

Strategic Improvement Programme

What is the Strategic Improvement Programme?

The *Strategic Improvement Programme* is much more than training. It is integrated with activity back in the workplace that has the potential to transform your organisation. Attendees will learn how to go about organisational improvement, develop and implement strategy, set up and run projects, improve systems and processes and much more.

The programme runs in a 3-day + 2-day + 2-day format and attendees are expected to carry out real pieces of work in between modules. These are not 'made up projects' but 'real work' - typically strategically important projects from the corporate plan. The difference is that the programme will help the attendees carry these out in a much more structured and effective fashion.

There is an optional fourth module covering the use of data. Sometimes we recommend that this is diaried to follow shortly after the first three modules. On other occasions we might suggest leaving a good few months after Module 3 before deciding whether or not to go ahead with Module 4.

Who should attend?

The *Strategic Improvement Programme* is aimed at the 'top tiers' of the organisation specifically at Chief Executives, Directors and senior to middle managers who:

- (1) Lead or champion projects, i.e. either carry out project work themselves or delegate projects to others
- (2) Are responsible for some form of 'routine operation'
- (3) Run meetings
- (4) Lead a team, i.e. have line management responsibility

This Briefing Note contains

- What attendees will be able to do
- A brief overview of the programme
- What participants will be expected to do between modules
- What the organisation will need to do to support this way of working
- Parallel activity
- Data - the optional module
- Ongoing support from the UIC

What attendees will be able to do

Organisational improvement and strategy

- Understand how to go about organisational improvement
- Understand the underpinning philosophy
- Understand the link between philosophy, strategy, projects and routine operation
- Understand the link between organisational improvement and corporate governance
- Develop and implement strategy
- Adopt a consistent approach across the organisation
- Understand some of the jargon and fads that are around

Projects

- Develop projects in line with organisational strategy
- Establish an annual plan of all the projects they and their team need to carry out
- Steer projects
- Push project work 'down' the organisation
- Involve people in a systematic and participative manner
- Champion projects
- Lead projects
- Kick-start, refocus and review projects
- Use the UIMPROVE Projects Framework, associated methodologies and tools
- Work with a Facilitator

Processes

- Understand Systems Thinking
- Work on a process to analyse and improve it
- Measure how a process is performing
- Manage routine operation
- Set up day-to-day work so that it runs smoothly

Meetings

- Run effective meetings
- Use tools and techniques in meetings
- Ensure balanced contribution and participation at meetings
- Be aware of how their behaviour affects meetings
- Model positive meeting behaviours
- Work with a Facilitator

A brief overview of the programme

Style and structure

What participants learn is practical, tried-and-tested and underpinned by good theory. The programme comprises three interlocking modules. Participants will need to attend the whole programme as the modules are not designed to stand-alone. Within each module there will be a mixture of:

- Input - both educational and skills-based
- Application of the learning to real-life situations
- Learning from what others are doing
- Surgery work - we will use our extensive experience to answer any tricky questions
- Planning and review of real work undertaken between modules

Module 1 (3-days)

- Scoping session - getting focus on the programme
- Background to the ideas - a brief history of improvement in organisations
- Key Concepts - ideas that underpin the approach
- Tools for Planning and Organising
- Introduction to projects
- The difference between 'Steering' and 'Doing' projects
- The UIMPROVE Projects Framework
- Annual Planning
- How to set up individual projects
- How to carry out projects
- Kick-starting projects

Module 2 (2-days)

- Review session - what people have done since last time
- How to develop, lay out and implement strategy
- Effective meetings
- Techniques for Productive Meetings
- Modelling positive meeting behaviours

Module 3 (2-days)

- Review session - what people have done since last time
- Introduction to processes and Systems Thinking
- How to improve a process
- Tools for Analysis
- Managing Routine Operation
- Project Refocus and Review
- Working with a Facilitator
- Review of the programme

What participants will be expected to do between modules

Specific

Produce an 'Annual Plan' for their team - This is a prioritised list of all project work they and their direct reports need to carry out over the next 12 months.

Produce project remits - Participants will be expected to produce written remits for each project they are either leading or championing.

Kick-start projects - Participants will be expected to set-up Kick-Starts for important projects. A Kick-Start is a structured event involving a wide variety of people to get the project off to the best possible start.

General

Participants will also be expected to:

- Apply what they are learning to day-to-day situations
- Improve their meetings through the use of better structure, tools and techniques
- Use project methodologies and tools
- Work with Facilitators
- Act as advocates for the approach

What the organisation will need to do to support this way of working

First and foremost, the organisation must recognise that this programme is not about 'personal development'. Instead the programme represents a fundamental change in the way the organisation, as opposed to the individuals in it, works. At a senior level, this also means a shift from working according to personal preferences to working in a standardised way across the organisation - the job of the senior managers is to set these standards.

This will require some quite radical changes in approach to the management of:

- Strategy
- Projects
- Processes
- Meetings

Support from and a change in working practices at Chief Executive and Director level is a fundamental requirement.

Parallel activity

To maximise the benefits of the programme a pool of Facilitators needs to be developed in the organisation. As a key thrust of the *Strategic Improvement Programme* is the need to carry out real work between modules (and, of course, on an ongoing basis once the programme has finished), the use of a Facilitator is essential for some of these.

Data - the optional module

One of the things that the programme highlights is the importance of the use of data in the organisation. This applies to data for the purposes of strategy, projects and Routine Operation. Some organisations commit to this module when they are first planning the programme. Others prefer to wait. The data module is 3 days and contents include:

- Dr Deming's Experiment on the Red Beads
- Underpinning principles
- An introduction to Statistical Process Control
- How to collect and analyse customer satisfaction data
- The Data Collection, Display and Analysis Methodology
- Tools for Data Display and Analysis
- Data workshop - we analyse some of your existing data

Ongoing support from the UIC

We will work closely with the organisation before, during and after the programme. This will involve regular review, not just of the training, but of emerging organisational issues.

After the programme, your managers will continue to be supported by the UIC. Firstly they will have received our comprehensive manual - *The Complete Guide to Improvement*. This contains everything covered during the programme and much more. Your managers will also be able to access a variety of on-line resources. They can also seek advice from us at any time.

Optionally, we can provide ongoing 1-1 coaching following the programme as required. Typically a UIC Consultant will be engaged for a day to provide a series of coaching sessions. These can be used to help individuals review or plan specific pieces of work or have a general discussion about how things are going.

Finally, we are always pleased to offer support and guidance by phone or e-mail.