



Case Study - The Exports Credits Guarantee Department

Developing senior management communication skills

The Export Credits Guarantee Department, (ECGD) is the UK's official export credit agency. It is a separate Government department reporting to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. The ECGD has more than 80 years' experience of working closely with exporters, project sponsors, banks and buyers to help UK exporters of capital equipment and project-related goods and services to win business and invest overseas.

HarknessKennett, working with Limehouse Partners, the crisis communications agency, were invited to help the Head of Public Affairs in the development of senior management's communication skills and their commitment to effective collective messaging. Against a backdrop of significant change, the ECGD asked us firstly to research existing internal communications and secondly, to design a development programme aimed at improving the communication skills of the leadership team. Using an on-line employee survey combined with one-to-one senior management interviews, we were able to identify the issues and concerns that were most important to the employees as well as the improvement needs of the top team.

Based on the findings we designed a workshop format aimed at senior managers focused on creating shared messages to support change priorities for the organisation and improving delivery of those messages by the whole team. This has resulted in increased awareness of the need to craft clear and credible messages which are delivered with appropriate impact.

"All the research demonstrates that employees value face-to-face meetings with their managers above all other mechanisms. In an organisation undergoing significant change team meetings are more important than ever. This project has helped us to move forward in assisting the senior management team to deliver messages to staff which instil confidence and support the direction we need to take together".

Rod Watson
Head of Communications
Export Credits Guarantee Department