



Organisational Raid on Standard Life Investments by Social Work Inspection Agency

Standard Life Investments, George Street, Edinburgh
Thursday 14 February 2008 – 10am to 3pm

APPROACHES TO PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Background to the Organisational Raid

Changing Lives – Five Change Programmes, One Agenda

Social work professionals, as well as service users, through five Change Programme Groups and Forums, are driving the Changing Lives programme forward.

These five change programmes were set up as mechanisms to help drive forward the change agenda. The work of each programme complements the others, and they form part of a single agenda striving to achieve the aspirations laid out in the Changing Lives report.

The five programmes are: Service Development; Leadership Management; Workforce; Practice Governance and Performance Improvement

The group of senior managers leading the Performance Improvement Programme were very keen to learn from successful organisations how performance management is undertaken within other organisations. They also wished to identify possible approaches to performance improvement that could potentially be applied with positive effect to social work services.

In coming together with the Scottish Leadership Foundation these managers were able to benefit from a learning experience by participating in an organisational raid hosted by an organisation that had a successful performance management culture in place.

The core aim of the visiting team was to structure their visit around a line of enquiry relating to 'Approaches to Performance Improvement'

The visiting team were interested in:

- Learning about the organisations approach to performance improvement
- Hearing how it was particularly geared to the issues faced by the organisation
- Getting a fresh view of what performance improvement might entail
- Identifying a range of approaches available
- Learning of strengths and weaknesses, problems encountered and ways of overcoming them
- Hearing of how success of approach has been assessed/ evaluated
- Considering what might be applicable to social work services

The visiting team also wanted to explore whether performance improvement was 'owned at all levels of the organisation', and whether a cultural change was required to successfully implement the current approach to performance improvement.

Standard Life Investments was identified as an organisation that appeared to have a very effective performance management structure in place.

They were approached as a potential host organisation and following an initial meeting, were delighted to share their learning and experiences with the Social Work personnel.

Background to Standard Life Investments

Standard Life Investments are an international financial services organisation offering award-winning solutions for global banking, healthcare, life & pensions requirements, and market-leading investment services.

They believe that their staff is their greatest asset. They also believe that each employee should be given the opportunity to make the most of their career and they encourage all members of staff to develop their personal potential.

Standard Life Investments have successfully introduced a three-step performance management process that they use to help their staff maximise their contribution to business success and realise their full potential by playing to their strengths, The three steps are:

Step One – Know Me

Step Two – Focus Me

Step Three – Recognise Me

These steps will be explored further below.

Introduction

Gordon Teasdale, Head of Human Resources at Standard Life Investments welcomed everyone and introduced his colleagues, Ann Currie and Carolyn Dyer, to the group. Each of the visit participants introduced themselves and gave a very brief summary of their role. On behalf of the Scottish Leadership Foundation, Liz Whyte expressed thanks to Standard Life Investments for agreeing to host the event and advised that, with everyone's agreement, at the end of the visit she would like to capture the learning of the day from each participant. Liz also advised that a write-up of the visit would also be undertaken and shared with everyone attending.

On behalf of the visiting group, Sandy Cameron, indicated that the overarching question for their visit was around the measuring of outcomes and how they were measured. Sandy went on to advise that around 130,000 people across Scotland were in social work employment – social workers were the smallest component with staff such as home helps being the biggest component. A number of issues were recognized within this sector which required step changes, such as – the workforce were not only diverse but there was no consistency in how they were managed in different locations; there was a feeling that staff were under pressure – what steps were required to change this; how people were trained; how the workforce is motivated/structured; and how services were governed. Sandy and his colleagues were keen to focus on outcomes and the important factors of those outcomes.

Gordon started the day off by outlining the programme for the visit and gave a brief overview of what each section would cover. A programme outline and a full list of participants are attached at Appendix 1. The initial Line of Enquiry for the visit is attached at Appendix 2.

REAL – Human Resources strengths based approach to strengths and engagement.

Gordon provided a brief overview of Standard Life Investments's performance management system – **REAL** - which is an acronym for:

R esourcing	The Talent Agenda
E ngagement	Giving People Meaning
A lignment	Doing What You Do Best to Deliver Success
L eadership	Leadership Your Way

Gordon explained that Standard Life Investments had started working with the Gallup Organisation around 20 years ago which led to the company fully embracing a talent management philosophy globally. Their focus is very much on getting the best talent for the organization and the Gallup approach underpins all that they do.

Resourcing – The Talent Agenda (The Gallup Path)

Ann Currie outlined the 'The Gallup Path' advising that this was developed through global research with over 100,000 clients. The path focuses on:

- **identifying the strengths of individuals** – right person = good organizational fit
- **having great managers** – being involved in recruitment; selecting for talent; defining the right outcomes; focusing on strengths and finding the right fit
- **engaging employees** - understanding staff – what motivates them; how do they want to be managed/recognized; understand them as individuals

Ann advised that these areas need to be effectively managed in order to achieve sustainable growth and profitability within the organization.

Additional information was provided on the Standard Life Investments selection process which led to a full discussion with all group members participating. This discussion covered areas such as: selection processes; keywords for attracting the right staff; identifying high achievers; identifying desired outcomes; focusing on people's talents; recognizing that money is not the only motivator and also recognizing that systems have to be aligned to outcomes you want to achieve.

Engagement – Giving People Meaning (The Gallup Q12)

The Gallup Q12 is a survey designed to measure employee engagement. This survey was the result of hundreds of focus groups and interviews. Researchers found that there were 12 key expectations, that when satisfied, form the foundation of strong feelings of engagement. More than 87,000 work units and 1.5 million employees have participated in the Q12 survey.

Standard Life Investments uses the Q12 survey annually to assess their employee engagement. The engagement index slots people into one of three categories:

- **Engaged employees** work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organisation forward.
- **Not-Engaged** employees are essentially "checked out". They are sleepwalking through their workday. They are putting in time, but not enough energy or passion into their work.

- **Actively Dis-engaged** employees aren't just unhappy at work; they are busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers undermine what their engaged co-workers accomplish.

The questions in the Q12 Index are:

- 1) Do you know what is expected of you at work?
- 2) Do you have the right materials and equipment to do your work right?
- 3) At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
- 4) In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
- 5) Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
- 6) Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
- 7) At work, do your opinions seem to count?
- 8) Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
- 9) Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
- 10) Do you have a best friend at work?
- 11) In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
- 12) In the last year, have you had opportunities to learn and grow?

Standard Life Investments split these questions into four sections to assess responses to:

- What Do I Get? Questions 1 and 2
- What Do I Give? Questions 3-6
- Do I Belong? Questions 7-10
- How Can We Grow? Questions 11-12

Gordon advised that their level of staff participation in the Q12 survey is around 90-95% and that this was achieved due to a good relationship with the Staff Association. He also advised that every staff member has a base salary, achieves a performance bonus based on outputs but has no limit on their earnings.

Gordon informed the group that a further set of business focused questions had been developed and together with the Q12 formed the Q20. He advised that the Q12 and Q20 created much more openness and sharing across the organisation.

The social work personnel reflected on how different the situation was in the public sector where an outcome agreement between central and local government was arrived at with local authorities then deciding on how they would meet/deliver key indicators.

Alignment - Doing What You Do Best to Deliver Success (Know Me, Focus Me, Recognise Me)

Gordon outlined the one/two/three Performance Management process which is used by Standard Life Investments to help staff maximize their contribution to business success and realize their full potential by playing to their strengths.

Step 1 **Know Me** is designed to encourage dialogue between managers and their people. Step one encourages the individual to share their knowledge, experience, skills and talents that they bring to Standard Life Investments and their aspirations and career goals.

Step 2 **Focus Me** builds on step one and is designed to enable the manager and his or her people to discuss and agree outcomes, measures of success and development needs. It is important that everyone knows what is expected of them and what measures will be used to assess their performance.

Step 3 **Recognise Me** builds upon step two and provides the process for regular review of performance throughout the year and leads to a final review, which in turn informs the reward process.-

Gordon also advised that each staff member undertakes a StrengthsFinder profile. The Theme Sequence report represents the 34 themes of talent, in the rank order revealed by the responses to the StrengthsFinder. Each person's Signature Themes, the five most dominant, are listed first.

The Theme Sequence can be helpful in exploring beyond the Signature Themes. By leveraging the themes of talent toward the top of the sequence, staff can enjoy personal and career success through consistent, near-perfect performance.

The themes towards the bottom of the sequence are likely to be less apparent in day-to-day behaviours. Sometimes they reflect what people don't enjoy or think about very much.

Gordon, Ann and Carolyn each shared their own StrengthsFinder profile with the group and a discussion took place on what the themes meant.

Each staff member also has a set of StrengthsFinders cards which are used to identify and build on strengths. These cards are designed to support staff in understanding and working with their strengths. Each card lists the following:

- The probable characteristics for each theme in terms of how the person might think, how they feel and how they might behave.
- Trigger questions that can be asked by both the manager and the individual to help prompt dialogue and ensure that the theme is considered in more detail and understood by both parties.
- How this theme may look – an example from Standard Life Investments and how a person experiences the thoughts, feelings and behaviour associated with that theme.

Each staff member undertakes this exercise once and is followed up with a coaching session with their HR consultant on how they can use and build on their strengths. A written report is then produced for each staff member based on the conversation on the StrengthsFinder report.

The Standard Life Investments staff emphasised that the focus is very much on the individual and identifying and recognizing strengths and talents.

Leadership - Leadership Your Way

There are clear guidelines around boundaries and accountabilities for staff but which allow staff members to really focus on their strengths. Staff are encouraged to have a sense of ownership and be confident enough to step into problem areas if required to do so.

Outcome agreements are in place for all staff and time is spent on defining the right outcomes and measures of success but always focusing on the strengths of the individual.

Staff are supported in a number of ways – effective line management; coaching from HR consultants and online tools such as ‘Stressfinder’ tool. Staff are also expected to know and understand the one/two/three Performance Management process.

Ann indicated that leadership was about really good discussions and communication with staff.

Key Learning from the Visit

The visiting group highlighted the following points as key learning from the visit:

- Being bold about change required
- Key issue about thinking about peoples talents and using them
- Personalisation of the workforce
- No compromise on talent recruitment
- The importance and input of HR staff
- Helping people to self assess
- Liberating people
- Getting buy-in at highest level
- Engaging with people who are driving forces of change
- Recognising that change does not happen overnight
- Understanding the purpose of the tools shown during the visit to achieve outcomes
- To question how bold can we afford to be

Standard Life Investments personnel found the visit fascinating, were very interested in hearing about the challenges and experiences within the Social Work environment and would be very interested to hear where they go to from here.

Summary

There is no doubt that Standard Life Investments and Social Work Services operate in very different environments. The measure of success for Standard Life Investments is sustainable growth and profitability. However, part of their success lies within their talent management philosophy and taking the time and effort to engage with each member of staff not just for organizational growth and sustainability but long term development and growth of each individual staff member.

Social Work Services operate very differently i.e. in a very highly regulated field, with a very diverse workforce, with no real consistency in management approaches; bureaucratic systems; staff unclear about boundaries and accountabilities and often staff feeling under pressure to perform differently but with very limited resources.

Throughout the visit the Social Work Services personnel fully engaged with the Standard Life Investments personnel and some very lively discussions took place on all aspects of the Standard Life Investments Performance Management Process and the realities of performance management within the social services care sector.

The discussions had been very useful to benchmark where the Social Services Care Sector was in terms of performance management. The visiting team really welcomed the opportunity to engage with a successful organisation from a very different environment from that in which they operate.

There was significant learning from the visit for each member of the group, further discussions would be on-going within the Social Services Care Sector relating to the opportunities and appropriateness of transferring some of the concepts, and approaches that they found most interesting into practice within their own organisations. Some areas that they indicated that they may explore further included:

- How to measure regulatory requirements v. performance management/achieving outcomes – what would be the impact on times, resources etc
- Personalisation of the workforce – outcome agreements
- How to avoid staff feeling under pressure
- How to motivate and structure the workforce
- Focusing on what is important on setting outcomes.

The Social Services personnel were very impressed with Standard Life Investments's Performance Management process and the way they engaged with their staff to ensure long term sustainability not only for the organisation but for staff also.

Standard Life Investments provided each member of the visiting group with a pack containing a range of their performance management tools. This pack contained the one/two/three Performance Management process; a range of manager booklets such as 'You as a People Manager'; 'You as a Coach'; Information on the Gallup Path and the Q12 tool; and information on the StrengthsFinder tool including copies of the profiles for Gordon, Ann and Carolyn. These documents are acknowledged as the source of some of the content of this write-up of the day.

This was a very informative day with learning opportunities for each member of the visiting group. Grateful thanks goes to Gordon and his colleagues at Standard Life Investments for their time, effort and input in making this such a successful visit.

Liz Whyte
Organisational Support Manager
Scottish Leadership Foundation
26 February 2008.

Organisational Raid

STANDARD LIFE INVESTMENTS

Attendees:

SLI:

Gordon Teasdale, Head of Human Resources
Ann Currie, HR Consultant
Carolyn Dyer, HR Consultant

Visitors:

Liz Whyte -	Organisational Support Manager, Scottish Leadership Foundation
Sandy Cameron -	Chair, Parole Board for Scotland and Chair of <i>Changing Lives</i> Performance Improvement Group
Nigel Henderson -	Director, PENUMBRA and co-Chair of <i>Changing Lives</i> Service Development Group
Richard Fowles -	Inspector, Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA)
Catherine Rainey -	Children, Young People and Social Care Directorate, Scottish Government
Andy Bruce -	Children, Young People and Social Care Directorate, Scottish Government

Schedule:

REAL Human Resources – A Strengths Based Approach
Introduction to Strengths & Engagement

Resourcing –	The Talent Agenda
Engagement -	Giving People Meaning
Alignment –	Doing What You Do Best To Deliver Success
Leadership –	Leadership Your Way

Line of Enquiry

APPROACHES TO PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Aims and Desired outcomes from the visit

To learn from successful organisations and identify possible approaches to performance improvement that could potentially be applied with positive effect to social work services

Including:

- To learn about the organisations approach to performance improvement
- To hear how it was particularly geared to the issues faced by the organisation
- to give us a fresh view of what performance improvement might entail
- to identify a range of approaches available
- to learn of strengths and weaknesses, problems encountered and ways of overcoming them
- to hear of how success of approach has been assessed/ evaluated
- to consider what might be applicable to social work services

Specific Areas within the topic to inquire about

Is performance improvement 'owned at all levels of the organisation', and was a cultural change required to successfully implement the current approach to performance improvement?

Including:

- Is it necessary for performance improvement to be owned at all levels
- Are there different versions/ visions of performance improvement presented to meet the needs of different parts/ levels of the organisation
- Were there issues - positive or negative- related to particular groups, and how were they captured or addressed
- If cultural change was required was it a large shift or part of ongoing change, and what were the key factors in achieving that cultural change

Questions for the host organisation

How do they focus on outcomes?

How do they empower their workforce?

What training in performance improvement do they provide?

What is the role of managers?

How do they sustain long-term commitment?

How did they introduce their system in the first place?

Information, areas of experience etc, that we would be willing to share with the host organisation

SWIA could offer the inspectorates view and knowledge, and we also have local authorities and voluntary sector who have experience of different delivery models. They will also see customers/clients in their own ways and might be able to offer a fresh perspective to the organisation. From the parole board you will see many sides of a situation in terms of views and performance levels!