



The Big Blue Box Ltd

Confidence Building Measures

The move from being a good operational manager to becoming strategic and a leader is often difficult. In a new role, recently promoted managers may need to move from the certainty of day to day operations, when work comes to them, driven by others, to having to find a direction, set a priority and define a strategy. Confidence can be affected.

The Background

In our first conversation we explored H's background and career story so far. H is a bright young manager with high potential who has recently been moved from an operational role 'in the field' to a corporate role in head office. His confidence is clearly being affected.

'It really felt like a big mistake.... I used to know what I had to do every day.'

Good at practical projects H's reputation is of a trusted, logical, structured individual who is good at engaging with people. He has a natural tendency to identify his weaknesses but has not identified his particular strengths.

The Process

Our discussion continued to identify several 'dimensions' to H's skill set that appeared important. We constructed a series of 'sliding scales' against which H was able to undertake a simple self assessment.

'Reviewing these scales I can really see how 'operational' I am.'

This exercise was then extended into a survey for H to undertake as 'homework' amongst those who know him well, both in work and outside. This was designed to encourage him to further raise his self awareness, to become comfortable with his own skill set and 're-balance' his understated self assessment with feedback from trusted people.

In our second session H fed back his findings on this 'DIY Psychometric test'. He had been able to come to his own conclusions about his position on many of the scales he had used. In discussion we were also able to identify those 'scales' that were moving, and the speed and direction of travel and some other scales that he hadn't considered that would further develop his strategic capabilities. In discussion we were able to define what changes were possible.

'This is really useful; I can really see where I am and what I can do.'

The Outcomes

Suddenly after just two sessions, H was able to see himself realistically, to take responsibility for his ongoing development and identify where he may need further support.

These simple techniques gave H some real ownership of his 'assessment' and the incentive to make some clear and aggressive changes. It also helped H to establish open and honest relationships, introducing him to techniques for building relationships. His confidence improved and he no longer regretted his move into the head office.

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