



Doing the right thing, not the easy thing Adding long-term value through team profiling

Games Workshop has been producing miniatures and models for fantasy gamers and enthusiasts worldwide for over 25 years. The company's 15-year forward plan requires a long-term approach from its development team, with succession planning and teambuilding for its 3,000 global employees a priority.

Matt Toone works as part of the Games Workshop Academy, based at their head office in Nottingham. The Academy is actually a small team of people whose job is to help people develop their personal effectiveness within the business. Part of that work is to help managers use their teams effectively to achieve the aims of the business. "Where appropriate, we use Profiling to help managers build awareness in their teams and develop more productive teams."

"Self-awareness is the foundation of all our development work, set within the unique culture and values of Games Workshop. We aim to develop our people to their full potential, which is why we use psychometric tools such as the Team Management Profile as part of our offer to the business.

"Understanding yourself and each other by knowing your team's working preferences, and valuing differences in communication style, is fundamental to really effective teamwork. So we've built profiling into what we offer our managers to address this need."

A global culture

"Because our teams are located across the globe, they can be fairly diverse; however we do promote a one business culture. Our HQ is based in the UK, at Nottingham - all of our product design happens here, as well as the manufacturing and distribution for our markets in Europe. A lot of people development is also centered here, so we often work with managers from a range of different functions. We work closely with all of our sales businesses - Italy, USA and Australia as examples - as well as our manufacturing site in Memphis, running programmes specific to the particular needs of the business."

Corporate values

"We're looking for long-term value. Our focus is very much on people. The *how* we do things, rather than the *what*."

"Our employees come from a range of backgrounds, some enter the company as hobbyists with a detailed knowledge of our products and some as business professionals. **We find that profiling our teams can help us to develop a shared understanding quickly, so they can work more effectively together.** Because of our strong culture, and our long-term focus, we want to grow our own managers. So we value development very highly in Games Workshop, we're looking to enable people to add value in the long term."

“Using the Team Management Profile helps people to put their work processes, as well as their relationships, into context.”

Assessing needs

“Although our main work is focused on personal development, we are often approached by managers to help with team development. We help them to be clear about their objectives and we may even enter into a wider conversation about the manager's own development needs. Once we've explored what's needed, we then look at the development solution. Part of that solution may include profiling, building on that all important self-awareness, exploring team dynamics and relating back to our core values. **For us, decision-making is all about doing the right thing, not the easy thing, and this approach is key to the Games Workshop ethos.**”

Outcomes

Games Workshop evaluate their interventions, courses or workshops by whether they are likely to get them closer to their 15-year aim, not just the short-term goals “We don't do happy sheets, we are looking for long-term value, we like to have ongoing conversations with our participants. **One way we evaluate the effectiveness of the Team Management Profile is how it is used as an ongoing tool, whether the vocabulary becomes part of the team's culture.**”

Recommendations

“Don't be restricted by the psychometric process. The tool should be helping you to do the job. It's a way of helping people to have conversations and of opening up discussion.”

“Focus on your end goal, what you are trying to achieve, rather than getting embroiled in the science.”

“Effective facilitation is crucial in making Profiling relevant and in helping people to create more of an impact on the success of the business.”

The Games Workshop team development process

1. Before we start, we discuss objectives, which are often for team members to develop their self-awareness and understand more about each other's working preferences, leading to increased performance.
2. Selecting the right tool is important. The Academy's consultants are accredited to use a number of systems, we use the tool most appropriate for the job. We tend to use a few reliable tools rather than a vast range of tools. The Team Management Profile is particularly useful for project-oriented teams as it also looks at processes and the interrelationship between different links in the supply chain.

We find that because of its focus on work preferences, the Team Management Profile helps people to put their work processes, as well as their relationships, into context. It adds an extra dimension to person analytics. The design, manufacture and selling of our products require all of the project segments in the Margerison-McCann Types of Work Model.

3. Each participant completes their Questionnaire prior to any workshop. We then perform exercises that illustrate styles of working based on the four work preference scales.
4. We share feedback on the Profiles as a group and use the exercises recommended in the accreditation course materials to look at ‘What I do and don't respond well to’.
5. The final stage is to look at action plans: what they commit to as part of the team after the sessions and what they take back to work. The development process needs to carry on; it's not separate to their work. We encourage them to use the pacing tips when working with others in their team and keep their action plans in mind.