

Belbin in Russia

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In a recent article in People Management, Meredith Belbin talks about his Team Roles work transcending cultural boundaries and being particularly pleased with the results of his work in Russia.

The Team Roles analysis is something we use a great deal in management development programmes and working with teams in the UK, but we had never before taken it abroad. Recently we had the chance to use it with a group of new managers in Russia's leading recruitment consultancy, Antal.

We used Belbin Team Roles as part of a modular management development programme. The aim was to raise self-awareness around different styles of working and create an opportunity for delegates to explore their make-up as a management team, as well as looking at the dynamics of the teams they were managing.

Those attending found the process empowering, coming away with a far greater sense of their own strengths and the contribution they make. They had a stronger sense of themselves as a management team, who together with all their combined skills and approaches have a real opportunity to drive the success of the business. It was the first time they had ever used any kind of self analysis like this and they were hugely motivated by it.

Natalie Laklushina comments: *"It has taught me not to get too stuck in the planning but to move forward and do things. I am not a creative "Plant" so it has also shown me I need to use creative techniques like brainstorming to ensure some creative input. I am very diplomatic, but it has taught me I need to be tougher as I have realised my team needs this."*

Liliya Maslova adds: *"The Belbin assessment was really interesting and I have upped my 'Shaper' to be more decisive with my team, who have really appreciated this. I can see the benefits of the Co-ordinator/Shaper way of managing. Thank you Belbin!"*

Overall, they feel they are working more collaboratively with a greater awareness of each other's strengths. One of the outcomes of seeing that they can learn from each other is to instigate a regular management "get-together" on an informal basis over lunch to share ideas and experiences.

In a business environment which is often not deemed to be as sophisticated as the European market, using an assessment tool such as Belbin Team Roles worked really well. It was able to demonstrate that, given the opportunity, Russian managers value having a range of skills and approaches and could see the competitive advantage this gives them.

It was a fascinating piece of work for us and we are looking forward to returning later in 2012 to see their progress!



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