

## CASE STUDY: Supporting the implementation of a New Operating Model (NOM) in the Wake of the Big Four...

Summary of our work with a large, European manufacturing company supporting the change leadership of the Sales & Marketing Division

**Consultants:** Esther Cameron and Nick Mayhew | **Keywords:** Organisational Transformation, Change leadership, Capacity Building, New Operating Model, Cultural Change, Impact of Big Four, Sales & Marketing function. | **Contact email:** enquiries@integralchange.co.uk

### Description of the Work

Our assignment was to support the leadership of a European sales and marketing function, employing 2,000 people and responsible for sales of around \$2.5 billion per annum, to implement a new operating model (NOM) while building new team and individual leadership capacities in the process.

More specifically, our task was to bring our change leadership and capacity-building skills to complement the structural intervention of a 'Big Four' consultancy, which had devised - and partially launched - the NOM.

We were called in just as this consultancy was packing up to leave by agreement with senior leadership. Many felt that too much was being left undone or unexplained, and experienced various degrees of overwhelm and abandonment as the programme was handed over to the organisation and the scale of the continuing change ahead began to dawn.

Our work lasted 18 months and involved delivering approx. 200 days' consulting and coaching work, covering the following **activities**:-

- advising the 2 Sales & Marketing Directors and 7 of their direct reports on their leadership of change
- supporting the above to establish and develop their new management teams
- conducting periodic diagnostic reviews and recommendations to 'unblock' stuckness and facilitate progress
- designing & facilitating workshops to support and review a 3-month NOM pilot project
- 1:1 coaching & change leadership development for the Sales & Marketing Directors, Sector Leads and some of their direct reports
- resolving dysfunctional relationship dynamics, where these were blocking progress
- co-designing and co-facilitating Sector launch/engagement events for 40-80 stakeholders
- embedding a new set of corporate values, through integration in the above work

### Outcomes

These included:-

- Sales Directors supported to remain effective and expand their change leadership skill-sets, despite a fast-changing operating context making gruelling demands
- a successful NOM Pilot project – re-aligning formerly competitive relationships, to become mutually supportive
- an effective senior management team established, able to work through potentially divisive issues, while also growing mutually-supportive behaviours
- more empowered, aware & skilful Sector Leads – increasingly able to manage their dispersed teams well

- resilient and productive new Sector Management Teams, embracing new virtual working – guided by a clear purpose, journey plan and priorities, good quality governance and team behaviour ‘charters’
- successful integration into the business of a new, cross-team process function
- increasingly engaged & accountable employees – understanding their role in the NOM, and with healthy relationships with their line-management and relevant stakeholders
- increased ‘whole system’ awareness across the Sales and Marketing function, resulting in more efficient activity and improved relationships between colleagues & key stakeholders

## Our Consulting Offer & Feedback



The work described above can be related to our unique ‘3 in 1’ change consulting offer, as follows:-

### 1) ‘Advisory Partnering’ for line- and HR/OD- leaders

Advisory Partnering involves our offering next step advice and guidance to leaders as they find their way through a complex change process, using our Integral Change Leadership Pathway as a reference point.

By building strong, ‘high challenge, high support’ relationships with our principal clients - the two, joint Sales & Marketing Directors and seven of their Sector Lead reports – we served as sounding board, truth-teller and change advisor as new management teams, strategies and behaviours went ‘live’.

*“We usually concentrate on the ‘What?’... We hired you to help us focus on the ‘How?’ and some of the ‘Why?’ of the change process. Much of the value of the work was in making us aware of others’ perceptions of how we were implementing things and adapting this to become more effective.”*

**Sales Director**

*“I liked the ‘advisory partnering’ concept. It worked well for me having a good balance between highlighting the areas that needed improvement, but equally truthful around the areas of strength.”*

**Sector Lead**

*“You have, on many occasions, pulled me and the team back to first assess, and then start to do. I run the risk of being somewhat ahead of the pack; you made sure that I took everybody with me.”*

**Sector Lead**

### 2) Joined-up, ‘minimal interventions’ to support the change process

The intention of our joined-up, minimal interventions is to nudge individuals and teams in the right direction through providing ‘just enough’ input and support, threaded into day to day activities and meetings – rather than creating a change industry that can feel irrelevant and overblown. Where possible, these interventions are offered as customised, multi-media ‘change products’, which clients can use to sustain progress after we have gone.

Typical examples of such interventions here included: short diagnostic reports & allied ‘Red Flag’ sessions; offering bespoke frameworks/score-cards into management team meetings to support particular change objectives; challenging proposed agendas and plans, as required; intervening to resolve dysfunctional team- & inter-personal dynamics; co-designing and facilitating Sector launch events for 5 different sectors...

Customised 'change products' used included:-

- What Makes for a High-Performing Team? A scorecard which enables teams to self-rate their progress towards becoming a high performing team
- Five Leadership Qualities + Change Leadership Pathway: Two, simple frameworks and an accompanying self-assessment checklist to guide change leaders in their decision-making
- Journey Plan Framework: A leadership tool to support engagement and decision-making re. progress and next steps
- 'Leading Through Uncertainty' Checklist: providing support and skill self-assessments for Sales Directors and their Sector Leads as they negotiated a highly uncertain operating environment
- Facilitating Virtual Teams video + slide-pack: 3-minute video and accompanying material to support Sector Leads and their management teams in facing up to the challenges of virtual teamwork.

*"The best way of describing how this work was done is the fact that you have first listened very carefully and then come up with a tailor-made approach. That is valued a lot."* **Sector Lead**

*"The minimal intervention approach takes a little time to adjust to since this proposition is quite unique compared with normal consulting styles. However, once recognised and understood it is effective. It ensures the leadership and accountability remains with the leader and that advantages the organisation in the longer term."* **Sales Director**

### 3) 'Just-in-time' skilling & capacity-building

Just-in-time skilling and capacity-building differs from standard programmes of leadership development and coaching in that it's delivered in consumable, but high protein 'chunks', alongside our advisory working and in relation to the live change issues our clients are facing. This grows connectivity and organisational capacity generally, as well as individual skill-levels.

Here this work involved: delivering 1:1 'live' change leadership skilling across 3 levels: Sales Director, Sales Sector Lead & Commercial Managers; providing team coaching as management teams crafted plans, set out priorities and engaged stakeholders; and, devising and embedding innovative employee engagement processes.

In support of our 1:1 coaching work, we used a diagnostic + feedback tool based on the 'Five New Change Leadership Skills' described in the new edition of Esther's best-selling book *Making Sense of Change Management*. This supported a considerable leadership stretch for many of the leaders we were working with.

*"Individual coaching was clear, concise, tangible and always well quantified with examples. It was direct at times but always objective and having worked on the areas highlighted I feel a more rounded and proficient leader."* **Sales Director**

*"I like the way you tailored your work to me as a person needing to become a leader and not me as a manager learning tricks...You helped me gain insight into the consequences of my behaviour and language as a leader trying to manage new/diverse and multi-location teams... using what was there and trying to influence, rather than drastically change, me."* **Sector Lead**

*"It is now, with hindsight, that I realise how much was contained within your guidance and the way it was delivered. On a personal level, I hear your voice at my shoulder when I am dealing with certain situations and there is no doubt that I have changed my style as a result of the work done with you."* **Sector Lead**

## How We Complement the ‘Big Four’ Approach

Because of its natural bias towards strategic, structural change and lack of attention to human process, a ‘Big Four’ intervention runs the risk of bypassing the client’s leadership altogether and missing the engagement it requires to gain traction. We believe that our distinctive consulting approach, values and relational skills enable us to offer leaders throughout the organisation much needed support following, or alongside, such an intervention.

As described above, we offer a combination of ‘advisory partnering’, ‘joined-up, minimal interventions’ and ‘just-in-time skilling & capacity-building’ – which, our experience shows, delivers the leadership confidence, whole organisational traction, and attention to ‘on-the-ground’ progress that makes all the difference between success and failure.

The table below gives a more detailed sense of the complementarity involved:

Potential ‘Big Four’ Impact	Integral Change Value-Add
Leaders feeling defensive, uncertain & potentially disempowered by a transformation ‘steam-roller’ driven by consultants.	Leaders supported to face the reality of the change agenda - and their own fears and competence gaps - and to bring more authority and confidence to both delivering real change and contributing to decisions about timescales and next steps.
Team members struggling to make sense, feel motivated and/or ask the taboo questions, particularly where the details ‘on the ground’ are not working as leaders and consultants assume.	We create safe spaces for feedback and discussion of progress so that people can flag what is and isn’t working and suggest what to do about it - and senior leaders can then respond constructively.
Key organisational interfaces becoming dysfunctional as they are reorganised - while consultant-driven ‘project management’ overlooks the importance and/or complexity of this.	Our ‘whole system’ perspective enables us to spot quickly where fragmentation threatens success; and our ways of working through quality relationships enable us to support practical solutions that help address important details, while building organisational integration and capacity.
Organisational politics and power-plays dramatically increasing as people feel loss of control.	We have the skills to attend to relationship breakdown early, while ensuring that leadership communications and engagement activities offer as much clarity and direction as possible.
New ‘corporate values’ are often defined and talked about, but remain as words on a page.	We ensure new value sets are integrated into day 2 day transformation and business activity, through our partnering, intervention and coaching work.
A sense of institutionalised helplessness can be engendered by ‘high performing’ consultants.	Our ‘partnering’ style and more generous way of working ensures that we are continually transferring skills and building capability - so individuals and teams are well set to take pride in sustaining progress as we step away.
A dip in energy and confidence when the consultants leave – “like the batteries being removed”	We support leaders and teams to develop enduring capabilities and understanding, and to self-manage progress, such that engagement levels remain high after we’ve gone.

### About Integral Change Consulting Ltd:

Integral Change Consulting Ltd was established in January 2010, and brings together over 30 years’ organisation change experience and knowledge by joining the established practices of change consultants Esther Cameron and Nick Mayhew.

We offer a uniquely joined-up, ‘3 in 1’ service as described above. In this, we are responding to the heightened pressure throughout most organisations to change rapidly what isn’t working, and to maximise the value-add from consultancy-suppliers.

Our combined talents and powerful partnership working - together with our established associate networks - offer clients a very strong, wide-ranging and ‘complete’ change consultancy service, with the potential to respond to many different client situations and needs.