

Developing Personal Resilience in the Workplace

Developing personal resilience in the workplace comes from pure strength of mind in the harshest of conditions and impossible of situations, especially in the public sector and civil service. Personal resilience training is often overlooked when things are rosy and comfortable. But when they are not, panic and anxiety kicks in, affecting your wellbeing and performance in the workplace.

As we face a current pandemic today...Do you watch your team crumble or rise to the challenge, recalibrate the situation to ensure you prosper in the darkest of times? From our [Professional Development Skills](#) series with the [Civil Service College](#), this online course can help you build your personal resilience in the workplace and be mentally prepared to be resilient and to have the confidence knowing you can be!

Aim

To provide participants with a clear understanding of:

1. Their own automatic responses in the face of adversity
2. An understanding of their own contribution to their difficulties through exploring their workplace “shadow” or unconscious dynamics
3. The creative potential of their “shadow” material as well as surfacing unrecognised capacities and abilities
4. An understanding of their myers-briggs profile and how this shapes their responses
5. An understanding of Daniel Goleman’s model of six leadership styles and how this can be used to develop resilience
6. Opportunities to unlock existing workplace difficulties through application of the tools and techniques explored in the work shop

Methodology

The training approach to be used, which governs the design and delivery of the training is based on the following principles:

- To actively involve the participants throughout the training
- To enable participants to share their thoughts and enquiries
- The training is designed based on the needs and expectations of the participants that are reflected in the pre-training questionnaire

Workshop methods and tools

In order to achieve the objectives of the training, the following tools and methods will be utilised:

- **Dream work:** The group will relax through some guided breathing exercises and share dreams and musings about the workplace. This allows in depth experiences to be shared amongst the group about their psychological processes and experiences.
- **Preparation:** The participants will be asked to complete a personality questionnaire beforehand which provides an analysis of their workplace style; they will also be asked to bring an object to represent an individual that they think of as resilient. This provides a greater depth and focus to the day. The personal content enhances the level of learning and interest.
- **Challenges:** The group will be given a series of live tests - such as building towers etc; these hands on experiments provide live data on how they respond as individuals and groups under pressure. These on the spot challenges galvanise the group into thinking and working collaboratively.

- **Modelling:** Many people think visually and physically. Individuals will be given modelling materials to build up replicas to represent their own unconscious and conscious dynamics in the workplace. This allows them to surface areas for development as well as hidden potentials that can be utilised
- **Storytelling:** The group will be given a short mythical story (Grimm's tale) about resilience, and this narrative will allow the group to explore their own unique approaches to difficult situations; and to explore alternative approaches in their own minds and amongst the group.
- **Discussions:** throughout the training, participants will be encouraged to contribute to discussions and share their experiences and thoughts with the rest of the group. The discussions will be facilitated and coordinated by the facilitator in order to maintain the focus in the key areas of interest
- **Group work:** group work will be used in order to facilitate practical understanding of the issues and in order to enhance team working, team building and cooperation amongst participants. The group will use the Daniel Goleman leadership model to support one another in developing their least used/ dormant approaches.

Sample programme

Agenda

10.00 **Welcome and Introductions**

10.10 - Social Dreaming Matrix: A professionally guided exercise to share inner thoughts about the workplace. This method was developed by Gordon Lawrence and is used to understand group and social processes.

10.30 - Challenge: Chair stacking exercise - the group is given a set time to complete a task. Afterwards the group is asked to reflect on individual and group dynamics - both conscious and unconscious. Group tensions are revealed, alongside more collaborative instincts.

10.40 - Shadow Work, Light and Shade: Individuals are asked to create anonymous models - using playdoh - of individuals and situations they find hard to work with; participants are also asked to create models of individuals and situations that they admire. Reflections on what this means for each individual and how they can utilise both a negative and positive range of experiences to enhance their work performance.

11.00 - Short story: Participants read a short story (The Girl with No Hands) and are asked to imagine their own responses when faced with serious adversity. The group reflect on the range of possible responses and reflect on what is appropriate in different contexts.

11.30 - Myers-Briggs: The group will be divided along several lines; extroverts versus introverts; intuitives versus practical; feeling versus thinking; opportunists versus planners; the group will consider the value of what their “opposite” or less developed style brings; and think about how this could add to their resilience.

12.30 - Lunch

13.00 - Six Leadership Styles based on Daniel Goleman’s model: Each individual will identify their dominant styles (from coaching, visionary, commanding, democratic, affiliative and pace setting); they will then be supported in using their less developed styles/ shadow styles.

14.00 - Each individual will be given the opportunity to work through an in depth example of a workplace challenge; the group will help them, through a form of appreciative inquiry, to define and refine the issues. They will then be supported in rehearsing the scenario, and in using their “shadow” or less used approaches (from Daniel Goleman’s six styles; Myers-Briggs; and also the shadow modelling). The focus will be on developing new strategies to enhance their resilience.

16.00 - Close and reflections on the day