

Managing in Challenging Times

Objectives

ING Real Estate wanted to introduce an innovative training programme to enable its Directors and Associates to give constructive feedback and support to their teams through challenging times.

Approach

We designed and delivered an experiential programme, with our partners Synergy Employment Law, to engage delegates with communication, performance management and motivation issues, as well as focusing on the legal considerations and critical management responsibilities required in times of uncertainty.

"We wanted to ensure that our Directors and Associates had the guidance and support to manage any stresses or anxieties in their teams and to communicate effectively in the current economic downturn," said Vivienne Shall, Senior HR Manager at ING Real Estate Investment Management. "Having previously worked with Steps and Synergy, we asked them to develop a programme that would engage our managers and help them provide the appropriate support to their teams."

Each session was introduced by ING Real Estate Investment Management's Chief Executive, Robert Houston - and featured scenarios that explored the importance of effective team working, good people management skills and effective leadership techniques. Particular challenges were also presented, including the need to manage expectations and the impact of individual behaviour on the team and the wider organisation. Delegates were able to question the characters on the issues raised in the scenario, their individual behaviours and their attitudes to change.

The session also used drama to illustrate the value of having good performance management conversations, highlighting the need for preparation, clear communication and the importance of establishing a shared understanding and clear parameters. Exploring this led delegates to consider other issues, including motivation, the benefits of open communication, encouraging initiative and the need for effective dialogue between a manager and his/her team, particularly during periods of change or uncertainty.

Throughout the session, a partner from Synergy Employment Law highlighted the legal obligations when addressing performance issues and gave an overview of diversity and discrimination legislation as well as the mechanics of disciplinary matters.

Outcomes

"The feedback from the delegates was excellent," said Vivienne Shall. "The session provided our senior managers with a set of tools with which they can effectively support their teams. It also provided a forum for them to share best practice and helped them to realise that they're not alone in having to face these issues."