



London Borough of Sutton save £300,000 in time

In the Autumn of 2005 staff at the London Borough of Sutton saved 20.9 minutes each per day on the time they were spending using email.

More than a third of the people who attended experienced less stress as a result.

This was achieved through staff attending a 90 minute seminar.

The Issues

In 2005 results from an internal survey at the London Borough of Sutton showed that stress was the greatest cause of staff absence.

Within the council poor use of email had become an issue. This was evident through people spending too much time on email, receiving and sending unnecessary emails, very poorly constructed emails, using email instead of having a face to face or a telephone conversation and excessive copying.

David Garioch, Health and Safety Manager at London Borough of Sutton, recalled a 90 minute seminar entitled “How to get better results from your email” he had attended whilst working in his previous role at London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

The seminar focused on how to use email effectively and was delivered by the UK pioneers of email best practice in business, Emaillogic.

David was particularly interested in the seminar because it included a simple measurement that showed how much people’s behaviour changed as a consequence of attending.

One of the measurements was the change in people’s level of stress.

David says:

“I was interested in the perception of those who attended. What was good about the course was that it measured stress from an individual’s perception. And stress is perception. If they are saying that their stress is reducing then it must be true.”

The Pilot Process

David arranged for two initial Emaillogic email best practice seminars to be delivered at the London Borough of Sutton.

These were a success and it was consequently agreed to use the European Week for Safety and Health to provide a platform for the delivery of the “How to get better results from Email” 90 minute seminars to a wide group of staff.

The Roll Out

Emaillogic offers an option of empowering organisations to deliver the email seminars using internal trainers. This is enabled through a train the trainer program.

This option was chosen and David and two of his team were trained to deliver the seminars. They were also provided with the methodology and support to measure the results of the training. This would mean they could track the success of the programme.

David Garioch says: "From the first contact with Emaillogic their service was efficient and professional. The train the trainer day was fun and informative, giving the three of us confidence on how to run the training sessions and follow the guidance in the training manual."

Level of Attendance

Attendance of training is often an issue in organisations.

A marketing programme was initiated.

David's team designed leaflets and posters and spread the word throughout the council.

The initial series of seminars delivered during the European Week for Health and Safety were a huge success. 273 people attended the courses during the week and that figure has now reached 383.

Whilst the seminar has not been mandated it has attracted both light and heavy users of email from all levels of seniority and from all the directories.

The popularity of the seminar has gathered a momentum of its own with people literally queuing to attend.

A councillor attended and a seminar has been requested for just councillors. Some other groups from the council have also requested specific courses so their team can all attend together.

The Results

To evaluate the training pre-course and post-course questionnaires were sent out to attendees. Below is a summary of results of 74 matched pre and post-course questionnaires.

- Over a third of staff felt less stressed
- Three quarters achieved their intent better
- Two thirds used the phone more
- Over three quarters feel in more control
- Over two thirds prioritise emails better
- 99% of staff manage their email more effectively

Analysis

- Staff on average cut the size of their inbox by 24% and the number of stored emails by a third.
- The number of times email was accessed was down by nearly two thirds. This translated into staff saving, on average, of over 20 minutes each day

- The amount of use of email in LB of Sutton is significantly lower than in other sectors of the economy. Results from 'Emailogic' show that on average a 25 minute saving relates to 25% of time spent daily. Here a 20.9 minute saving relates to over a third of time spend daily using email.

The seminar will be made available to at least 1000 staff in the next year.

The time saving of 20.9 minutes alone equates to the release of 2800 staff days or £300,000 worth of time for those staff to spend on more productive tasks.

David Garioch says:

“Having run a programme of training the course now sells itself and sessions are filled in a couple of days with the minimum of publicity. I would have no hesitation in recommending this product.”