

# product *news*

## Major moves forward with Thomas Key

Last year saw some major moves forward in UK employment legislation and this is set to continue in 2004. Legislation will be implemented by the Government and the European Parliament, in relation to equality and discrimination which will make discrimination on any ground unfair.

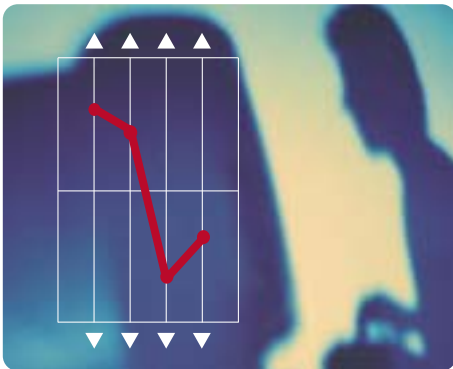
This legislation will have particular impact on the recruitment process. Both the BPS (British Psychological Society) and BTPA (Business Test Publishers Association) are committed to ensuring assessments used as part of the recruitment process, and indeed with existing employees, are used in a professional and objective manner. The BTPA is committed to consistently improving the quality of published

assessments, the professionalism of their use and the understanding of their benefits and limitations.

As a member of the BTPA, Thomas takes its obligations extremely seriously. We are committed to ensuring that our systems are fully compliant with all regulations and provide you with the support and help you need in your recruitment process. As legislation changes it becomes even more important to offer feedback to candidates. We take this responsibility very seriously and have made some major changes to Thomas Key to ensure that you can quickly and effectively provide the feedback candidates will require.

At the same time we now offer you a range of additional products for free, all designed to improve the benefits that Thomas' tools bring to your business.

## New job profiling software



*Job Profiling helps you to think of the key behavioural requirements of a job in a natural and intuitive way...*

Thomas is launching its new job profiling software. This new product is designed to help you to think of the behavioural requirements of a job in a natural and intuitive way. It is unique in its capability to quickly and effectively profile the job you are recruiting for. Before you can recruit the right person to the right job you must understand not only the candidate's profile but that of the job itself.

The process is structured in such a way that it gives you a template for a job, into which you fit a candidate with the best fit in terms of their PPA profile. The software provides an extremely objective view of the characteristics required for the role. This option will be available completely free of charge.

*See page 4 for more details*

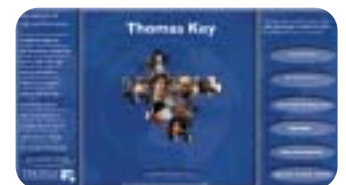
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### New Thomas Key Software

**Additional free reports available in Thomas Key** - Each time you profile a candidate in Thomas Key and purchase a PPA report you will now receive a Candidate Feedback Report. Thomas Key also now enables you to use free of charge, the new job profiling software and Search & Select.

*See page 4 for more details*



### Search & Select

Your Thomas Key database holds information on a wide range of people and jobs. This new function now enables you to maximise the use of this data by enabling you to match jobs to people and people to jobs.

*See page 3 for more details*



# Team Audit *now available online*

*Team Audit  
helps you  
build high  
performance  
teams*

Team Audit is now available online as well as in Thomas Key. Team Audit enables an organisation to:

- Identify its ideal team culture
- Assess the existing team profile
- Provide a gap analysis in terms of behavioural and role short fall

Team Audit is unique in that it gets to the root cause of the problem in hours rather than weeks. Team Audit helps team members understand themselves and the impact their behaviour has on others. It can be used when teams are not performing as well as they should be, when a company strategy calls for change, if an organisation is not performing or when there is a change to the membership of the team.

Team Audit helps you build high performance teams. Good teamwork is the cornerstone to business success but too often companies get it wrong. So, what makes a good team a great team? A successful team needs the right proportion of people with the right mix of skills, experience and perspective.

A high performance team relies on three factors:

- Self awareness
- Recognition of different team member's contributions
- Modification of behaviour to enhance team effectiveness

A team must analyse its structure – how it works, what its strengths and limitations are and the role each person plays within it. If your team is not working as well as it could be you need to get to the root cause of the problem and plan remedial measures to address it.

Team Audit enables you to identify your ideal team culture, assess actual team members and analyse the gap in terms of behavioural and role shortfall. The audit also predicts a team's reaction to change, allowing an organisation to plan with confidence.

Teams fail because of mismatched needs, unresolved conflict, personality clashes and lack of trust. All these can be addressed through understanding and recognising how each person in the team behaves and responds to different situations. Self awareness creates a strong platform from which more ambitious performance goals can be achieved.

# New version of Thomas Key

All these are now  
FREE to use

- Job Profiling
- Search & Select

The world in which we do business changes constantly and Thomas works hard to ensure its business systems are ahead of the field and truly reflective of these developments. Legislation and European directives play an ever increasing role in regulating UK employment practices and must be considered when formulating a business's HR strategy.



In light of legislative requirements Thomas are committed to providing the test taker with feedback about the results in a clear and appropriate style. Feedback and the sharing of information is a key part of the Data Protection Act. All individuals, including prospective, current and past employees, have a right

to know what information is held about them. They also have the right to ask the company to see this information.

In the context of testing and assessment this means that companies will now be obliged to provide feedback. To help you do this, the new version of Thomas Key will now provide you with a Candidate Feedback Report when you purchase any PPA report. This means you receive two reports for a charge of 18 units. Candidate Feedback is a concise report that includes:

- PPA scores
- Key positive words that describe that person
- General characteristics
- Key motivators
- Value they bring to the organisation

This will enable you to give clear and appropriate feedback on the results of the PPA to all the people you profile.

The new version of Thomas Key will also enable you to use, **free of charge**, the new job profiling software and Search & Select. Your local consultant will contact you shortly to update Thomas Key. If you have any questions you can either talk to your consultant or contact Thomas directly on 01628 475 366.

## in brief...

### Now available PDF reports



PPA reports are now available in PDF as well as HTML format. PDF files are a generically acceptable document format and extremely flexible. The files can be emailed easily between users and will print exactly as the document appears on screen.

### New browsing languages

The International website will now be available in more languages. Users will now be able to browse in Czech, Canadian English, American English, French (Belgium), Polish, Portuguese (European) and International Spanish.

## Search & Select

Helps you find: **People for jobs & Jobs for people**

Search & Select is a new option available in the Thomas Software Suite. It will enable you to match people to jobs as determined by PPA and HJA results. You can search your Thomas database much more effectively to match not only people to jobs but also jobs to people.

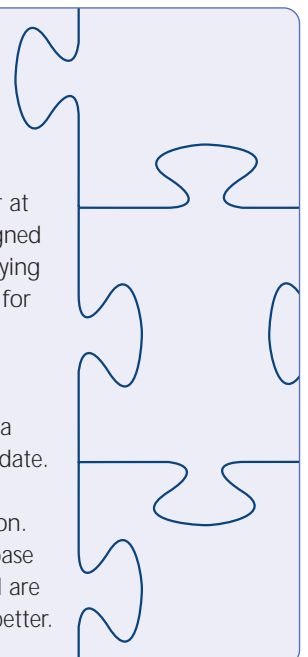
### Finding People for Jobs

You will be able to view all job roles available within your organisation for which you have completed an HJA. From this you simply select one e.g. Office Supervisor. You then press the 'Find' button to view a list of people with the closest 'fit', in terms of profile, for that role. Their names will appear in order of

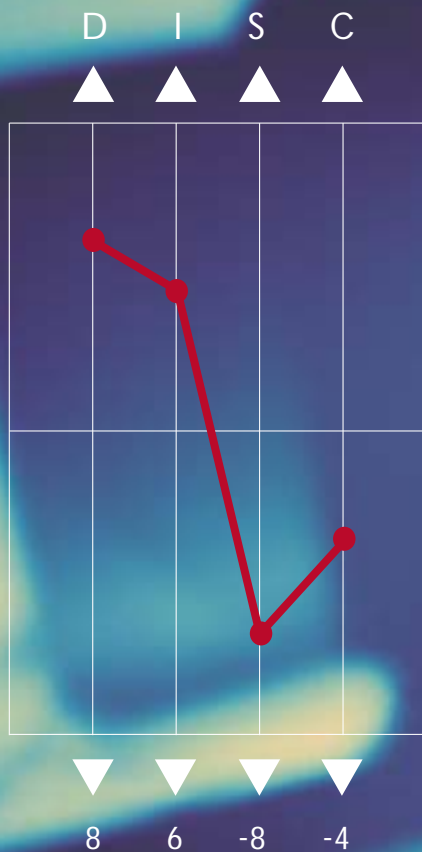
goodness of 'fit', so the best candidate will appear at the top of the list. The new option has been designed to enable you to be much more effective in identifying potential candidates within your existing database for different jobs.

### Finding Jobs for People

"Search & Select" will enable you to find a job for a specific person, either an internal or external candidate. You simply select a person from your Thomas Key database and press the 'Find Jobs for Person' button. You will then be presented with jobs in your database that are most suited to that person. The jobs listed are those for which there is a goodness of fit of 3 or better.



## NEW SOFTWARE VERSION



# New job profiling software

**T**homas is pleased to launch its new job profiling software. This has been specifically designed to make job profiling much more simple and intuitive. This option is also FREE, incurring no unit charge.

Before you can recruit the right person to the right job you need to understand not only the candidate's profile but that of the role itself. Just as the PPA enables you to understand the behavioural characteristics of an individual, profiling also helps you identify the behavioural requirements of a job. Like the PPA, the results are plotted on a graph. You can then compare the PPA profile against that of the job profile to assess how well that person would 'fit' the role.

The new software helps you to think of the key behavioural requirements of the job you are recruiting for in a very natural and intuitive way. The process is structured to give you a template for a job, into which you can slot a candidate. It provides a very objective view of the characteristics required in the role.

To assist in analysing how well PPA results compare to a job profile, Thomas has designed a guideline that offers external, expert opinion on how good a fit there is. Called 'Goodness of Fit' the guidelines are in the form of a rating system 'Fit 1' through to 'Fit 5'.

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| Fit 1 | This person's behavioural characteristics are ideal for the role. Providing his/her experience, knowledge and education levels are satisfactory, the likelihood of success in the job is high.  |
| Fit 2 | This person's general characteristics are fully acceptable for the job, but it should be noted that he/she is not a perfect match.  |
| Fit 3 | This person's characteristics are at some variance with the requirements of the role but can still be considered a fair fit.  |
| Fit 4 | This person's profile is not a natural fit for the role. However, if he/she has a marked degree of self awareness and can modify their behaviour, he/she should not be ruled out.   |
| Fit 5 | This person's profile falls outside the normal range of fit. The indicators suggest that he/she would be more suited to, and therefore happier, in some other role. The chances of this person succeeding in the role are likely to be limited. |

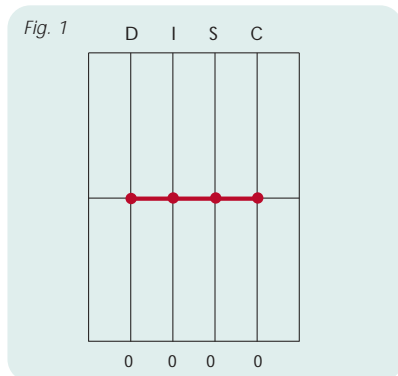
## How does it work?

The first screen asks you to enter the title of the job you want to profile.

You are then given three choices:

- Complete an HJA (the job profile)
- Fill in a tally box
- Create your own HJA - **NEW**

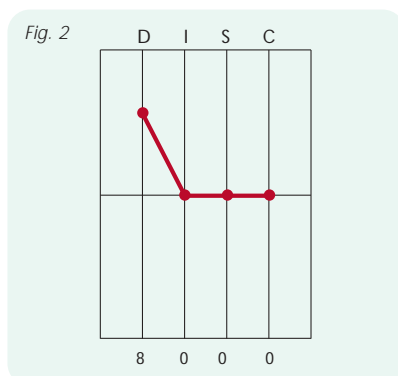
This last button is new and enables you to create an HJA by taking you through four simple steps. If you choose to create your own HJA you will be presented with a blank graph with the four points (D, I, S and C) in a flat line on the centre line. (fig.1)



To the left are the Job Demand lists, consisting of four sets of words that can be applied to a job. They describe the main focus of the job under review and highlight the main potential characteristics required to be successful in that role. The words represent the high factors you are looking for in that role.

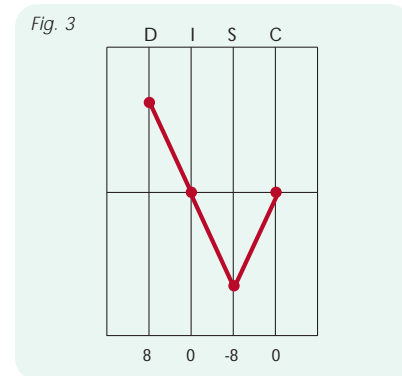
It is at this point that you begin to create a job profile. It has been designed to be as simple to use as possible – there are only four steps involved.

**Step 1** You will be asked to look at the Job Demand lists and identify what are the most important characteristics for the job. You then select the first factor. For example, if you want to profile the job of a sales person, the first factor you might choose would be – driven, assertive, goal oriented. If you chose that list the graph would reflect the following. (fig. 2)



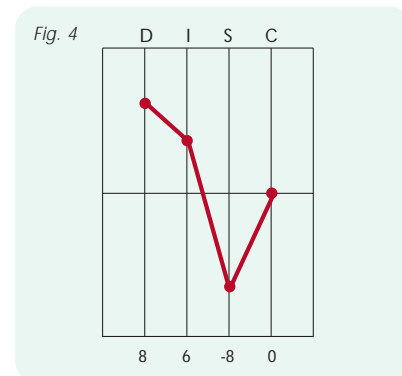
## Step 2

You will then be asked to choose from the remaining three Job Demand lists. In a sales role you would probably be looking for – mobile, active, alert – so you choose that word set. The graph then reflects your choice. (fig. 3)



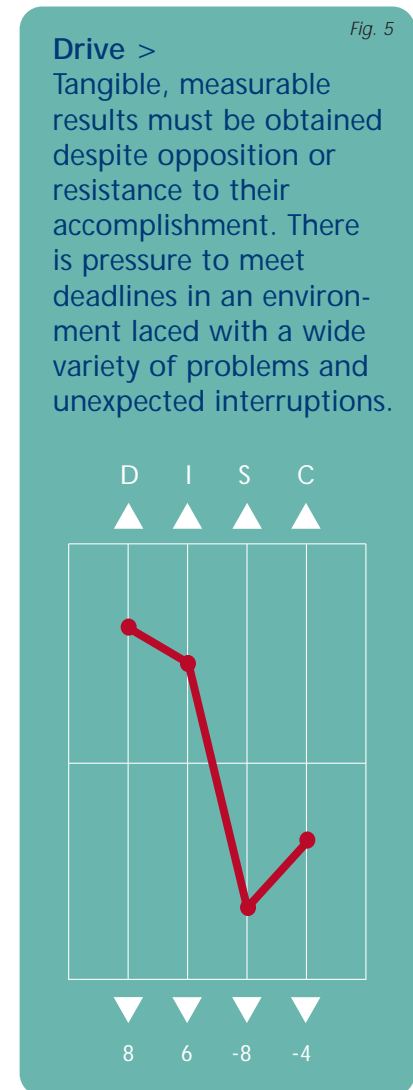
## Step 3

There will then be four remaining sets of Job Demand lists from the remaining HJA factors. From these you will be asked to choose the next most significant word group. In our example of the sales person we choose I – persuasiveness, influence, outgoing. The graph now reflects the choice of the I above the line. (fig 4)



*Before you can recruit the right person to the right job you need to understand not only the candidate's profile but that of the role itself.*

**Step 4** There will then be only two sets of adjectives left from which you must choose one. The screen will now display the “job demands” associated with this HJA shape; the centre section will display the basic combination; the bottom section will display the first part of the HJA job description. (fig. 5)



The resulting graph is very much a ‘work in progress’ job profile. The eight green triangular buttons above and below the graph can be used to increase or decrease any of the four factors. As you change the shape of the graph the Basic Combination descriptions change to reflect the different shape.

If the profile is invalid the description under the graph will be ‘invalid’ with an explanation as to why. The same applies to a tight HJA.

Once you are happy with the shape of the HJA you can print a report.

You will then have a profile of the job which you can use to compare against the candidate's profile.

## We can't clone your top people, but we can come close...

**T**homas International has launched a powerful new tool that will enable you to effectively 'clone' your best people. It will identify the behavioural qualities and capabilities of those who perform well in a particular job using both PPA and TST (Tests for Selection and Training). Once you know what makes your best people just that, you can recruit more of them. Bad recruitment decisions have huge cost implications for a business, in terms of both money and other less tangible factors such as morale and motivation.

A benchmark is effectively a continuous improvement process that uses a systematic standard to raise and maintain high performance standards, against which new employees can be assessed and selected.

### **Benchmarking can be used to:**

- Help your managers identify and select your top performers
- Assess what makes your top performers the best and why others are not so good or are failures
- Reduce costly recruitment errors
- Reduce staff turnover
- Achieve sales objectives
- Encourage higher standards
- Develop a better understanding between team workers

*The new product has several key features:*

**Interview Bias** – Managers are likely to recruit people with a similar profile to themselves which can lead to interview bias. This new item alerts an organisation if there is any evidence indicating possible bias of this kind.

**Coaching and Managing Summary** – This summary is designed to be given to all those who manage any person included in the benchmark. It helps the managers understand why each person in their team behaves the way they do and coaches them to respond accordingly. This insight will lead to a deeper understanding that can then be

used to hone a manager's communication skills and maximise the performance of the team. The summary is set out in bullet point and looks at what motivates the top performers, what they expect and want, and the type of manager they work best for.

**Family Profiles** – In the section headed Statistical and Detailed Analysis the family profiles are now ranked in order of best performance using the following criteria: Most top performers, Most fully acceptable performers, Least to most poor performers.

It also identifies the percentage of poor performers  
**Goodness of Fit** - Previously we may have been able to identify only one or two acceptable profiles. The new product enables Thomas to apply these one or two to the 'Goodness of Fit' chart in order to provide up to 5 or 6 acceptable profiles.

### **How does a Benchmark work?**

A benchmark can be used to assess a sample group of eighty or more people doing a similar job. Smaller groups can be accessed using a similar process. The process involves PPA and TST assessment of each person within the sample with the results compared to actual performance.

As part of this process the company itself needs to assess its organisational performance. It is up to the individual company to decide how it should do this but it should use areas with measured performance levels. These could include: achievement of budget and plans, meeting sales targets, providing customer service care and advice as well as communication and leadership.

The performance of each person in the sample is then ranked, based on the company's agreed parameters for organisational performance. Typically 25 per cent of the sample should be from the top performers (Top Performers), 50 per cent from the sample who rank between 25 and 75 in terms of performance (Fully Acceptable Performers) and 25 per cent from the lowest performers (Poor Performers).

# Diagnosics *can fix it*

Given the time and money spent assembling teams in the first place, it is vital that you 'fix' them as quickly and effectively as possible.

**T**homas' Diagnostic tools are a means to understand exactly what issues are currently affecting your team and preventing them from reaching their objectives. Even the best teams face issues and challenges that need to be addressed if they are to move forward to achieve even more ambitious goals. A diagnostic is a one day workshop where a team can openly and honestly address the issues they face. The day enables people to verbalise their views in a non-confrontational, supportive environment.

Problems can only begin to be solved when people develop a much greater level of self awareness - understanding and appreciating the way someone prefers to behave at work means you can work with them more effectively.

*A diagnostic will:*

- Identify ideal and current team culture
- Deliver a clear view of the problem areas
- Focus and commit the team to their challenges
- Present a full diagnosis of strengths and limitations.

It shows a team where they need to be and the areas they need to focus on to arrive there.

## Management Diagnostic

Members of a management team need to be able to relate to each other, build commitment and, crucially, achieve consensus. To gain commitment, people need to modify their behaviour to complement those of their team members.

For example, the board of a company must be comprised of people who will drive the business forward but it also needs a representation of other elements to ensure it is not totally disengaged from the operation of the business. Yet it is precisely these different behavioural elements, combined with a lack of understanding of what each brings to the party, that can cause tension.

The Management Diagnostic is a one day workshop which begins by brainstorming the different issues and challenges faced by the group at the moment. From this they drill down to identify the really key issues from which an action plan can be formulated. The diagnostic also asks the team to consider the culture required by and for the management so that shared values can be agreed.

## Team Diagnostic

Teams can sometimes hit a glass ceiling. Discussion and debate can turn into a 'blame game' with people pointing fingers at the perceived shortcomings of others. One factor that differentiates 'dream teams' from 'teams



from hell' is a strong platform of understanding. Differences are not good or bad, better or worse. Each member needs to recognise their own limitations and recognise that there are people on the team who can do things differently and perhaps better than themselves. People need to cover the bases they are good at and concede to others where they are better.

Teams fail because of mismatched needs, unresolved conflict, personality clashes and lack of trust. All these can be addressed through understanding and recognising how each person in the team behaves and responds in different situations.

A Team Diagnostic is a one day workshop, beginning with a brainstorm exercise which gets the delegates to think about the sort of problems and challenges they face as a team. Delegates are then asked to focus on what prevents them from being a high performance team, what team building issues they face and what their existing team culture is. Only by understanding what their actual team profile is can the team plot a path to achieving their ideal team profile.

## Sales Diagnostic

The Sales Diagnostic is a one day workshop that helps sales teams identify factors that are preventing them from being as successful as they could be. There is a facilitated session that gets delegates to focus on what are the major challenges of increasing sales.

Each member of the team is profiled using the PPA. The results are plotted on chart that compares the actual sales culture of the team, the HJA requirements of that particular sales role and the agreed sales culture.

The session then goes on to examine the observable behaviours of the different factors and how to modify behaviour accordingly.

# Modular courses

Thomas has designed a new range of modular training courses to provide competency based training that will bridge the skills gap. Training issues may arise from a Team Audit or Diagnostic workshop that need to be addressed. Thomas' modular courses enable you to develop programmes to meet your people's specific training needs. All modules have a practical bias and most incorporate a 'Techniques Toolbox'. The toolbox arms delegates with practical methods they can successfully implement in the work environment. Each module includes group and/or individual exercises that enable delegates to practise the application of the techniques. The exercises are designed to illustrate the preferred work styles of the different profiles and how delegate's behaviour should be modified accordingly.

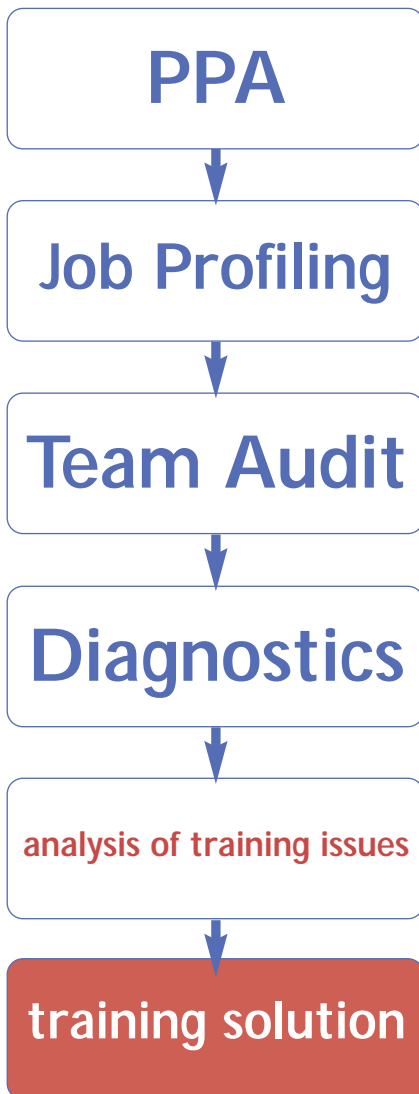
## Benefits of the courses:

**Flexible** – pick and mix style enables you to choose the training you want

**Choice** – a broad range of competences to choose from

**Practical techniques** – practical methods to implement at work

**Personal Action Plans** – each delegate will complete an action plan



## What will they enable me to do?

### Self Awareness

- Improve motivation, collaboration and team working
- Develop interpersonal skills
- Improve communication/relationships with customers and colleague

### Selection Interviewing Skills

- Reduce the risk of costly recruitment mistakes through better informed decisions
- Improve individual and team morale with good recruitment decisions
- Reduce staff turnover and absenteeism

### Appraisal Skills

- Increase confidence and competence in appraising people
- Create a more positive approach to people development
- Improve morale, performance and rapport at all levels

### Negotiation

- Improve sales performance
- Develop an awareness of personal limitations and the limitations of others
- Enhance team collaboration
- Build stronger working relationships

### Leadership

- Develop a strategy to deliver the corporate vision

- Create a positive corporate culture and an inspiring work environment
- Build high performance teams
- Improve relationships at all levels
- Manage change effectively

### Goal Setting and Achieving Objectives

- Develop a more focused approach to achieving corporate and team objectives
- Understand the value to the business and the employees of providing a challenging work environment
- Deliver improved performance in people
- Monitor results more effectively and address areas of underperformance
- Involve people in the corporate vision and strategy

### Communication

- Improve communication and co-operation at all levels
- Select appropriate methods of communication
- Create a dialogue
- Build and develop rapport with others

### Motivation

- Create an effective work environment
- Improve performance and relationships with staff
- Boost morale