


Services for Young People

Case Study

Ensuring success in staff development for the youth workers at Derbyshire County Council by providing a bespoke in-house programme, 'Inspiring Excellent Youth Work'.

Having attended the national programmes Improving Youth Work Management (IYWM) and Transforming Youth Work Management (TYWM) with other senior managers in the service, the client asked us to design and deliver a programme for 18 managers and officers in Derbyshire.



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Gordon Savage

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Sue Mansell



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Sue has been Derbyshire's Staff and Curriculum Development Officer for three years, having previously been a Personal Advisor. She attended Strategy and Leadership in Youth Services, previously TYWM, with a colleague in 2007.

We spoke to Gordon and Sue a year after the programme was delivered to discover the impact it had on individual participants and the organisations they work in.

Contractor:
Gordon Savage
Head of Derbyshire
Youth Service

Participant:
Sue Mansell
Youth Officer for Staff and
Curriculum Development

Gordon Savage, Contractor

Why did you choose FPM to deliver your training?

I contacted you because I was impressed with my own experience. I know you have a national reputation when it comes to youth work management training and I wanted to make your expertise available to more of our staff.

We didn't want generic training or anything we'd have to change to make sense of. I knew we'd get relevant knowledge and techniques which we could use straight away.

We thought we were a good service, which was confirmed by Ofsted, but we wanted to push on and strive for excellence. Our mantra is 'Planning for Learning' which involves continuous improvement. The training is an integral part of that.

Did it meet your expectations?

Yes and more so. The in-house programme, along with IYWM and TYWM, was the catalyst to transform the whole service. We still use the models from the programmes, like the 7Ss and the cycle of change today – it's a very hands-on toolkit.

How did the staff and service benefit from the training?

The staff are now much more confident at managing and changing things. We were already assertive but the training helped us become even more assertive and more strategic when it comes to handling political relationships.

We were doing a good job already but the courses enabled us to improve and, just as importantly, demonstrate the impact of our work.

It changed the way youth workers think about their jobs. The service is now more proactive and mobile. We involve young people much more now, with a democratically elected Youth Council which attracts over 20,000 votes annually. We are also more integrated with the voluntary sector now, having appointed a VCI coordinator, which will get more and more important as the Children's Trust develops.

I think we've moved up to the next level in terms of the service we now deliver. However, we aren't resting on our laurels and are still aiming to improve.

Sue Mansell, Participant

Why did you decide to attend the programme?

Gordon recommended the course to me as he had attended FPM programmes in the past and recognised their quality. I had to attend a management course as a core competence and this seemed to be the best as it was designed for youth service managers.

Did it meet your expectations?

I'm very open-minded when it comes to training and I hadn't come across FPM so I didn't really have any expectations. I was impressed with the materials though and thought the pace of the course was quite fast – so much was fitted in the six days!

What did you gain from your experience?

The main thing I learnt was that I needed to be more organised and manage my budget carefully.

Finance was a theme of one of the modules and I learnt that someone else will always have an eye on your budget! I brought in systems so I know how much we've spent and how much we're due to spend. It's easier to manage and more transparent now.

More generally, I've introduced systems and processes, which I took from the course, to make things more ordered and structured. For example, I now have a training portfolio so I can access all of our information in one place.

How has the service benefited?

Well, I'm responsible for the core competency development of 50 full time staff and over 300 part time staff so they benefited as I've managed my time better and can do more for them. I'm very person-centred so perhaps spent too much time with people before. I've toughened up, which means I can get more done.

Everything is more logical and integrated now. For example, we have back-up plans and staff training fits in with other training like the Common Induction, which ensures staff from other services, like Connexions, receive the same induction procedure.

I introduced the Diploma Training and Learning Agreement which means staff have to finish their training within an agreed time limit. This makes them more focused as students take responsibility for their own learning.

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