

How we supported VisitBritain / VisitEngland to increase staff engagement with their Performance Management Review Process to 100%

Background

In April 2016, VisitBritain and VisitEngland were merged by the Government to create one single Tourism marketing body for the UK. The merger brought together circa 250 FTEs from across the globe operating in locations including the UK, the USA, Brazil and Australasia.

Just over a year after the merger took place, an internal HR audit was commissioned. Performance Management was a key area which was identified as requiring improvement, to ensure the processes were fully harmonised and effective. At the time, the Performance Management process was not widely nor fully adopted – only circa 10% of the associated review paperwork which was supposed to be completed during annual reviews was completed and returned to the HR team.

In September 2017 Caroline Roberts was hired as VisitBritain's Head of People and Talent, with responsibility for all HR processes worldwide. She was tasked with transforming the HR strategy and delivery.

The Curve Group had previously partnered with Caroline to create and roll out a Performance Review Process in another organisation and so, in November 2017, two months after joining VisitBritain, Caroline reached out to The Curve Group and asked for our help to support her to introduce a new Performance Management Review Process across the organisation.

Requirement

Caroline wanted the new Performance Management Review Process to be fair and transparent – it also needed to:

- Recognise the value and contribution of individuals
- Enable the creation of high-performance teams
- Generate meaningful performance conversations between managers and

their direct reports to support the development of skills and behaviours

- Ensure staff would be rewarded and promoted appropriately

The Curve Group were engaged to:

- Coordinate an international consultation process with the management population of circa 40 FTEs
- Review the existing Performance Management process and re-design it to make it more effective
- Roll out company-wide training sessions across the business on the use of the new Performance Management Review Form

Solution

The Consultation Process

The Curve Group's Learning and Development Business Partner delivered a series of consultation sessions with management teams across the organisation. Attendees included Directors, Heads of Departments and First Line Managers and the sessions were delivered via a combination of face to face workshops and webinars for those not based in the UK.

The sessions facilitated a discussion around the current level of understanding and awareness of the existing process for measuring and assessing performance within the organisation. It transpired that there was some awareness, but knowledge and application was not consistent.

Following the initial consultation, the Performance Management Review Process was assessed, and an initial set of process amendments were presented back to the management population for further inputs and feedback.

There was collective agreement that in order to provide a useful framework in which to manage performance, the process needed to be better bedded into normal working routines and practices as opposed to something which was only referred to on an annual basis, as had been the case previously.

The Refresh

Upon completion of the consultation sessions, The Curve Group's Learning and Development Business Partner refreshed the Performance Management Review Process, developing a new and improved, consistent and clear framework for use as follows:

- Formal review meetings to be conducted every 6 months; in April and October
- One meeting to take place for each review, lasting approximately 1 hour to include a review of the objectives set, general performance and productivity, confirming any support required to enhance/improve performance and setting of additional objectives to address underperformance
- Employee to complete elements of the form prior to the meeting and to send to their Manager 3-7 days prior to meeting so that they also have time to prepare
- Review meeting takes place and then the Employee produces a final version of form, sends to their Manager and HR
- HR to create a summary which extracts all of the training requirements / wishes from across the company, to inform the overarching Learning and Development plan

The revisions were presented back to the Head of People and Talent and then ratified and signed off by the CEO, ready for implementation.

Embedding the New Performance Management Review Process

To ensure the new Performance Management Review Process was successfully embraced across the company, it was important that time was invested to share details of the new process with all staff members, so that they all felt comfortable with the process and were empowered to adopt it.

The Curve Group's Learning and Development Business Partner delivered training sessions for all management and staff across the business, introducing them to the new process. Sessions for Managers lasted for 90 minutes and sessions for all other staff lasted

30 minutes. These sessions included both face to face delivery and remote delivery via Webinar to staff based outside of the UK. Both types of webinars were also recorded so that it could be accessed by staff as and when required as another resource to support the implementation.

Results

VisitBritain and VisitEngland were absolutely delighted with the results – the first time the new Performance Management Review Process was put into action, the return rate of the associated review paperwork to the HR team had increased from 10% to 100%!

"It was a pleasure working with The Curve Group, as they took the time to really find out our issues and built rapport with staff. Our Learning and Development Business Partner helped us keep to timelines, has a welcoming style when delivering training and is tenacious with getting results."

Caroline Roberts, Head of People and Talent, VisitBritain/VisitEngland

Continuous Enhancement

Since the main rollout of the new Performance Management Review Process, we have continued to deliver refresher sessions to new staff members to ensure that it remains fully embedded across the entire company.

In the summer of 2018, we facilitated a session with a group of 70+ staff members to on the company values and are now further enhancing the Performance Management Review Process in order to encompass the set of newly harmonised values which we have supported VisitBritain and VisitEngland to develop.

Later in 2019 there are also plans for us to support VisitBritain and VisitEngland to improve their recruitment processes via a programme of bespoke training for Hiring Managers as their investment in HR continues.

If you're interested in finding out more about how we can help you with the strategic and operational aspects of your Recruitment and HR management i.e. with your people, we would love to hear from you. Give us a call on 01295 811486 today or find out more about what we do and other ways to get in touch via our website: www.thecurvegroup.co.uk.

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