



Embedding Values & Principles

Objectives

Pfizer is a research-based pharmaceutical company which discovers, develops, manufactures and markets innovative medicines for humans and animals. To understand the essence of its own success, Pfizer conducted extensive research into employee perceptions of the company and its philosophy. From this data, the Central Research division developed seven intrinsic values: People; Personal Leadership; Teamwork; Integrity; Creativity & Innovation; Quality & Excellence and Contribution. As part of its commitment to living these values, Pfizer commissioned a Steps drama-based development programme to bring them to life.

Solution

“At Pfizer, we believe that how we do things is as important as what we do and that’s why the values work has been so important,” said Ted Cheeseman, Senior Consultant for Learning and Development. “Our managers were encouraged to look at ways of transforming the words into reality for people in their departments. The idea was to embed the values by ensuring a common understanding not only of what they mean but also of what behaviour they call for. We’ve worked with Steps for a number of years - they provide professional role players who act out realistic characterisations of employees and customers so that our managers can practise a range of skills such as undertaking performance reviews, being assertive and influencing.”

Called *Putting the Values to Work*, the resultant programme was delivered to individuals across the department. Led by three facilitators from Steps, it featured a business game scenario where the delegates were split into three companies. Each group was asked to determine the values for their company and how they planned to take their business forward. They were then told that the three fictional companies were to combine and they had to work out which of their values were non-negotiable in the ensuing discussions.

The programme then concentrated on the delegates’ understanding of the seven values highlighted by the Central Research division. Professional role players were used to show the values being adopted - and compromised - in real situations within the department. At key stages in these dramas, the role players would turn to the group of delegates and ask for suggestions of what they should say or do in order to proceed. Freed from the need to role play themselves, the delegates were able to concentrate on the training issues and learn by analysing and summarising what they had seen.

Outcomes

Ted Cheeseman believes Pfizer has gained real value by working with Steps on an interactive, experiential development approach.

“Steps’ programmes proved to be exciting, entertaining and very effective,” he said. “We want our people to know what we’re valued for and we want to encourage them to live by those values. The two drama-based development programmes have played an important part in realising this goal.”