

Strategic Improvement Programme

What is the Strategic Improvement Programme?

The *Strategic Improvement Programme* is much more than training. It is integrated with activity back in the workplace that has the potential to transform your organisation. Attendees will learn how to go about organisational improvement, develop and implement strategy, set up and run projects, improve systems and processes and much more.

The programme runs in a 3-day + 2-day + 2-day format and attendees are expected to carry out real pieces of work in between modules. These are not 'made up projects' but 'real work' - typically strategically important projects from the corporate plan. The difference is that the programme will help the attendees carry these out in a much more structured and effective fashion.

Who should attend?

The *Strategic Improvement Programme* is aimed specifically at Chief Executives, Directors and senior to middle managers who:

- (1) Lead or champion projects, i.e. either carry out project work themselves or delegate projects to others (Essential)
- (2) Are responsible for some form of 'routine operation' (Essential)
- (3) Run meetings (Essential)
- (4) Lead a team, i.e. have line management responsibility (Desirable)

If at all possible, people should attend in their natural work teams.

This Briefing Note contains

- What participants will be able to do as a result of the programme
- A brief overview of the programme
- What participants will be expected to do between modules
- What the organisation will need to do to support this way of working

What participants will be able to do as a result of the programme

Organisational improvement and strategy

- Understand how to go about organisational improvement
- Understand the underpinning philosophy
- Understand the link between philosophy, strategy, projects and routine operation
- Understand the link between organisational improvement and corporate governance
- Develop and implement strategy
- Adopt a consistent approach across the organisation
- Understand some of the jargon and fads that are around

Projects

- Develop projects in line with organisational strategy
- Establish an Annual Plan of all the projects they and their team need to carry out
- Steer projects
- Push project work 'down' the organisation
- Involve people in a systematic and participative manner
- Champion projects
- Lead projects
- Kick-start, refocus and review projects
- Use the **UIMPROVE** Projects Framework, associated methodologies and tools
- Work with a Facilitator

Processes

- Understand Systems Thinking
- Work on a process to analyse and improve it
- Measure how a process is performing
- Manage routine operation
- 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
- Model positive meeting behaviours
- Work with a Facilitator

A brief overview of the programme

Style and structure

What participants learn is practical, tried-and-tested and underpinned by good theory. The programme comprises three interlocking modules. Participants will need to attend the whole programme as the modules are not designed to stand-alone. Within each module there will be a mixture of:

- Input - both educational and skills-based
- Application of the learning to real-life situations
- Learning from what others are doing
- Surgery work
- Planning and review of real work undertaken between modules

Module 1 (3-days)

- Scoping session - getting focus on the programme
- Background to the ideas - a brief history of improvement in organisations
- Key Concepts - ideas that underpin the approach
- Tools for Planning and Organising
- Introduction to projects
- The difference between 'Steering' and 'Doing' projects
- The **UIMPROVE** Projects Framework
- Annual Planning
- How to set up individual projects
- How to carry out projects
- Kick-starting projects

Module 2 (2-days)

- Review session - what people have done since last time
- Effective meetings
- Techniques for Productive Meetings
- Tools for Evaluation and Decision Making
- Modelling positive meeting behaviours
- Making interventions in meetings
- How to develop, lay out and implement strategy
- Plan assignments for between now and the next module

Module 3 (2-days)

- Review session - what people have done since last time
- Introduction to processes and Systems Thinking
- How to improve a process
- Tools for Analysis
- Managing Routine Operation
- Project Refocus and Review
- Working with a Facilitator
- Review of the programme

Customisation

It is possible to customise the content and order of the programme to meet the specific needs of the organisation.

What participants will be expected to do between modules

Specific

- (1) Produce an 'Annual Plan' for their team**
This is a prioritised list of all project work they and their direct reports need to carry out over the next 12 months.
- (2) Produce project remits**
Participants will be expected to produce written remits for each project they are either leading or championing.
- (3) Kick-start projects**
Participants will be expected to set-up Kick-Starts for important projects. A Kick-Start is a structured event involving a wide variety of people to get the project off to the best possible start.

General

Participants will also be expected to:

- Improve their meetings through the use of better structure, tools and techniques
- Use project methodologies and tools
- Apply what they are learning to day-to-day situations
- Work with Facilitators

Planning and review

Planning and review of this activity is built into the programme.

What the organisation will need to do to support this way of working

First and foremost, the organisation must recognise that this programme is not about 'personal development'. Instead the programme represents a fundamental change in the way the organisation, as opposed to the individuals in it, works.

This will require some quite radical changes in approach to the management of:

- Strategy
- Projects
- Processes
- Meetings

Support from and a change in working practices at Chief Executive and Director level is a fundamental requirement.