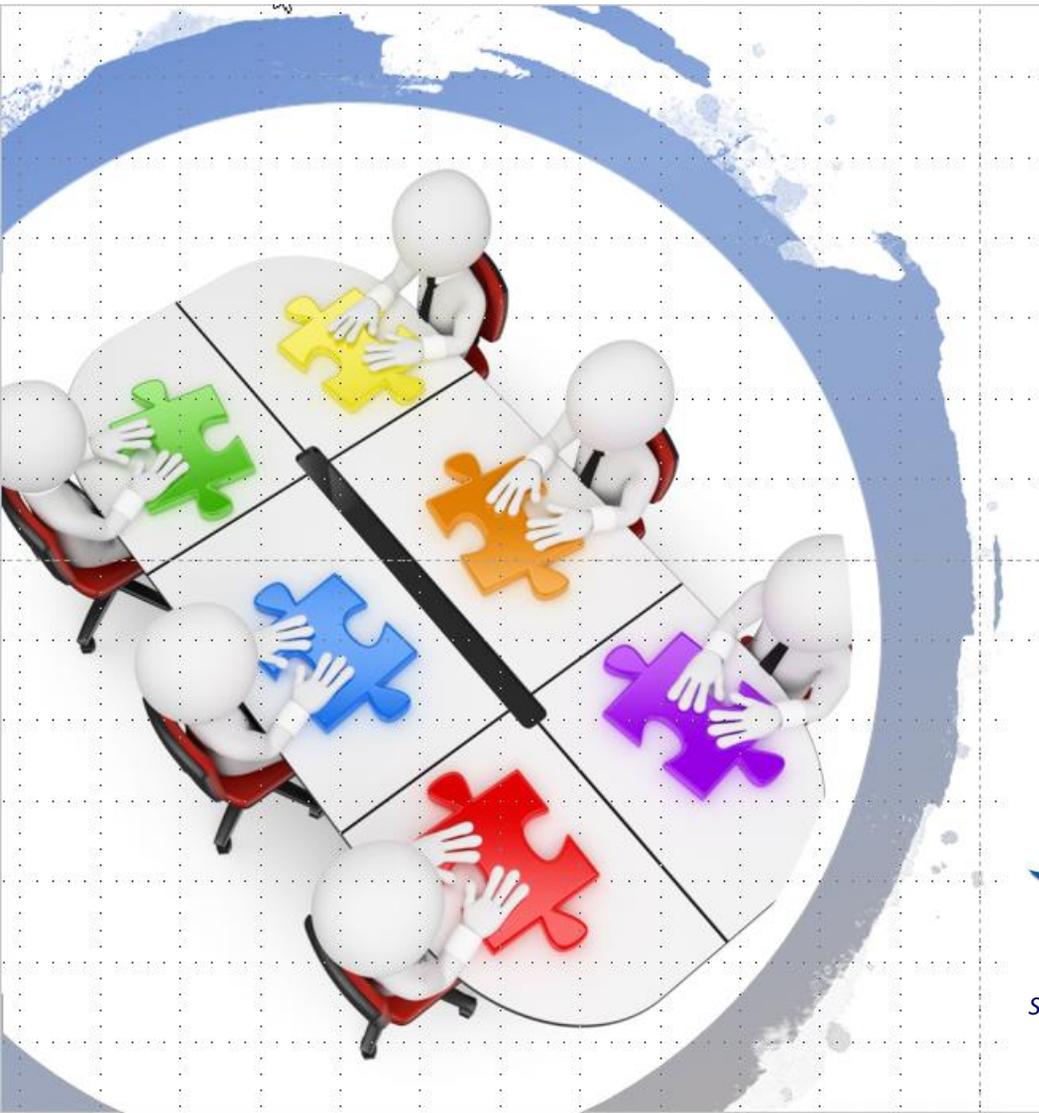


Manager Engagement: *The Hidden Menace*

Insights from the study of 1000 teams

**Employee Engagement in Organisations
series © 2020**

Introducing the M-Pathfinder™ solution



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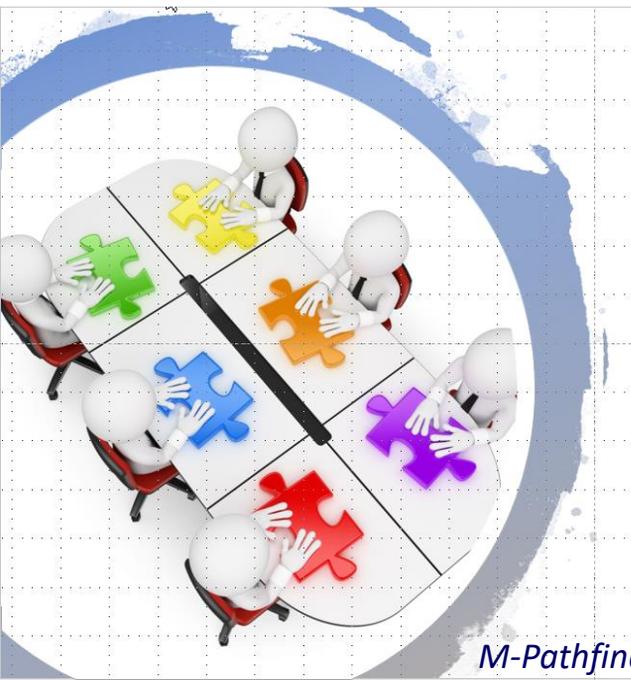
Serving organisations since 2003

Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



VaLUENTIS is one of the leading professional firms in the field of engagement, talent development/performance and wellbeing, with its headquarters based in Berkeley Square, London and operational research centre based near Nottingham.

The firm provides client organisations across the private and public sectors with survey, advisory, coaching and analytic services.



VaLUENTIS flagship offerings include:

- The Management Pathfinder™
- Six Pillars™/5D Engagement
- License To Manage™
- Ludentology™
- Smart Social Interaction (SSI™)/WellBeing partnering VaLUENTIS Business School and Ludorati.

These provide organisations with proven performance improvement and development strategies from survey instruments to full blown organization interventions in modular off-the-shelf or customised solutions.

Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



“Separating the manager scores can be revealing
in a number of ways alerting to hidden issues”

Managers, team leaders, supervisors - all form a crucial link between the senior teams' strategy/direction and the front-line.

But in times of organisational pressure (be this growth, restructuring or other operational changes), we typically ask a lot from these colleagues – whilst expecting them to maintaining 'business as usual' with all the accompanying people management requirements.

Organisations have put much stock in a plethora of engagement related strategies and activities, to varied success.

Engagement scores and benchmarking have become the norm to many, yet how well does an organisation understand the engagement of their manager cadre? How does this compare with their team as a whole?

Often, engagement findings include manager scores when in fact best practice would suggest that as part of reporting, these should be separated to compare and contrast.



- What picture emerges? Is there material divergence between the two samples?
- What does the manager curve look like, i.e. do manager scores exhibit a narrow acceptable range (as should be expected) or are there demonstrable, concerning differences of low and high scoring?
- And what is the impact on team engagement/performance?
- Do organisations have this information to hand, and if they do, what is in their playbook to direct analysis and action to improve areas of weakness/concern?

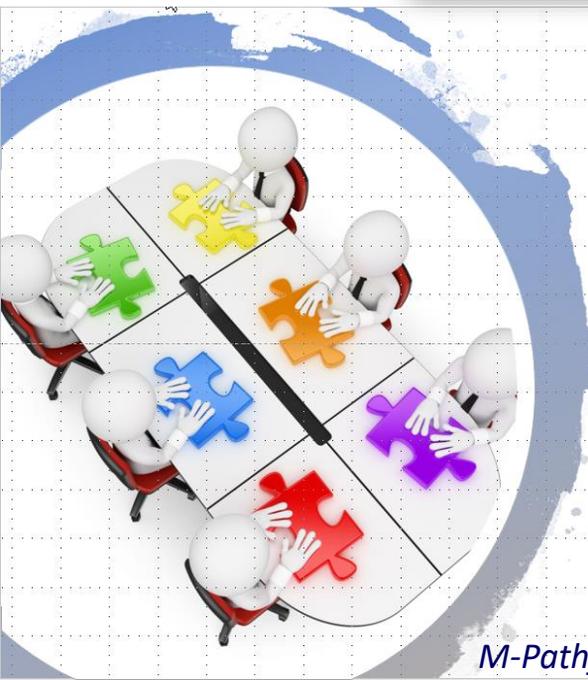
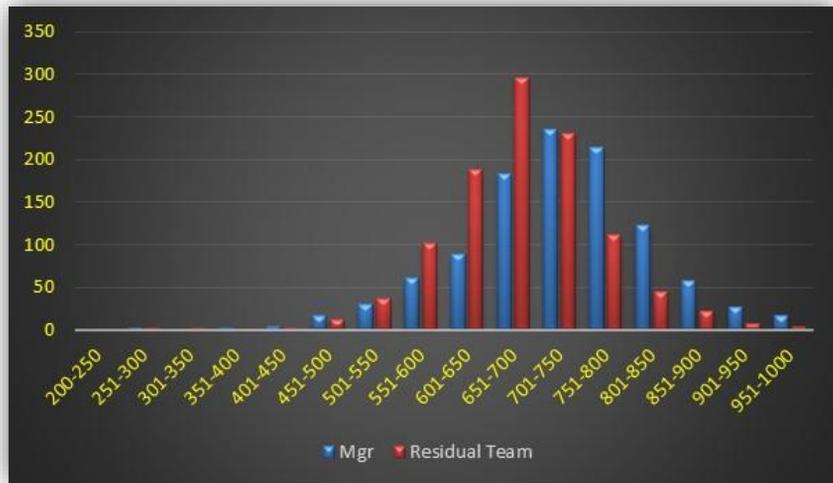
Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



“Across the sample, it is clear that there is significant divergence both between Manager-Team scores as well as the Managers themselves”

Utilising VaLUENTIS’ established 5D EE framework (see overleaf), a sample of over 1,000 teams was used to analyse manager engagement extracted from organisation data, with those in a people management capacity including team leaders and supervisors.

Across the sample it is clear that there is significant divergence both between manager and team scores as well as the managers themselves.



Engagement scores and benchmarking have become the norm for many organisations but the disaggregating of managers from their teams appears to have been often overlooked and the potential insights therefore missed.

Not all surveys however have a dimensional framework as that of VaLUENTIS but the ability to recut data is available to provide this missing picture(s).

In any instance, we would urge organisations to revisit their engagement analyses and perhaps uncover some fresh insights. The next few pages provide more detailed analysis.

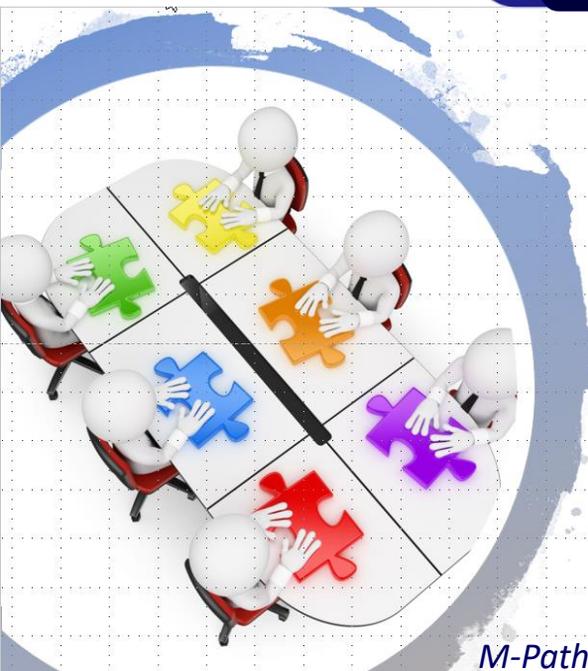
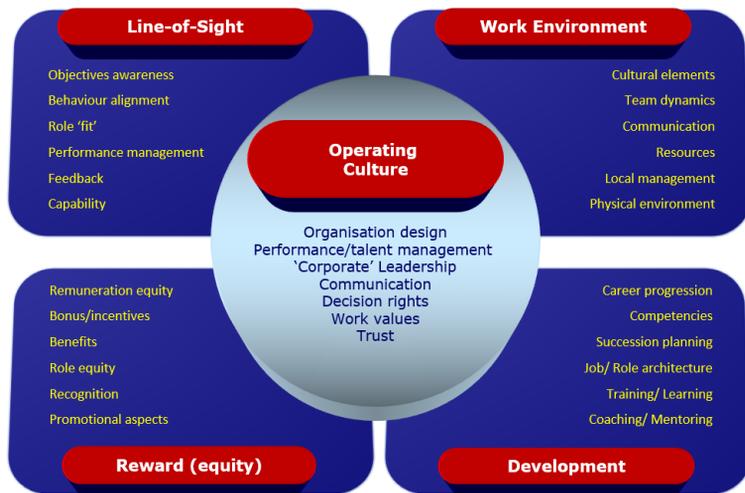
Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



“Management is doing things right, whilst leadership is doing the right things” (Drucker)

Valuentis 5D (Domain) Engagement Framework is derived from our original definition of employee engagement published in 2003 (see below).

We identified five clusters which had bearing on individual/team productivity and performance. These were termed: *Line-Of-Sight*, *Work Environment*, *Development*, *Reward (equity)* and an organisation’s *Operating Culture*. Leadership/management is implicit throughout the Domain.



“Employee Engagement is an outcome-based concept. It is the term used to describe the degree to which employees can be ascribed as ‘aligned’ and ‘committed’ to an organisation such that they are at their most productive.”

Standard definitions for ‘aligned’ and ‘committed’ and ‘productive’ are also available though organisations can customise to their own particular circumstances within guidelines to maintain consistency.

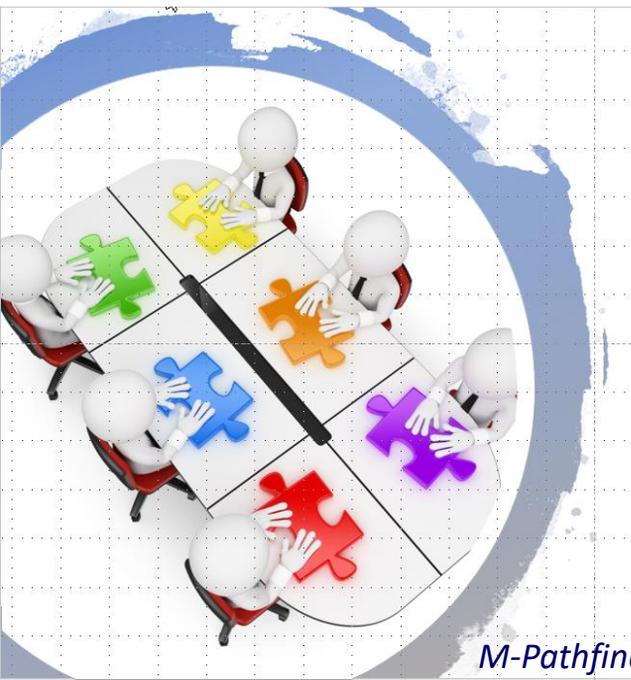
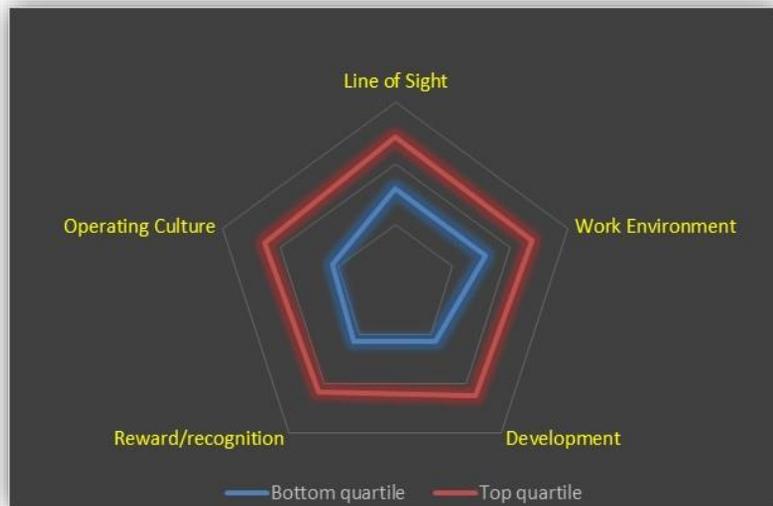
Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



“The stark contrast between the top and bottom scoring manager quartiles is very clear across the five dimensions.”

The five Dimensions of VaLUENTIS engagement framework provide unique insight for analysis and for directing improvement actions or for identifying aspects of organisation design that may require more serious intervention.

Thus Manager-level data was plotted across high-quartile and low-quartile managers with marked results as shown below:



Surprisingly perhaps, each dimension sees clear material impairment. Given that these Managers are in charge of teams, these results should alert serious assessment given potential impact both in the short and longer term – i.e. organisation talent at risk.

A more potential matter of concern for organisations, is that ‘Operating Culture’ touches on individual trust, pride and belief in leadership approaches – so what is causing this level of deterioration?

This type of analysis can provide new perspectives on Manager engagement and ensuing ‘fixes’ whether it is coaching, development, wellbeing, counselling and/or other positive interventions.

Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



CASE EXAMPLE

“As a result, turnover of supervisors dropped, saving recruitment costs as well as the material benefits of supporting operational continuity.”

Client X conducted a project analysing supervisor relative to team engagement in a particular business division that was experiencing rapid turnover.

Valuentis analysed recent employee engagement survey data with the outputs consisting of:

- Profiling supervisor engagement relative to residual team engagement
- Plotting performance curves across the business to identify teams that were above or below expectations
- This included misaligned team engagement or supervisor engagement relative to the business area as a whole (internal benchmarking)
- Segmentation into three categories of ‘Sweet spot’, ‘Grey zone’ and ‘Supervisor low?’ for separate analysis and visual representation.

In a series of workshops, operational data and knowledge from within the business was overlaid on the survey analysis

This analysis included recent key performance metrics; identifying whether the manager or team were new or experienced; how long the supervisor had been with the team and organisation.

This combination of quantitative and qualitative insight led to the redesign of the development programme and induction for externally appointed supervisors.

A series of team events to enhance communication and shared understanding with additional coaching for supervisors flagged as potential ‘pressure-challenged’ in the analysis.

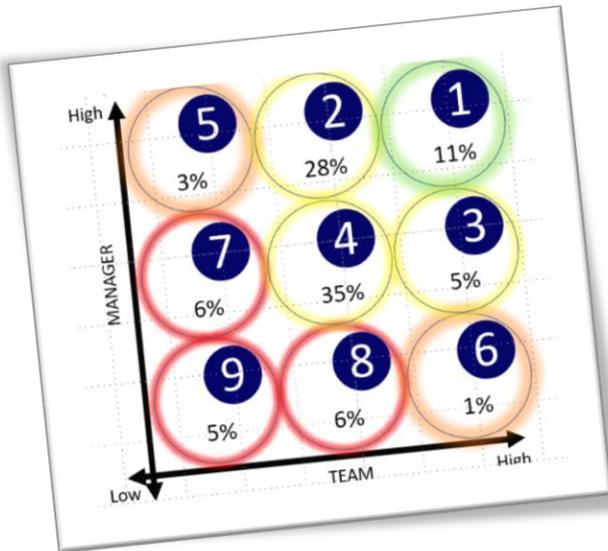
As a result, turnover of supervisors dropped, saving recruitment costs as well as the material benefits of supporting operational continuity.



Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



By disaggregating the engagement data of the Manager with the residual team and then differentiating the scores within each; we are able to plot a relative Manager-Team engagement grid as presented with the insights as indicated below:



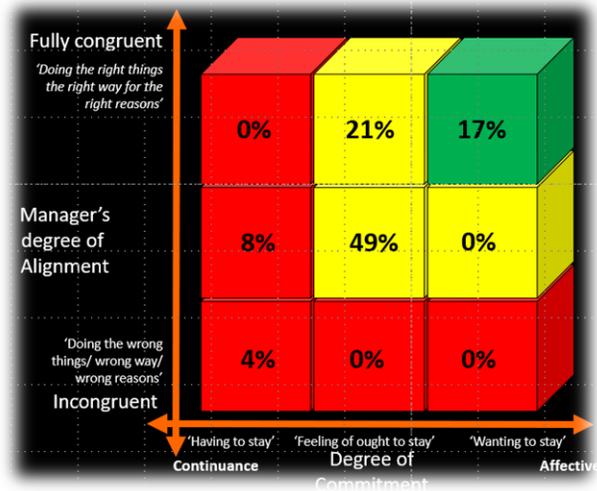
- M-High/T-High (11%):** where organisations would like all managers and teams to be.
- M-High/T-Mid (28%):** Is the differential down to the role levels or is there some impairment at team level – and what will it take to improve to High engagement scoring.
- M-Mid/T-High (5%):** For managers to appear less engaged than their team raises obvious questions and the issue over time of team engagement erosion.
- M-Mid/T-Mid (35%):** The most common finding of middling engagement for both managers and teams. Given this is the largest cohort, the question for organisations is how to convert these teams to High-High scoring.
- M-High/T-Low (3%):** Exaggerated differential between Manager and Team raises concerns and should engender more analysis/action.
- M-Low/T-High (1%):** Its rareness suggests individual cases relating to the individual managers concerned. It would appear that the Team are performing despite their Manager but longer term impact/erosion on team engagement is the issue.
- M-Mid/T-Low (6%):** These are often identified as problem teams due to concerns with both Managers and their Team scores.
- M-Low/T-Mid (6%):** More cases of problem teams as identified.
- M-Low/T-Low (5%):** Worst case scenarios of Manager-Team engagement requiring immediate attention.



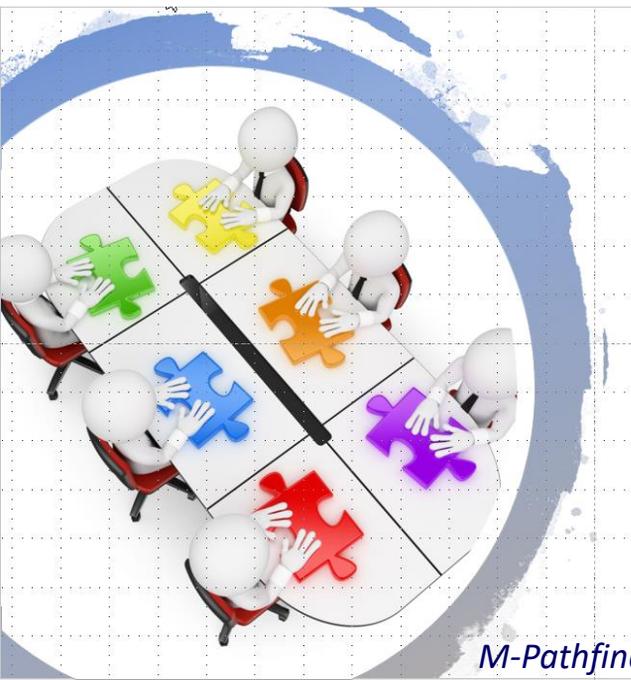
Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



Having disaggregated the engagement data of the Manager with the residual team we also recut the data into our unique Alignment-Commitment (AC) matrix for Managers, again plotting in a grid format. The importance of managers in organisations cannot be understated, thus the extra focus and insight as indicated below (including sample percentages):



- 1. A-High/C-High (17%):** where organisations would like all their managers to be (fully productive with maximum team impact).
- 2. A-High/C-Mid (21%):** 'Middling' commitment is always a concern because of the potential for further erosion as well as the dangers of 'coasting' and the impact on team talent.
- 3. A-Mid/C-High (0%):** Any non-alignment will impact on both Manager and Team output.
- 4. A-Mid/C-Mid (49%):** The most common finding of 'middling' engagement. Organisations should be wary. Given this is half the sample, the question again for organisations is improving the Manager scoring to High-High.
- 5. A-High/C-Low (4%):** Managers in this category are most likely to leave with the obvious disruption to their respective teams (and potential further fallout).
- 6. A-Low/C-High (0%):** Committed but non-aligned Managers can wreak havoc.
- 7. A-Mid/C-Low (8%):** Problem category suggesting a number of issues that most likely include struggling or incompetent managers (also newly promoted).
- 8. A-Low/C-Mid (0%):** More cases of problem Managers as identified.
- 9. A-Low/C-Low (4%):** Worst case scenarios of Manager engagement requiring immediate attention.



Manager Engagement: The Hidden Menace



CASE EXAMPLE

“The exercise additionally highlighted concerns that led to the development of a parallel wellbeing programme, including team-based activities and problem solving events.”

Client Y introduced a new approach towards management development and wanted to link it to staff engagement within the context of their organisation.

A staff engagement survey was conducted, with standard team-based reporting supplemented by:

- Quantification of the differences between managers and their immediate teams (and where possible collated direct reports)
- Construction of a ‘manager index’ score within the teams as additional insight, drawn from supplemental survey questions.

A three-way analysis was conducted to understand the relationships between manager engagement; the team differential and perceptions of management strengths as identified in the survey.

These were collated into a design blueprint which supported the identification of key priorities for the management development programme – including appraisals, coaching and fair/equitable treatment.

This resulted in a tailored curriculum being created, with individual manager scorecards, including psychometric profiling.

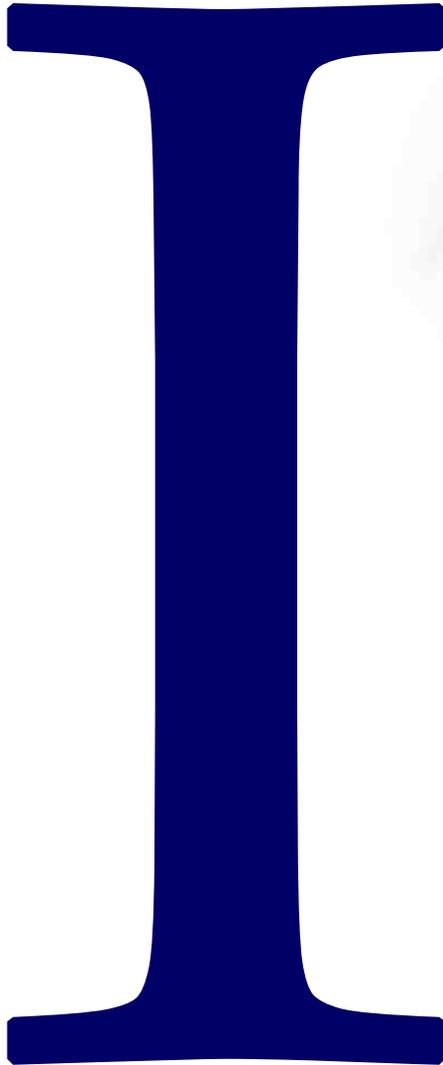
The exercise additionally highlighted concerns that led to the development of a parallel wellbeing programme, including team-based activities and problem solving events.





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