



## Making Court a great place to work

### Objectives

The European Court of Human Rights sits within the Council of Europe, based in Strasbourg, which exists to develop common democratic principles within its 47 member countries.

Results from a staff survey at the European Court of Human Rights showed a need for heightened awareness around positive management and leadership behaviours, particularly some of the 'grey areas' - eg. When does strong management end and bullying begin? When do reasonable management requests become harassment?

This is a critical mission for the European Court of Human Rights – not only in improving staff wellbeing – but also in demonstrating their commitment to equality, justice and respect, as an international organisation upholding democratic principles.

### Approach

We began with a highly detailed period of research (conducted in English and French), ensuring sensitivity to the key challenges – particularly cultural difference and 'silo working' within cultural groups. We delivered a one-day programme in French and English, developed for lawyers and legal support staff with managerial responsibilities. The programme included:

- Interactive scenarios and facilitated discussion to explore how negative behaviours are manifested and what can be done to positively challenge these, drawing on Court values & principles.
- The AID model, (Action, Impact, Desired Outcome), to help build confidence in addressing inappropriate behaviour and communicating more effectively.
- The Johari Window change model, which we used to develop debate around unconscious bias and assumption – looking at how we can implement more inclusive behaviours and be more inspiring to our team.
- An opportunity to practice management styles and communication techniques using one to one roleplay in their preferred language. This gave a rare opportunity for practical skills building and observation, including valuable feedback from trained actor-facilitators and peers.

Sessions allowed participants to explore their own, and others', perception of effective management in a highly practical environment. Working individually and in a team, delegates examined how issues including day to day work pressures, biases, assumptions and cultural difference affects management behaviours. We also encouraged a shared management vision amongst the team, and a commitment to taking responsibility for challenging negative behaviours.

### Outcomes

We have had resoundingly positive feedback from this programme. One delegate commented: "*It was a great course, and I enjoyed every minute of it. I am usually very sceptical about management-skills training programmes, but this one really stood out, mainly I guess thanks to the very impactful method, masterfully delivered.*" In detailed delegate feedback analysis, 91% of respondents stated that the course had had a positive impact on their role and behaviours.

So successful was this programme that Steps has been commissioned by the Council of Europe to provide training in several other areas, including Active Listening.