

Modelling management behaviours

Objectives

Business and financial adviser Grant Thornton wanted to train 50 managers to become role models and coaches who will support partners and other managers in the firm to further improve their people management skills.

Solution

Grant Thornton's trainers worked with Steps to deliver a three-day coaching and influencing skills programme to support this select group of Staff Development Managers (SDMs).

"The training helps our SDMs to become excellent line managers and role models who can coach others to do their job better," said Sue Cohen, Senior Training Manager at Grant Thornton. "Since our SDMs are geographically-spread, it also gives them a chance to network and to share experiences."

The first two days of the programme were delivered by Grant Thornton trainers and covered participant learning styles, personality profiles, coaching models, coaching practice, communication, influencing and giving feedback. Steps ran the third day, bringing the issues to life and giving participants an opportunity to practise their skills.

"Steps have worked with Grant Thornton for over ten years, providing role players for training programmes covering sales skills, appraisal skills, selection interviewing, influencing skills, partner development, leadership and management skills and they've developed a very good understanding of our business," said Sue Cohen. "With Steps, it is as close to real as you can get. Their forum approach engages and challenges the delegates to discuss and debate their role and consider the best way forward in each scenario."

As a key component of the programme, delegates are asked for individual examples of situations in which they have encountered behavioural challenges when they've been trying to coach others. Steps recreate these situations in bespoke role plays. The delegates work in small groups and they take turns to role play as a coach, with a Steps actor portraying the coachee, whilst the rest of group observes and offers valuable help and advice.

Outcomes

Sue Cohen has observed that delegates are more confident and more competent in their role as SDMs post-course.

"When you have 50 busy managers, most of whom are direct fee-earners, it is extremely important to develop and support them effectively," she said. "The feedback from this programme shows we are providing powerful training that results in memorable learning. As well as helping them improve as Staff Development Managers, the training gives them excellent personal development that also makes them more effective as line managers."