

# CASE STUDY

Supporting Consulting in the Met

## Core Consultancy Skills for the Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate



Keeping up to date with the cultural matters at the heart of communities across London is key to the Metropolitan Police Service' (the 'Met's') ability to better serve and protect its local people.

The Met's Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate was created in 2006 to ensure best practice and understanding of cultural diversity and citizen issues throughout the Met.

The Directorate is made up of teams of diversity strand members and a team of six specialist Diversity and Citizen Focus Advisors.

The latter provide strategic advice to the thirty-two London Borough Commanders (area leaders) and Business Groups (including Transport, Airports, Homicide, Guns, Robbery, Kidnap, Special Branch) on cultural and community matters, and the former who advise colleagues across London on specific issues concerning age, disability, gender, faith, sexual orientation and race. The teams also regularly liaise with public bodies, associations and citizen focus groups to keep abreast of latest news, legislation and concerns that it feeds back to its relevant colleagues.

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## Changing role of the Directorate

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The Directorate was doing some excellent work but needed to raise its profile in order to offer a professional service that would encourage colleagues from all thirty-two Boroughs to use its skills. Detective Inspector Paul Gapper explains: “As the awareness of the need for our services expanded, it was up to us to rise to the challenge, and operate as efficiently as possible. Some of the questions we asked ourselves were: ‘Are we spending the right amount of time with the clients that need us most?’ and ‘How are we measuring and reporting on the time and services we provide and the value it adds?’ We already acted as consultants to the business but we thought that officially adopting the title would help clarify to our clients how to use us to best effect.”

Paul continued: “This was an ideal opportunity not only to enhance our team’s function but also to develop our employees. We wanted to build on our client engagement techniques so that we could form strong relationships with our customers, as well as introducing some standardised approaches to planning, control, and reporting so we could build structured business cases to support our own growth and report on the value we were adding. It was also our job to sell ourselves in to the different Boroughs and Groups and engage with people at all levels, and we needed to be more confident in doing so.”

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## Bespoke consultancy training with experienced practitioners

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Paul met consultancy-training experts Elevation Learning and attended one of their public training courses. However, for the Directorate, he thought a residential course specifically tailored to their needs would be more intensive, and get his team on board and learning their new skills, faster.

The team of fifty had a two-day residential course with Elevation Learning consultants Anthony Rees, Philip Taylor and Cynthia Pexton-Shaw.

Paul continued: “The team were very professional and knowledgeable about the basics of core consultancy skills such as listening and questioning, client interviewing and engagement, plus workshop facilitation, negotiation, coaching and presentation skills.

“The trainers were lively and inspired and peppered the session with real life examples of why and how certain techniques were so effective in the work place, which made it real for our team. Being residential helped to, being away from business as usual gave us the chance to focus and bond”.

Back in the workplace, the Directorate’s internal clients were the first to comment on the benefits of their newfound consulting skills. “Customers noticed the effects of our training straight away,” Paul said. “They reported that our approach, our measurement, our presentations - everything were professional, efficient and user-friendly. We are now the busiest we have ever been, serving more London Boroughs than ever before. Good news travels fast!”