



WHEN GOOD ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH

– the MANCAT story

MANCAT (Manchester College of Arts and Technology) is a large Further Education College with 17 sites across the city of Manchester. It works with a wide community of learners from the age of 16 upwards and offers a range of qualifications. In the spring of 2003 MANCAT was doing well but was – as is the case with so many other organisations – looking for excellence



THE START

In 2003, The Pacific Institute was working with the most improved secondary schools in Manchester. MANCAT was interested in whether a similar impact could be achieved in a much larger and much more complex organisation. The main objective of the project was to effect culture change across the college. Before implementing TPI programmes, the college already had a very strong mission to work with students to help them aspire, participate and achieve. Although the culture within the college was generally positive, there was a desire to find ways of promoting further the pursuit of excellence and success. This would be done by increasing the aspirations, expectations and efficacious thinking among college staff and students. Achieving this goal should ensure that MANCAT would progress from its official inspection assessment of “good” to “outstanding”.

THE PROCESS

The project began with a confidential staff Culture Survey in January 2004. The survey identified a collective staff vision and provided an analysis of staff views about the existing culture and the effectiveness of the organisation.

Results from the initial survey indicated that MANCAT's opinion of its own organisational culture was close to average, but that its vision was highly aspirational. The college saw this as a positive indicator, as the key behaviour changes needed to move from the current to the desired culture were identified.

Next step was for 120 senior staff to complete Investment in Excellence and for 40 of them to be trained as facilitators of the programme. Over 800 staff have now completed Investment in Excellence, and plans are in place for all staff to do the same. In addition, the 17 most senior leaders have

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MANCAT PRINCIPAL
PETER TAVERNOR

completed a Leadership Alignment process, helping them understand the effect that their leadership style was having on the behaviour and performance of their direct reports.

The application of The Pacific Institute's principles following the Investment in Excellence programme was so successful that the college decided to launch a programme following the same principles but designed for young people – Breakthrough to Excellence. 180 staff were trained as facilitators of the Breakthrough programme, and it was offered to all 16- and 17-year-olds on entry to the college.

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“I used to give up straight away. After Breakthrough I learnt that you don't give up – you try hard. I applied this to my life and now I get Distinctions.”

MANCAT STUDENT



We would like to share some stories...

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO PRESENT TO YOU THE FIRST ISSUE OF IMPRINT, The Pacific Institute's newsletter. In it you – our clients past and present, our facilitators and the thousands of you who have gone through one of the many Pacific Institute processes – will find a number of inspirational stories.

Over the last years The Pacific Institute has added enormously to its portfolio. In addition to our successful behaviour change programmes for performance improvement, we now also work with clients on organisational alignment, leadership effectiveness and culture change.

As a result of this, The Pacific Institute is currently working with an ever increasing number of clients in both the corporate and the public sectors. Our corporate clients include multinational organisations both in the UK and across Europe: financial organisations, pharmaceutical companies, heavy and light industries and retail organisations. In the public sector we work within education (schools and colleges), community regeneration, health, local government and criminal justice. We are also working intensively on developing whole-city approaches to our work.

It is some of the great stories from our many exciting projects that we would like to share with you. Please enjoy the read.

Neil Straker
Managing Director,
The Pacific Institute



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THE OUTCOMES

So what are the outcomes? In January 2008 a Culture Survey was carried out again. It showed a 35% improvement in the organisational culture – a substantial move towards the aspirational culture MANCAT is aiming for. In the last three years, more than 5,000 students have participated in Breakthrough. There are clear indications that this has helped with retention and performance of students, as well as with their approach to life in the college and beyond.

MANCAT PRINCIPAL PETER TAVERNOR IS DELIGHTED

“The journey with TPI has been the most productive I've ever encountered in terms of change transformation. The culture change has been remarkable.”

But what of the initial challenge? Has The Pacific Institute made a difference? Peter Tavernor is adamant that this has been a most worthwhile investment.

“During the last five years we've had 800 staff and 5,000 students go through The Pacific Institute's programmes, Investment in Excellence and Breakthrough. An absolutely huge amount has been achieved. We've gone from good to excellent which was our objective, and we are absolutely thrilled having achieved this goal. We're now 'outstanding' in OFSTED inspection terms. Our recent inspection in 2007 put us in the top 5% of colleges for inspection grades. More importantly, we're in the top 2% of added value to learner experience, a remarkable performance. An absolutely critical part of all this was to pursue the performance improvement approach offered by The Pacific Institute.”





THE FUTURE

What's next? The work with students continues on an ongoing basis, and a further 500 staff are still due to complete Investment in Excellence. MANCAT and The Pacific Institute are now getting together to work across the communities of Manchester. The goal is to reach and inspire thousands of residents with the STEPS programme and in doing that to transform the collective efficaciousness of a great city. Now that's a challenge!



Quotes from MANCAT students about what the Breakthrough programme has meant to them

"Breakthrough has helped me a lot, showed me how much I had been missing. It boosted my self-esteem and helped me a lot through college life. It helps me with everything. The more I see, the more I want to do."

"Since Breakthrough I can see myself get out of the limitations I used to give myself and be able to go past these."

"Breakthrough widened my horizons. My comfort zones have grown massively, and I am trying out things I never used to."

"Since Breakthrough I have found it a lot easier to do my work on time and do it really well. I also found that the idea of going to university did not intimidate me. Before, I was scared of the work that was involved."