

Strategic Improvement Programme

The Strategic Improvement Programme is aimed at the Chief Executive and Directors of an organisation - known as the Corporate Brain in UIMPROVE language. Getting this team to work effectively together is the second most important thing an organisation needs to do if it is to be successful (we'll leave you to think about the first). The programme is also suitable for departments with a high degree of autonomy in large organisations. Undertaking the programme is much more than just training. Amongst other things, an effective Corporate Brain needs to...

- (1) Spend quality time together
- (2) Work on things together
- (3) Set the direction of the organisation together
- (4) Identify issues together
- (5) Make decisions together
- (6) Learn together
- (7) Think and act strategically

...and the programme directly contributes to all of these.

The core programme is 7 days in total comprising three modules of 3 days, 2 days and 2 days. There are also two further optional 3 day modules. The gap between modules should be no less than 2 months and can be much longer (as long as a year) for the optional modules. The order of the modules and the exact content of each can be tailored to suit the issues and priorities of the organisation.

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| Module 1 | Organisational improvement
Using projects to drive forward the Mission and Vision and implement strategies |
| Module 2 | How to develop and implement strategy
Working with the Next Tier Down (the middle managers)
Overhauling the organisation's meetings structure |
| Module 3 | Controlling and improving routine operation
Getting day-to-day work humming |
| Module 4
(optional) | Data and Statistical Process Control
Using data for organisational improvement and control of routine operation |
| Module 5
(optional) | Strategic leadership
Leading the organisation, departments, teams and individuals |

Who should attend?

- (1) The Chief Executive/Managing Director
- (2) Directors (Direct Reports to the Chief Executive/Managing Director)

Taking the first step

This programme is most often commissioned by people that have prior experience of it - typically a Director who has been promoted to Chief Executive and now wants to supercharge their own team. For everyone else, it can feel like a major commitment - because it is. Therefore we offer a 'do Module 1 and go no further' option. This limits any risk - both in terms of adoption of the approach and financial. So far, we've never had a client that hasn't moved on to Modules 2 and 3.

What participants will be able to do following the core programme

Organisational improvement and strategy

- Understand how to go about organisational improvement
- Understand the underpinning history, philosophy and principles
- Understand the link between Mission, Vision, strategy, projects and routine operation
- Understand the link between organisational improvement and corporate governance
- Develop and implement strategy
- Develop an Annual Corporate Planning Process for the whole organisation
- Collectively lead the Next Tier Down of the organisation as a collective
- Actively involve the Next Tier Down in strategy review and deployment
- Adopt a consistent approach across the organisation
- Understand some of the jargon and fads that are around

Projects

- Develop projects to deliver organisational strategy
- Establish an annual plan of all the projects they and their department need to carry out
- Steer projects
- Push project work down the organisation thereby increasing organisational capacity
- Involve people in a systematic and participative manner
- Champion projects
- Lead major projects
- Understand how to kick-start, refocus and review projects
- Use the UIMPROVE Projects Framework, associated methodologies and tools
- Work with a Facilitator

Routine operation

- Understand systems and how these collectively achieve the Mission of the organisation
- Work on a process to analyse and improve it
- Measure how a process is performing
- Control routine operation to ensure consistency and optimisation of outputs
- Set up day-to-day work so that it runs smoothly

Meetings

- Run effective meetings
- Use tools and techniques in meetings
- Ensure balanced contribution and participation at meetings
- Be aware of how their behaviour affects meetings and is 'caught' by the rest of the organisation
- Model positive meeting behaviours
- Work with a Facilitator

...and as a consequence

- Work more effectively together as a Corporate Brain
- Be more effective at taking direction from the leader and cascading this through the organisation
- Think and act strategically

The focus of each module

Module 1 Organisational improvement and projects

...including:

- A brief history of organisational improvement
- Key Concepts that underpin the approach
- The basics of setting up and running projects
- The difference between steering and doing projects
- Annual Project Planning
- Project Remits
- Kick-starting projects

Module 2 Strategy, Leadership Forum and meetings

...including:

- How to develop and implement strategy
- The Annual Corporate Planning Process
- Leadership Forum - using the Next Tier Down of senior managers to maximum effect
- Effective meetings and the Techniques for Productive Meetings
- Modelling positive meeting behaviours

Module 3 Controlling and improving routine operation

...including:

- Underpinning principles
- Systems and processes - what's the difference and why this is important
- How to control a process
- How to improve a process including the Tools for Analysis
- Developing a system of control

Module 4 Optional module - Data and Statistical Process Control

...including:

- Underpinning principles
- Dr Deming's Red Beads and Funnel Experiments
- Variation and Statistical Process Control
- How to collect and analyse customer satisfaction data and use it to drive improvement
- Dashboards and all that - developing a balanced view of how the organisation is performing

Module 5 Optional module - Strategic Leadership

...including:

- Underpinning principles
- Motivation
- Flexible Leadership
- Leading teams
- Leading individuals
- How to prepare and deliver a Leader Speaks
- The importance of organisational design

How we work with you

Before we start

We meet with the leader to ensure we understand the organisation, the team and current issues. This enables us to focus the content on issues of real importance to the team and organisation.

During each module

We run the training but the leader leads and the participants really get to contribute. The nature of the exercises is about what's going on in the real world and what needs to change. This means making decisions and identifying next steps.

After each module

We provide a review letter containing reflections and recommendations. We follow this up with a review meeting with the leader.

Throughout and following the programme

We are always available to answer questions and provide advice - or simply to pop in for a coffee with either the leader or any of the participants. There is no charge for this because we view it as an essential after-sales service.

The current record

We have three brave individuals who have been through the Strategic Improvement Programme three times. One of these has been a team member once and the leader (of two different teams) twice. The other two as team member (in different teams) twice and as leader once. We (of course) were curious to find out what they thought, some comments being:

- Although the content is the same, the organisation and team are different and therefore so are the real-life issues that need dealing with
- Different parts of the contents are more or less relevant for the same reason
- It is good to pick up details and subtleties missed the first time around
- Previous experiences of implementing what is being learned are invaluable
- It's a completely different experience as leader
- The Key Concepts and underpinning philosophy really begin to make a difference
- It's more about the organisation and team than training

Records are there to be broken.