

## CASE STUDY

**Developing a bespoke, skills-based Programme to unlock performance improvement within the Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) Team at Royal Mail Group – leading to better outcomes and more cost-effective operations.**

The Royal Mail Group is the UK's leading delivery company, delivering letters and parcels to 29 million addresses, six days a week. The Royal Mail Group has a 502-year history, with 142,000 employees in the UK and another 20,000 employees globally. The Royal Mail Group adheres to strict quality and service standards and serves a wide range of customers, from domestic to commercial clients, as well as large-scale businesses, distributors, and manufacturers.

### **The need revealed for a shift to “softer skills” to improve performance.**

Dr. Shaun Davis, the Global Director of Safety, Health, Wellbeing and Sustainability at the Royal Mail Group, claims it was due to his doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring that he was able to identify the potential benefits of coaching training to up-skill his team and unlock performance improvement.

He recognised that often in the SHE profession there is a lot of focus on technical measures, but the softer skills such as coaching and mentoring, which are frequently overlooked, can make all the difference in improving performance.

### **Coaching Focus worked hand-in-hand with the Royal Mail Group to design a tailor-made training programme.**

Shaun didn't have to look far to find the right company to implement coaching training at the Royal Mail Group. He fortuitously met Trayton whilst presenting at a conference. As Shaun explained, it “was the perfect combination of location, timing, and the individual”.



Coaching Focus put together a bespoke product tailored to suit the Royal Mail Group's specific needs: up-skill the Royal Mail Group's SHE team to be effective coaches and mentors.

The training is delivered in three phases, starting with workshops for 50+ staff in the Royal Mail Group SHE Team, to learn about the principles of coaching and its added value. The second phase, currently being implemented, is a practical learning component, which involves providing Royal Mail Group staff the opportunity to use these skills within their teams and in their day-to-day work. The next and final phase will happen in October 2018, where Coaching Focus will bring together the group again to reflect on what was effective and any further improvement needed.

According to Shaun, this is one of the strengths of the Royal Mail Group's bespoke product they received from Coaching Focus – it is very practical, focused on giving the staff tools they can use, and providing the opportunity to practice in various scenarios. Another benefit is the 'open door policy' that Coaching Focus have provided the Royal Mail Group, which allows staff undergoing the training to contact Trayton and his team if they need any follow up advice.

### **A better-equipped team at the Royal Mail Group has already led to improvements both in customer relations and internal communication.**

Although still early days, the Royal Mail Group have already observed positive results from the training. Shaun enthuses “[internal customers] say that our team are particularly supportive and not only identify the problems, but help people to work through to solutions, which is exactly what I had in mind. So that has been really positive.”

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The Royal Mail Group has also identified performance improvements across key measures, as well as noting a general mind-set change within the company. "It's been really helpful getting people to think about how they engage with their colleagues, with their internal customers, and also in their day to day job," Shaun explained.

A further benefit was to have the SHE team do the training together. "Knowing the Royal Mail Group's culture and heritage, to get them together so that they can all share their experiences has worked really well and has given it real credibility. They have been able to apply what they have learnt more readily."

The Royal Mail Group is expecting staff to gain an enhanced sense of contribution and fulfillment from incorporating a coaching philosophy into the SHE team. Often this particular team are perceived quite negatively, as the 'bad guy' telling people what's wrong. Adopting a coaching mind-set allows them to be a part of the solution and feel they're playing a more active role in resolving issues.

The cost-benefits for the Royal Mail Group that result from the coaching training are expected via a flow-on effect. Improvements in relationships will produce better performance, thus leading to reductions in accidents, incidents and claims.

**Next step: The Royal Mail Group are taking coaching even further.**

The Royal Mail Group are so pleased with the work they've done with Trayton and his team that Shaun is now trying to influence external Health and Safety training organisations and professional membership bodies to incorporate coaching into their standard training. "More of a coaching philosophy for business in general would be beneficial - sometimes people just need engaging with in a different way and coaching is a way of doing that," he claims.



The Royal Mail Group are also looking at training budgets for next year to further embed the coaching philosophy into the company.

**Client:** Royal Mail Group

**Challenge:** A technical skills-based approach not producing results, highlighting the need for a shift to softer skills to improve performance.

**Solution:** A bespoke training programme by Coaching Focus.

**Result:** A better-equipped team at the Royal Mail Group has already led to improvements both in customer relations and internal communication, with further benefits expected such as an enhanced sense of contribution and fulfilment, and cost-benefits from reductions in accidents, incidents and claims.

### About Coaching Focus Ltd.

Coaching Focus partners with organisations to create sustainable, performance-focused coaching cultures.

They offer ILM Coaching and Mentoring courses for senior managers or HR/LD professionals who want to develop their expertise, Manager as Coach skills programmes, and other courses, to UK companies like Tesco and BSI Group.

They also offer coaching consultancy services to companies internationally.