

LV= (Liverpool Victoria)

Founded in 1843, LV= is the UK's largest Friendly Society, and one of the top five insurers in Britain. Staying true to its founding ideals of providing affordable insurance and savings plans, and offering award-winning products along the way, the business has also embraced expansion, recently undergoing a period of rapid growth.



Project background

As a mutual society, LV= does not have to keep external shareholders happy; but keeping staff and management motivated and fulfilled is still central to the success of the business. The business experienced rapid growth in 2011, and was suffering the growing pains associated with building new management teams.

Aware of these problems, LV= pinpointed the MBTI® instrument as an invaluable structure to support staff through ongoing expansion. The advantages of having an in-house MBTI practitioner had been considered for some time by Operational Training Coordinator Erica Farmer, and in 2011 she put forward a

business case for acquiring these skills.

LV= recognised the need for increased self- and team-awareness, to improve team bonding, communication and efficiency. Heavy workloads had become daunting, leading to excessive overtime, with impact across all departments. It was important to remove as many barriers to productivity as possible, maximising constructive time and winning back non-constructive hours lost in poor communication or misunderstanding.

It was also important to make team goals a reality, rather than just talking in terms of ambitions and

FINANCE SECTOR

Business needs

- Communication
- Teambuilding
- Leadership
- Coaching

Psychometric tools used

- MBTI® Step I

Benefits

- Increased and enhanced communication to facilitate growth and progress
- Greater empathy between managers and departments
- Highly successful teambuilding and bonding
- Increased tolerance and efficiency, reducing stress in the workplace



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*Erica Farmer,
Operational Training Coordinator,
LV= (Liverpool Victoria)*

high hopes. This, again, would depend upon successful team working.

The solution

Erica completed her MBTI Step I qualification training in October 2011, putting her newly acquired skills into practice immediately.

Although she had held a type indicator qualification for four years, she was very keen to go that step further and become an MBTI practitioner.

“The MBTI tool is the big one, the most recognised instrument in its field”, she said, explaining her strong desire to complete the programme. “It is one of the most important qualifications in the training industry, alongside CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development). It specialises in what I’m really passionate about.”

Erica had faith in the ability of the MBTI instrument to facilitate ongoing growth within LV=, and to streamline communication processes. Bringing an MBTI way of thinking on board would inspire empathy between different personality types, introducing a common language for everyday interactions. This would provide a smooth path for communication on cross-departmental matters.

With this in mind, she arranged a series of 15 one-to-one meetings with managers. OPP assessment was used, along with paper questionnaires, the latter employed in group sessions where participants were able to do self-scoring.

Results

For Erica there was what she calls “a moment of emancipation” during the training process, where the significance of the MBTI approach made its final leap.

By applying the tool, LV='s chief goal of team development has now been achieved. Managers acknowledge that there has been a very positive impact, with open discussion now being the norm – a huge improvement on the less cooperative culture that dominated beforehand.

There is now an understanding within LV= that there are different, equally valid, leadership techniques and styles. The company has taken on board the fundamental point that there are no rights and wrongs, only differences, the key being the recognition and appreciation of those differences.

The MBTI® instrument has also proved flexible enough to be tailored specifically to the managers involved, ensuring that information is disseminated in the right form for the individual recipient.

Getting the message across to everyone has been a key achievement at LV=, based on the practical knowledge that there are different styles of communication that people adopt naturally, and ways to adapt these styles to appeal to different people.

The challenges of rapid growth have been translated into positive outcomes, with operational managers working together to achieve strong leadership, complementing rather obstructing each other. They are also able to deal better with pressure, and to reduce the incidence of stress, through the increased tolerance that comes with achieving a good level of mutual understanding, and an understanding of how MBTI type explains different stress triggers and reactions.

The business is now developing a communications charter, with the fundamental principles of the MBTI instrument at its heart.

And it doesn't end with MBTI qualification. Erica says LV= will continue to take advantage of OPP's after-sales service, following up on various development points over the coming months.

Established in 1989, OPP is one of Europe's largest providers of business psychology solutions. Its market-leading personality assessments include the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®), FIRO®, TKI™, EJI™ and Strong™ instruments.

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