

**After a long debate on whether the LaMP courses should be mandatory or 'strongly endorsed' David Williams asked if Kay could have a look at whether someone being told they had to go on the course had any effect on their benefit of the course compared to someone who had self-nominated.**

*The simple answer to this question is yes; if someone chooses to go on a course they have an open mind and are ready to engage with the content and how they can apply the learning and make the change work from the very beginning as they have had perceived control over the choice of whether to go or not. If they are "made to go" and do not understand why it is important, as they haven't been told or they don't believe the reasons given, then their mindset is already dealing with internal thoughts around this which need to be cleared by the trainer before beneficial learning can take place.*

The current confusion that arises at the start of the courses where some believe that the courses are mandatory and some have self selected is, in fact, a worse position for the trainers as it leads to more unnecessary angst around "why have I been told to come & you haven't" which delays the readiness to receive the content of the course for the whole group.

Ultimately those self selectors / early engagers have the opportunity to learn, practice and question more & thus get more benefit.

We appreciate that there was a long debate on the mandatory vs strongly endorsed aspect which we weren't party to but for completeness in answering this question we would like to add the following:

*The complex answer is this is a key moment for re-defining the culture of the organisation & what we want for PCC in the future.*

### **We should lead by example & practice what we teach.....**

The whole of the Leadership & Management Programme has an extremely strong theme of managing / influencing change which consistently makes the point that during implementation of change programmes in order for that change to have the greatest chance of success the focus needs to be on those people who are ready to change first as they will deliver the early successes / quick wins and pave the way for others to follow.

Applying our own principles would give us a clear answer to the mandatory / self-selection question in that we should get the willing and enthusiastic people through the programme first and they will influence the less enthusiastic to change. If we made the programme mandatory, this would violate the very principles that we train on the programme....

We believe that the element of social influence in this is huge. To an extent, it doesn't really matter what we say about the programme on Intralink, it's what managers hear about it from their own manager/s and their peers that makes the most significant difference.

### **Behavioural responses when being told to do a course**

Those present at the SDB when we initially had the discussion around mandatory vs strongly endorsed will recall that there was open acknowledgement that if the CX &

SDB made the course mandatory then some heads of service in the room would feel absolutely "safe" in actively going against this and not doing the course because "no one was going to tell them what to do".

It is interesting to note then that some heads of service appear to be expecting to receive a different set of responses from their teams when they have in turn effectively made it mandatory. It is thus this interaction that is still creating the mandatory mindset which is prevalent in the courses to date.

Additionally it is also interesting to note that these staff are choosing to air their grievances and their burdens in the training room and not with their manager & therefore are coming under duress.

So what do we need to do?

If all our managers actually strongly endorse the programme, through open conversation about why they would endorse it, rather than just say "do it", then we will have less of the issues currently being experienced. If we know we react badly to being told to go on a course what is it that we would want to help us understand why our manager wants us to go on it? Suggestions could be conversations around:

- Why this course is important to PCC?
- Why this course is important to me?
- Why I believe this course is important for you

Whilst it is impossible to generalise on the behaviours of all PCC managers if we all strive to check our own spheres of influence that these conversations are taking place in a genuine and authentic way we will change the way delegates are approaching these programmes & indeed the way that any requests we are making of our managers.

***Our conclusion therefore is do not make this mandatory, rather model the behaviours we would like to have for ourselves and check that others we are responsible for are doing the same.***

**As a final note there will always be those that will resist change .....**

It is also worth while noting that the ultimate level of engagement on the programme is not necessarily dependant on whether they have been told to come or strongly endorsed. It is our belief that the content of the programme is enough to bring on board those who see that they have an individual role to play in examining their own impact on their teams & how that will contribute to the Transformation Agenda.

It is those who persistently hold the belief that it is nothing to do with them and that the "problem" is "out there" as we highlighted in our early evaluation report of the Introduction course who will resist change. See Appendix 2.

The impact of these individuals on the courses can be challenging but if we look at the model that we use on the programme then these people will most likely be in the 10% of the population who are actively against the change and unlikely to ever find a place of personal reconciliation within the changing organisation.