

# The Practitioner and BT

By Rick Price (2010)

## What we did.

Over the past 18 months, Human Insight has been supporting BT Global Services (BTGS) through significant and ongoing change by enabling the senior leadership population to re-engage on their team purpose and composition. All of this has been aimed at enhancing the performance on BTGS following the 08/09 profit warning and Oct 1st, 2009 re-organisation (BT Global Services, 2010).

## How we did it.

Human Insight ran a certification programme for members of the Leadership and Talent Team at BTGS. Thereafter the practitioners were members of this team supported by a Human Insight project manager.

Jointly, BTGS HR (specifically, the Leadership and Talent Team) and Human Insight have created a team development process involving:

A one-day 'Fast Start' process for new executive teams in which:

- Growth-Curve analysis is used to recognise the context of the team and agree the team goals;
- An individual and team analysis is performed using Human Insight's AEM-Cube®, showing individual and team alignment to the goals, the level of strategic diversity within the team, and the opportunities and challenges arising around leadership and engagement;
- A follow-up after 3-6 months with the team, identifying how well the team is achieving its strategic goals - using the AEM-Cube for individual feedback both from within the team and from their clients (BT Global Services, 2010).

The new executive teams were initially configured by the lead practitioner based on their strategic goals and their AEM-Cube profiles provided by the Human Insight project manager. Following the one day Fast Start process workshop, executives could be reassigned to other teams.

Over 40 teams worked with the AEM-Cube thus creating a database of some 1000 images.

## What were the steps taken to get there? How did it begin? How were workshops structured?

This company like many large international organisations had many suppliers of what could be summarised as learning and development initiatives – training, management development etc.

A key influencing factor at the beginning was the role the Growth-Curve could play in providing a single framework and language to combine these initiatives into a coherent way forward. This opened the door for seeing the value of using the AEM-Cube as part of the change process.

The next step was a commercial negotiation on the pricing of self and feedback images given the likely volumes to be used.

There then followed a co design of the process, melding the Human Insight method of team development with the strategic context of BTGS. This was another key influencing factor as competitor tools did not easily work in a strategic context or provide strategic choices to act upon.

BTGS then took the responsibility for launching and running the process. Of course, they had a 'burning platform' – the profits warning. They provided the context for collecting the AEM-Cube data to feed into the one-day workshops.

At the end of the process Human Insight took the initiative to analyse the 1000 images using an independent statistician. This was not asked for by BTGS. It coincided with Human Insight supporting a one-day induction for new graduates where it was decided to collect self-images of the participants.



Human Insight then put together these analyses to demonstrate the following points to the BTGS practitioners:

- The senior management group were biased in self and feedback images to matter attachment. Unsurprising in a high-tech company. However, it was so skewed that the risks are great in terms of customer focus, costs of change management, employee loyalty and execution speed. The strategy should look to diminish this skew and improve commercial and transformational performance.
- The senior management group's self-image profiles were biased towards an exploratory and operational preference yet were seen in feedback profiles to be more controlling. This would not be a natural behaviour for them and can result in a bureaucratic emphasis. The strategy should look to creating more diversity along the Growth-Curve and a greater balance between exploration and optimisation.
- The self-images of the graduate intake suggested that BTGS were recruiting a good diversity of people without any particular bias. This suggested that during the next four years before the graduates took on more senior responsibilities the development process was skewed to technical preferences. The strategy should look to develop and manage that diversity that came into the company at the early stages.

## The tools used.

The Growth-Curve was used to help BTGS executives engage with their strategic goals.

The AEM-Cube was used for senior executives to understand how they could best contribute to the strategic goals and work within a team dynamic.

## What were the outcomes and strategic decisions?

The primary purpose was to reconfigure the senior leadership teams around their specific strategic purpose. In addition, an analysis of the cubes from senior executives and new graduates provided further action-oriented insights.

The database of over 1000 AEM-Cubes resulting from the Fast-Start process has enabled additional business intelligence to be performed - identifying patterns emerging. This research has already had some interesting results with respect to graduate and employee methods of engagement which will be helpful in considering recruitment, engagement and loyalty schemes within Global Services, as well as considering how to approach the development of customer connectivity and the Right First Time service (BT Global Services, 2010).

