

Phoenix rising from the ashes... how do you replace conflict with collaboration in 3 clear-cut steps?



Situation

Post-acquisition by a global pharmaceutical company, this leading biotech was under pressure to deliver the promise of their product pipeline.

A new governance model designed to expedite the development and commercialisation of their portfolio had been introduced but the new strategic leadership team, recruited to transition the product teams from a clinician-led structure to a functionally-independent leadership model, had met entrenched resistance to change throughout the organisation.

The most acute flashpoint lay between this new team and R&D Project Management. Initial efforts to ease tensions by clarifying roles and responsibilities had only inflamed emotions and heightened concerns. With the close collaboration of these two teams being a pivotal driver of change for the new structure, this conflict had the potential to jeopardise the future for the entire organisation and an urgent resolution was needed.

Approach

Mansfield Buchanan took a 3-step approach to help the teams forge the collaboration so urgently required. Working initially with each team separately, the 2 foundations steps involved:

- uncovering insight into the practical and emotional pressures that were driving attitudes and behaviour, and presenting our objective assessment of the steps that should be taken by that team to overcome the forces fuelling the conflict
- facilitating a team workshop to address each team's own sense of identity and value, focus on the business need and agree how to bridge the divide with the other team.

The final step was to bring the two teams together to debate and agree a unified approach to implementing the new model, and foster the collaborative drive needed to ensure success.

- Mansfield Buchanan facilitated both an initial ½ day joint meeting and a subsequent 2-day meeting. Using diverse techniques to diffuse initial tensions, we provided the impartial support needed to help the teams work together to agree how to embed the improvements and functional collaboration required to deliver results to all their Customers - from product teams to patients to the global investment community.

Finally, in order to strengthen the positive spirit that had begun to flourish and marginalise any residual negativity, Mansfield Buchanan designed and ran a creative team building event. Entitled 'Strictly Come Singing', the smiles, laughter and personal bonds that characterised this team activity were in stark contrast to the divisions encountered just a few weeks before.

Impact

By addressing the issues impeding engagement across this small but pivotal group of some 30 people, the full impact of their collective expertise and collaborative effort was swiftly focused on enabling the larger product teams to deliver the changes needed to optimise the value of this influential biotech's asset pipeline.

"A huge 'thank you' to you.
I am convinced that we
would not have got as far as
we did without your help
and unique style.

VP: Product Development Leadership

*"Thanks so much for your
expert facilitation of this
meeting. It was better
than we even could
have expected.*

VP: R&D Project Management

"6 months on ... the
teams have forged even
stronger links and are
now viewed by the
organisation (and the
teams themselves) as
having an effective and
collaborative partnership
that is helping to move
the business forward."

VP: Product Development Leadership

Mansfield Buchanan is a leading business consultancy specialising in insight driven engagement.
To find out how we can help your business, contact Annalise Cowley ac@mansfieldbuchanan.co.uk