



## Management development in the media

Each year over 350 million copies of IPC magazines are sold in the UK, reaching 28 million adults. IPC is the biggest consumer magazine publisher in the UK.

*The majority of its 2000+ staff will be moving in 2007 to purpose-built offices behind the Tate Modern on London's Southbank. "This will change everything about the organisation, from our internal culture to the way we work," says Kate Dee, IPC's Head of Learning & Development. "Four of my team are practitioners in various Margerison-McCann Team Management Systems instruments. I'm particularly keen on the Linking Skills Profile because it helps us with the changes we're making, not least management and leadership development."*

### Creating different training for different managers

From the outside you'd expect a publishing company to rely less on business disciplines, and more on individual creativity. Creative organisations in the media, entertainment and advertising are supposed to be exciting but chaotic places to work. Was there any resistance to the whole idea of management training at IPC?

"No," says Kate, "we employ many technical experts: people with production, writing and specific subject skills. Such people wouldn't necessarily have formal management training but they understand the need for good performance."

Like other organisations, IPC has many different sorts of managers. "For instance publishers and editors seem to work very differently. Magazine editors are seen as



Members of IPC's magazine publishing team

creative, less concerned with numbers and they live in a reality where they're only as good as their last issue. Publishers are seen as the organisers, concerned with cost and contribution, lauded when things go right. This is not 100 per cent accurate but the Team Management Profile confirms their working preferences: editors tend to be in the Innovating/Promoting segments of the Team Management Wheel, publishers in the Thruster-Organiser segment. These differences highlight different management development needs."

### One size fits all?

The role of the Team Management Profile grew as IPC's Management Development programme evolved. "Prior to 2003," says Kate, "there was a three day management programme. It was 'one size fits all' whether you had an MBA and ten years' experience, or had run a student newspaper and were in your first job. In 2003 we introduced *Leading to the Future* for Group Board Directors. This was repeated in 2004 but by then we'd rolled out our Management Development Framework."

# “Understanding yourself ... helps you to apply your skills more effectively”

## Creating a structure for management development

IPC's management development programme is cleverly structured to provide a foundation of base management skills before moving on to more personalised coaching and training:

Stage 1 Key business Skills

Stage 2 key Management Processes

Stage 3 How to Operate as a Manager

Stage 4 Tailored Management Development

IPC's Chief Executive Sylvia Auton wrote the introduction to the management development booklet. This signposted how committed the organisation was to the whole process. She sums up what they were trying to do: 'Get the right development at the right time in the right way.'

## Making the link

So, how does the Team Management Profile fit in? Kate smiles... "Well, we're changing that. Originally we used it at Stage 2 in the unit on *What Makes a Manager*. Understanding yourself - your own preferences, your own style of working - is as important as acquiring the skills of project management for instance. It helps you to apply your skills more effectively."

"In fact, I was convinced by the Team Management Profile when I filled it in myself. I'm a 'split-Wheel', with two very different areas of preference. Discovering that immediately helped me to understand why I prefer certain tasks to others. It gave me practical help in structuring my job."

"But we found that managers needed a lot of very specific training at Stage 2, covering areas such as employment law, and as a result we're re-evaluating how we use the Team Management Profile and whether this is the best part of the management development programme for it."

"From 2007 participants will be offered one-to-one Team Management Profile feedback and coaching - introducing them to the concept of feedback and giving them the opportunity to look at how they work in the team."

"We use the Linking Skills Profile at Stage 3 and it's the basis for further individual development."

"The experience of filling in the Questionnaire and then having a one-to-one Profile session is a very good introduction to the role of feedback. The concept of feedback can be challenging initially but the report is written in a way which eases people into the process. We couldn't run this part of our programme in quite the same way with any other instrument."

There are thirteen people, task and leadership linking skills which sit at the centre of the Team Management Wheel and which can be measured using the Linking Skills Profile.

"The Linking Skills Profile Questionnaire is a multi-rater instrument filled in by an individual, their colleagues and supervisor. Each person rates the extent to which each of these thirteen skills *does* occur and the extent to which it *should* occur - in other words, its importance.

The differences between the so-called 'satisfaction rates' of the person and the other raters are themselves extremely useful in structuring a feedback session, investigating important issues and planning training.

But the Linking Skills Profile also introduces a gap analysis, summarising the difference between these *does* and *should* ratings. This is fascinating. It allows us to talk about practical issues: 'You're doing too much of this' or 'You're not doing enough of that'. It focuses on real-world behaviours."

## All change

Kate's conversation is shot through with the concept of *change*: change in location, shifting culture. As we begin to sum up she highlights two more areas where change is on the agenda.

"We've run our management programme for two years and now we're re-evaluating it. We plan to relaunch it in 2007. You simply can't set up a programme and leave it running for years. We are looking at how we can best use the Team Management Profile in the programme."

"Just as programmes change to react to business needs, so people change. So we encourage people to re-use instruments like the Linking Skills Profile every 18 months or so; this highlights how far they've grown and changed, and ensures development is constant."



TMS Development International Ltd

Further information:  
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