

MANAGING DOWNSIZING

Maintaining critical services during a complete operating model change

THE CHALLENGE

One of the largest blue-light organisations in the UK was replacing its core ICT systems, resulting in a 50% reduction in ICT headcount. Union cooperation was needed, and staff had to stay to operate existing systems until those systems were replaced, without impacting critical public services.

How do you tell people they will be leaving, then keep them here to operate critical systems until their roles are not required?

SOLUTION

Honesty and openness are key. From this starting point, we produced a strategy to individually manage each redundancy.

Working with each staff member, we developed an individual plan based on interviews, focusing on that person's career plans and providing specific training and certification to prepare them for their next role.

We used a combination of workshops, presentations from recruiters, practice interviews, CV writing, and support for LinkedIn profile creation to enable each person to enter the job market in the best possible position.

This approach gained union support and enabled a collaborative approach to the change.

We mitigated the risk of early leavers by bringing in external specialists to learn the existing systems, at the same time as training staff in industry best practice.

OUTCOMES

1. Critical services maintained

Some staff left early, with our full support, but most stayed to keep critical services working. The risk mitigation worked.

2. Smooth transition to the new model

Every staff member not retiring had another job to go to when they were made redundant, and the new systems were brought online smoothly.

3. Morale and reputation maintained

The positive outcomes for the staff leaving impacted those staying as well.

I still get invitations to the reunion dinners.



Key Message: "You can leave whenever you like, but then I can't help you. If you stay I can train you and prepare you to get the best possible new role when you enter the market."

AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGES

- Reduce headcount
- **Maintain critical public services**

OUTCOMES

- **No service impact**
- **£2m+ annual cost saving**
- Positive reputational impact
- High morale

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“Managing the people aspect of significant technological change is challenging but very rewarding. The right outcomes make all the difference to the ongoing morale and culture of the business.”

Bob Smith-Vaughan, Director