



Training Attention Case Study Modelling Group Dynamics

What did the client want to have happen?

This case study is based on a dynamic manager who had a team whom he described as lacking initiative.

What did we do?

Caitlin modelled how he worked with his team during a meeting to help him discover more effective ways of motivating them. Caitlin was able to observe difficulties in the communication process.

During the meetings there was a pattern pauses before answers from the team and increased questions from the manager. As the manager asked more questions the team tended to disengage and became silent.

The system was then explored through metaphor - what was happening for the manager when asking a question and for the team when processing the question and developing their answers?

For the team, metaphorically the manager would throw a boulder of a question into a millpond, and they would start to allow the waters to clear in order for an answer to emerge.

However, before it had cleared the manager would drop in another, larger, more directive boulder causing more ripples. After a few of these the waters were so murky they could not see an answer so they disengaged. Using this metaphor, it was possible to identify and give new meaning to the silence as the team were thinking.

However, that silence became increasingly uncomfortable for the manager whose 'grains' of ideas grew to boulders inside him until they could be released, such that they 'burst out' of him into the millpond.

What happened next?

He resolved to write down his ideas while others were thinking so as not to disturb them and they found that talking through their thinking helped to keep him involved



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systems thinking in practice

and comfortable until their answers were clearly formulated and they could express their ideas at their own pace.

If you would like more information about this process or how we could work with your teams please contact Nancy on nancy@trainingattention.co.uk.