

Change – Expect The Unexpected

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The Royal British Legion

AGENDA

- An advert for the Legion – *we're not what you might think!*
- Case study of modernisation
- Shocks and surprises
- Lessons learnt
- Leadership and HR



Our Mission and Purpose

Our Mission:

We are the No.1 provider of welfare, comradeship, representation and Remembrance for the Armed Forces community.



Our Purpose:

We stand shoulder to shoulder with all who Serve





What we do

- Welfare provision to the whole Armed Forces family – serving, ex-Service and their dependants.
- One of the UK's largest membership organisations.
- Campaign on a range of issues affecting Service people.
- Custodian of Remembrance and guardian of the Armed Forces Covenant



Who we help



The whole Armed
Forces family



Vital statistics

- Total income and expenditure of £280m pa
- 1400 employees
- 400,000 members
- 2,600 UK branches: 87 overseas
- Beneficiary population of 9m
- Spend £1.5m every week on welfare support
- Around 160,000 casework interventions



Why change?

- A professional welfare delivery organisation
- New, evidence led, welfare strategy
- High profile of armed forces set to decline
- Increased demand for services
- Flat economy and reduction of state welfare provision
- Competition for the donor pound
- Need to change public perception
- Need to change culture

Barriers to change

- Change and risk averse organisation
- Upwards delegation
- Accountability and performance (demonstrable lack of)
- The 'great and the good'
- The skills and resources to do it
- Courage!

The 'new' Legion

- 4 Pillars of activity
- Welfare at the heart of everything we do
- National organisation – local delivery
- New Regional and Area Offices
- Multi-disciplinary teams
- Delegate responsibility **and** accountability

The 'new' Legion contd.

- 3 touch points – walk-in centres, contact centre and interactive web-site
- More volunteers and support them
- Much improved IT systems and processes
- Supporting beneficiaries to become sustainably independent
- *Business as usual!*

Shocks and surprises

- I under-estimated how long it would take
- Evidence, evidence, evidence!
- The grieving process and the aggrieved
- Winning hearts and minds
- Matching existing skills to new competencies
- Special pleadings
- Elected reps have been invaluable
- Morale suffers but it's worth it!

Lessons learnt

- Easy to under-estimate the resources required to drive cultural change
- Producing the evidence was vital
- Very difficult to change culture without changing people
- Some casualties are inevitable – take care of the wounded
- Constant, repetitive communication of the vision and what success looks like

Lessons learnt contd.

- The media!
- Active support of Trustees is vital
- Identify and manage risk
- Encourage challenge *but not hostility*
- Insomnia is inevitable!

Leadership and HR

- Corporate team must be as one
- Professional HR advice, and challenge is vital
- HR must be at the top table
- HR Director led the 'Change' Team
- Guardians of values and cultivators of the grapevine

Leadership and HR contd.

- Immense pressure on HR
 - Recruitment
 - Discipline and Grievances
 - Consultation and negotiation
 - Tempering the hotheads

Why change? – A final thought

The old models and ways of working are disappearing around us. Looking ahead there's nothing that tells us life is going to get easier for our beneficiaries, quite the opposite in fact. It's a cliché, but the only constant these days is change and the Legion cannot pretend that it has some sort of immunity. Charities are businesses. They don't have a profit motive but they have a higher corporate social responsibility than any other sector – not least because people give us their money.