

## HOLST SUPPORTS CULTURAL CHANGE WITH ITS PSYCHOMETRIC TOOLS, WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING SERIES



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### CHALLENGES

- Culture of poor communication
- Lack of transparent decision making
- Low priority given to people development

### STRATEGY

- Improve internal communication by implementing training and development workshops
- Engage in the development of existing employees using McQuaig
- Focus on continuous improvement using McQuaig for recruitment and selection.

### INTRODUCTION

The academic department at Nuffield is one of the largest of its kind, leading the world in reproductive health research.

When Lesa Levett joined Oxford University's Nuffield Department of Women's and Reproductive Health, she quickly realised there was a problem with the department's culture.

Researchers and medics felt restricted in the way they worked particularly when using the specialist equipment required for their research. Lesa quickly engaged her staff to understand the issues and the results showed a significant lack of trust:

"There was a lot of unhappiness, they didn't communicate very well, and people felt that they were underdeveloped and undervalued. My findings highlighted the lack of investment in many areas."

## PROCESS

Lesa's initial review was just the start of the process. As Lesa explains "I used McQuaig in my previous job and people were open to its use at Nuffield. For existing staff, I offered it as a development tool. We wanted staff to understand themselves better and felt that this in itself would lead them to feeling more valued."

The McQuaig Word Survey® was used to help existing staff understand their personality and behaviours, as well as their leadership capabilities.

Nuffield undertook the training provided by Holst to ensure the HR Team was up to speed to deliver in-depth feedback to staff, enabling them to help employees explore and understand their behaviours.

"We have now trained all our HR Team and they have their Level 2 McQuaig Accredited Interpreter and Level 3 Advanced McQuaig Interpreter qualifications to ensure that they are able to provide the highest standards of feedback and guidance to staff and managers."

The HR Team is now able to support staff in developing their personal development plans.

"The Holst Team is incredibly open and when we ask for help, they find appropriate, positive solutions. If we need additional staff trained, Holst assists. It is all included in our McQuaig licence."

Lesa then focused on the recruitment and selection process and found that the McQuaig Word Survey® is the 'go-to' report.

Lesa explains how it streamlined this process;

"The recruitment managers found it invaluable because it helped to generate interview questions and provided an insight into the individual prior to the interview. I personally like the interview questions and compare these against the job benchmark. I use a mixture of questions based on our core competencies together with McQuaig. We have found this really valuable in the whole process."

Lesa sums up the initial change:

"As a tool, it went hand in hand with my vision for the department"

What other measures were introduced to support the changes?

Fortnightly feedback helped Lesa understand where the pinch-points in the department were and where a manager might be struggling. The results were combined with training days involving strategy workshops. Selected staff were divided into groups to feedback on strategic changes.

"The workshops were powerful and helped to drive change"

"Lack of inclusive leadership was highlighted, with only senior leadership meetings conducted. Everyone wanted to collaborate with their team and be heard."

This led to the introduction of a completely new management structure. New working groups were created, focusing on people resources, research and education as well as a centralised executive team.

"Instead of the decisions being made solely by the departmental leaders, everyone is involved. Decisions are transparent with the minutes accessible to all"

Lesa started a working group to look at inclusivity and has developed a behaviour charter.

"Instead of addressing bad behaviour when it happens, the behaviour charter sets out what we want. When we recruit with McQuaig, we can identify what we want to see in our candidates."

Lesa is looking to embed the charter and has embraced the opportunities to change culture with Holst through staff training.

**"The training, provided by Holst, helped staff understand their McQuaig profiles which in turn helped them to understand their colleagues too. It highlighted the similarities and differences in how we can work, communicate and respect each other better."**



## WHAT OTHER WAYS HAS HOLST SUPPORTED YOU?

Holst also provided bespoke training;

“We consulted Holst on our wellbeing objectives and values and they designed a bespoke training plan and ran workshops during our wellbeing week. My team really enjoyed it and found it so engaging”.

Looking to the future, the pandemic highlighted how important it is to consider employee wellbeing. The workshops during their wellbeing week had excellent uptake.

During lockdown, Lesa continued to focus on nurturing staff as a priority. As restrictions ease, Lesa wants to continue to bring staff together and wellbeing is an obvious starting point. Lesa wants Holst to play a significant part in this.

“Continuing to improve communication and support is

incredibly important. As staff want more flexibility to work from home, our focus is to help them to become more resilient in this changing work environment.” We plan to use subsequent training workshops to support them in managing their mental and physical wellbeing.”

## RESULT

Over the last four years, Lesa has seen significant change and Holst has become an important member of her Change Management Team.

“We see Holst as part of our organisation. Holst has enabled us to provide the developmental opportunities that weren't there before. We are more transparent and actively encourage our staff to work together; this is the culture we want at Nuffield. Holst supports us to help create this improved culture.”

Since introducing the new behaviour charter, the change in the department has been very positive. For Lesa, the change in culture is now part of Nuffield's continuous improvement plan.

**Lesa describes her relationship with Holst in one word**  
“Trust.”



Our reports give a snapshot of how a person will perform in a role. It will show you how to motivate them and tell you if they are a good fit the role you are hiring for. You will gain more insight than you get from a CV and be supported with behavioural-based interview questions.