

The Principles Underlying Mitchell Phoenix' Approach

Over 20 years of client work Mitchell Phoenix' approach has been constantly refined in the pursuit of a single goal: the creation of results in the client's business. This principle is the foundation upon which our programmes are built, and it is in the light of this principle that all other decisions about course content, structure and facilitation are taken.

This document is designed to answer two questions: *what* are those results, and *how* are they created?

Principle 1: Create Results

Mitchell Phoenix programs run a day a month for between four and six months. In the month-long gaps between seminars delegates return to work and apply the concepts from the program to the challenges they face in the workplace, and create results. At the start of the subsequent seminar, each delegate gives a three minute formal business presentation highlighting what they did and what the results were.

The results delegates create impact on three levels: the individual, their team and the whole organisation.

Individual Results

As delegates review and extend their use of the leadership and management concepts explored on their programme, they generate results for themselves, which range from bottom line contribution to more time, greater levels of influence, enhanced reputation, higher levels of confidence, stronger motivation, and more assured decision-making.

Team Results

When the principles begin to be disseminated among a team, this leads to the adoption of a common management language and practice, ensuring stronger communication, higher levels of engagement, greater cohesion, more effective meetings, and improved results.

Organisation-Wide Results

As teams begin to embody strong leadership and management principles, the culture required to support improved business performance emerges.

Example Organization, HSBC: from 1992 Marcus Gregson, then Chairman of HSBC Private Bank, used Mitchell Phoenix to build a robust management culture that would support the level of growth and sophistication required to be successful in their market. Paul Smith in the UK and Stuart Taylor in the Channel Islands continued this investment, with delegates attending both public and in-house programmes up to and including 2011.

"Mitchell Phoenix assisted in creating a common management culture, a greater focus on results, heightened awareness on adding value, much greater focus on planning and preparedness, more focused communications and ultimately, increased effectiveness within the business."

**Stuart Taylor, Managing Director,
HSBC Private Bank CI**

Sample results from Mitchell Phoenix Programmes:

Maximising Employee Engagement

Using material from the programme, a manager ran a meeting on how to improve communication in her department. Emboldened by the environment the manager created around the meeting, the administration assistant commented that she had never had clear direction on what was required of her in her role. Subsequently the manager ran a mini appraisal with the assistant exploring how she could contribute more fully to the department. As a result of this, the manager reported the assistant has now taken on extra responsibilities and is more motivated, while the executives have more time to devote to their core activities.

**Improves Employee Engagement ---
Maximises Employee Engagement**

Principle 2: Direct Transfer of Learning to the Workplace

Placing the emphasis firmly on the creation of results means that the content of Mitchell Phoenix programmes must be robust, practical and effective for busy people working in complex environments – or our delegates would tell us at the very next seminar. This means that every leadership and management idea on every day of every one of our programmes has been pressure-tested by thousands of managers.

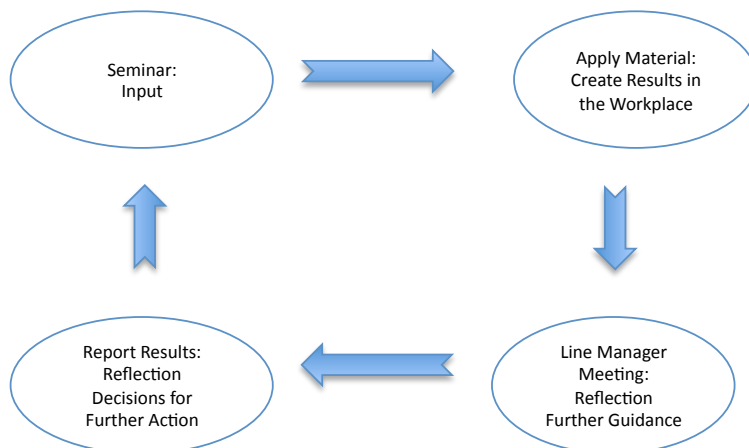
As Mitchell Phoenix' material has evolved over the years, we have taken inspiration from the senior managers we meet every day on our programmes, and our consideration is always, *if we include a new piece of management thinking in the course, what will they do with it the next day back in their workplaces?*

“A 6 month Mitchell Phoenix management programme that, frankly, changed my life. It broadened my outlook and since completing it my enthusiasm soared and the techniques he showed us to deal with difficult or sensitive management challenges have been invaluable to me, and of course my business.”

Ian Ford, Managing Director, Watts Group

Principle 3: Cumulative Experiential Learning

Programmes run a day a month for between 4 and 6 months to provide managers with opportunities to apply the material, and create results.



Principle 4: Expert Facilitation

A process of this complexity, which balances manager-led application of material with trainer-led input and reflection, places significant demands not only on the delegates, but also on the facilitator.

In our experience, only seminar leaders who are full-time Mitchell Phoenix employees can ensure consistent results at an individual, team and organisational level.

Sample results from Mitchell Phoenix Programmes:

Driving Process Improvement

In the month between seminars 3 and 4, a manager ran a meeting to find ways of cutting down on review points. Working with his team, he found a number of processes and behaviours that could be quickly streamlined, and reported to the group that as a result of this the number of review points had been halved. He went on to say that the programme had equipped him with the skills and confidence to drive a number of initiatives like this, and because of that his boss was now displaying stronger confidence in him, and providing him with more opportunities to influence the senior team.

Critically evaluates self and others against leading standards --- Drives performance against leading standards

The Interface with the Client Business's Values and Competencies

Any large organisation faces the challenge of embedding its values and competencies such that they are visible, vibrant and consistent from the top down, at all levels, over the long term, fostering a culture which supports strong business performance.

Our approach leaves nothing to chance. On a programme that runs a day a month for six months, there are five periods between the seminars in which managers are asked to apply the material to the challenges they face back in the workplace and generate results.

The experience of creating these results shapes new, more effective ways of working – at the heart of which are the values and competencies the client business seeks to embed. The results featured in the right-hand column of this document were all reported on a high potential, first-line manager programme Mitchell Phoenix ran for one of our clients. The red text below each one maps it onto their Leadership Competency Framework.

Mitchell Phoenix and the Wider Field of Management Thinking

Mitchell Phoenix' approach, which has evolved over 20 years of client work, does not fit neatly into any single model of learning and development in the workplace, but rather shares similarities with a number of strands of thought. Two significant parallels are outlined below.

Behaviourist / Cognitivist Thinking*

Mitchell Phoenix' programmes presuppose that there are certain principles of leadership and management with which managers have a relationship, and that the quality and depth of a leader's understanding of these principles, and their skill in applying them in the workplace, will underpin their success. This mirrors aspects of behaviourist / cognitivist thinking in that it assumes that there is something external to managers of which they should be aware, and against which they should benchmark their performance.

Constructivist / Situationist Thinking*

However, the assumption that managers' experiences form their outlook and behaviour aligns more closely with constructivist / situationist thinking, as does the emphasis on application of the material in the workplace, the delegate's free choice in how the material is applied, the need for reflection on previous practice, and the focus on repetition.

Example: The result on the right shows how these two strands of thought combine. There is a principle: that leaders should create an environment in which others can excel. The manager then uses tools from the programme to further deepen her engagement with it, and create results in the workplace.

Sample results from Mitchell Phoenix Programmes:

Creating An Environment In Which Others Can Excel

A manager had a member of staff whose day-to-day contribution to the team was not as valuable as it could have been. The manager resolved to raise the member of staff's level of performance:

1. The manager ran a brainstorm on improving performance in a certain area, at which the member of staff in question had one of the best ideas. The manager took care to praise the member of staff for his contribution, sufficiently emboldening him to volunteer to monitor the project he had suggested.

2. Some weeks later, building on the success of the brainstorm and the subsequent growth of the member of staff's confidence, the manager asked the member of staff to work with a colleague on how to improve a particular process. The improvements they developed were so successful the manager proposed that these improvements be rolled-out across the business. This further strengthened the member of staff's confidence, raising his level of performance in all areas.

**Actively manages performance
--- Creates a high performance culture**

As defined by Harrison, R. (2009) *Learning and Development*, London: CIPD. ISBN-10: 1843982161 ch.4