

Balfour Beatty Inclusive Leadership

Case Study

The infrastructure sector faces an unprecedented challenge of skill shortages, lack of diversity and a need to innovate. The Clear Company worked collaboratively, creating a strong partnership that delivered a scalable, impactful solution supporting Balfour Beatty to deliver an Inclusive Leadership programme - whilst also adapting to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Inclusive Leadership

The Clear Company have extensive experience of delivering global inclusive leadership programmes in a variety of formats including coaching, virtual delivery and workshop events in order to align leaders to a common inclusion agenda. Engaging sessions that draw on personal experiences, progressive practice and the value of inclusion are delivered to clients.

Balfour Beatty wished to address the following objectives with the inclusive leadership programme:

- Understand the crucial role of the leader in building an inclusive culture.
- Understand the strategic value and importance of inclusive leadership.
- Explore D&I topics in a challenging and thought-provoking way.
- Understand how to remove barriers to under-represented groups.
- Understand and recognise institutional naivety and its impact on people.
- Explore how bias can influence inclusion and exclusion.
- Build confidence to enable leaders to talk about D&I.
- Explore practical actions you can take away as well as how to take accountability for the inclusion journey.

Current State Assessment

In advance of the workshops, the Clear Company team worked closely with the team at Balfour Beatty to ensure that the leaders were informed and engaged through advance communications and pre-work. Knowledge sharing around topics such as the importance of inclusive leadership, holding inclusive conversations and the impact of non-inclusive behaviour took place.

- In-depth research was undertaken to influence the design of the Leading Inclusively programme. The research explored existing knowledge levels, current inclusion practices, levels of inclusive behaviour and views on the current leadership shadow across the organisation.
- Stakeholder interviews were carried out by experienced Clear Company consultants including the business diversity and inclusion sponsor, senior leaders from the eight business units, HR Directors and any diversity and inclusion sponsors or advocates. This established the levels of understanding and accountability for inclusion, cultural differences between business areas and inclusion aspirations.
- The Clear team designed a flexible programme allowing for tailored content to be delivered each leadership team recognising the uniqueness of each team journey towards a more inclusive culture.



Adaptability

- The programme accommodated different ability levels and individual needs throughout. The experienced facilitators tailored each workshop to the audience both in advance and also, in the moment responding to the virtual room.
- Face to face facilitated workshops were agreed and booked in to start in early 2020. However, following the first Covid-19 lockdown in March, the Clear Company took their face-to-face workshops into a virtual classroom, ensuring that the planned programme was able to continue.

- Two key steps were followed in the initial sessions to ensure the success of the workshops: Firstly, the creation of a safe environment in which leaders were free to learn and ask questions without boundaries - knowing that all judgement would be left at the door. Secondly, time was allowed for leaders to share their hopes and fears, so that the highly experienced facilitators could address individual coaching needs throughout the workshop.
- The Clear Company leadership facilitators with specific expertise in developing and coaching leaders delivered sessions in two modules including topics such as the impact of non-inclusive behaviours, understanding bias & privilege and the role of empathy in leading inclusively - as well as key topics such as inclusive design, working with suppliers and leading inclusively through COVID-19.

Impact



Attended by
156 people

The Clear Company inclusive leadership workshops ran from **June to December 2020** with **15 cohorts** totalling **156 people** attending **2 sessions of 3.5-hour each** with additional pre- and post-work.



2 cohorts took further sessions

In addition, **two of the cohorts selected to undertake further sessions** to expand their development and understanding.

Each team was **supported to create an inclusive leadership charter** which has shaped leadership plans, informed the overall Balfour Beatty strategy and **facilitated the incorporation of inclusive practices into 2021 business planning.**

Leader Feedback

"I have shifted my mental model of the world - I am looking at everything in a different way."

"It is my job to make D&I important."

"Is this happening in my team? Just because it's not happening to me, doesn't mean it's not happening."

"Our D&I antennae are up and active!"

"The team really valued both sessions and took an awful lot away with them both personally and collectively as a team, so thank you all."

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