



Useful and Usable

Previous articles have focused on the importance of action in the learning process.

What impact does this bias towards action have on our approach to management training, and how do we ensure that our delegates really do take action in between seminars? If we expect busy senior managers to act, it must be immediately apparent to them that the tools they have been given are both useful and usable.

Usable means that our delegates should be able to use what they have been shown in a work context, which often means under pressure. For this reason, simplicity is at the heart of all we do. As Philip Baker (Planning Director at Banks Developments) says, Governing Change “cuts away the jargon management development can sidetrack participants into.” In the heat of many management situations there is no time to remember the 13 golden steps, or 9 key secrets of this or that. Tools must be straightforward.

Simplicity is only half of the equation, however. For managers to take action they must also see that what they are being told to do is useful: in other words, that it works and is relevant to the live issues they face in the workplace. The tools they are given must be practical. “How to manage and motivate is the crux of this programme,” explains Banks Developments’ Project Director Barney Pilgrim, “and how is the operative word.”

Finally, for managers to continue using the tools they have been given they need to see that what they are doing is not only practical, but that it produces results. “When implementing change, one’s instinct is to think the conversations around it are not going to be pleasant or easy, but with Governing Change training you have the armoury to make it work effectively,” adds Barney Pilgrim, “some situations which I would have viewed as difficult in the past I now look forward to.”

Kevin Yates, MD of Mitchell Phoenix sums up our approach: “The questions we apply to the ideas we work with are how accessible, how useful, how transferable to the workplace?”