Kier
Building Talent for Sustainable Futures

Written by
Megan Williams
and David Deegan

Designed by
Zoe Lynch
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Responding to a crisis in the construction industry, and recognising a shortfall in their leadership pipeline, Kier engaged Cranfield to revitalise their talent management with the “Building Leaders” development programme.

Victims of their own success, the promotion of newly-developed senior leaders created a shortfall further down the leadership pipeline, so the two organisations worked together to develop a further programme for the mid-level leaders, called “Raising Leaders”, which proved equally successful.

Together, both programmes have not only strengthened the leadership pipeline, but increased employee engagement and improved the business.
Kier
Founded in 1928, Kier Group plc is a leading provider of Infrastructure Services, Construction and Property developments, with c. 10,000 employees.

Cranfield
UK’s only wholly post-graduate university.
The Challenge

Context

In Jan 2018, Carillion, Britain’s second-largest construction company, announced liquidation; an event which destabilised the UK construction industry. Alongside this, Kier was facing its own financial difficulties.

Andrew Davies was appointed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kier in March 2019 to lead the restructuring and improvement of Kier’s financial position. As part of the strategic review that Andrew carried out of the Group, he created Performance Excellence, which had a key focus of developing and managing its people. This was much needed as a talent review conducted by its Group HR Director reported 75% of middle-management roles had no identified successors.

With a renewed vision, Kier urgently needed to re-engage potential talent and build a robust pipeline, with the long-term aim of building board-level and Executive Committee (ExCo) succession pools. It was also identified that in order to deliver business plans during the industry destabilisation period, “M3-plus” also needed to develop a more courageous, adaptive approach to leadership.

Kier Grade Terminology

S
Senior Leader
S1/S2 including the Executive Committee (ExCo)

L
Leader (Manager of Managers)
L1/L2 (2 being highest)

M
Manager
M1/M2/M3 (3 being highest)

C
Contributor
C1/C2/C3/C4
Further investigation into lack of potential successors in both “M3-plus” and “C3-M2" talent pools highlighted:

**1.** People wanted more responsibility and autonomy, but connection to accountability needed strengthening.

**2.** Lack of skills in discussing/leading Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Sustainability; subjects critical to publicly-funded tenders and increasingly corporate tenders.

**3.** As a result of mergers/acquisitions Kier had a high proportion of TUPE workforce. Some viewed Kier’s employment as transitory.

**4.** Kier’s talent-recognition/promotion criteria were skewed towards technical/functional expertise rather than management/leadership qualities.

**5.** People were committed to Kier’s values, but uncertain about role-modelling associated behaviours without ‘killing’ their own style.

Kier is driven by projects, and examination of project-leadership revealed:

**1.** Project success could have improved had senior leaders intervened earlier and/or made better decisions.

**2.** Project managers lacked sufficient commercial acumen and/or didn’t recognise the link to their accountability.

**3.** For Kier to increase clients who were long-term partners, leaders needed to think beyond initial client requests, understand potential business trajectories, and know where/how Kier could add value.

**4.** Governance processes and principles needed proactive leadership.

**5.** Leaders needed to think strategically and translate strategy into clear implementation actions.

**Embedding in the wider business**

As well as enhancing retention to create long-term succession pools at different levels, the development needed to focus on business-performance.

HR and senior leaders therefore collaborated to link succession plans, development plans and performance records. It was also recognised that development of relationships between ExCo members and fast potential employees was crucial.

### Desired Impact

Consequently, CEO Andrew Davies sought a development solution that would:

- Increase capability to act at higher levels
- Increase retention
- Increase diversity of the talent pool
- Increase employee engagement
- Positively impact Kier’s commercial success
The Commitment

Analysis

Having previously built a strong working relationship with Cranfield Executive Development (CED), Kier recognised it understood the business changes, could adapt quickly, and create bespoke solutions. CED also brought diverse faculty to challenge current mindsets and encourage new ways of thinking. The Strategic Tensions Assessment Tool (STAT) developed by Cranfield’s Professor David Denyer identified that Kier needed moving from a “Defensive” to “Progressive” leadership mindset.

Building on Kier’s analysis (see Challenge), Cranfield conducted semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a “diagonal slice of the business”, i.e. both horizontal with a range of departments/functions to ensure breadth, and vertical with a range of levels including senior leaders, potential participants and those who would report in to participants. This process utilised Cranfield’s Design for Impact™ (D4i), a unique, systemic approach to impact management developed from Dr Wendy Shepherd’s Doctoral Research into Organisational Level Impact of Leadership Development. An overview of the model is described in the Appendix. D4i centres on five key drivers of impact that transform individual behaviours into organisational level outcomes. They were used to inform design, and support measurement of participants’ promotability.

M3-Plus
Top 5 Development Themes

1. Role-modelling Kier values/ways of working
2. Understanding client needs; connecting them to Kier’s value proposition
3. Commercial acumen
4. Inspirational and engaging leadership
5. Role-modelling accountability; better decision-making

C3-M2
Top 5 Development Themes

1. Leading/engaging others
2. Building/using networks
3. Strategic thinking
4. Diversity/inclusion/sustainability conversations
5. Commercial acumen

To meet the desired impact
Kier/CED created a 2-tier development solution: “Building Leaders” – for “M3-plus”, and “Raising Leaders” for “C3-M2”, each with their own, but interrelated, learning objectives. Envisaged as a talent domino-effect, “Raising Leaders” commenced shortly after the first cohort of “Building Leaders”.
The Commitment

Building Leaders (M3-plus)

To set the tone for ExCo succession, Andrew Davies committed to joining every module, communicating the relevance of content to Kier’s success, to emphasise importance of participants’ engagement in learning. CEO and ExCo sponsored/mentored participants.

Senior leaders identified real business challenges for participants to work on.

Raising Leaders (C3-M2)

This programme also has CEO presence, and every cohort is sponsored by an ExCo member who helps participants build relationships with senior leaders across Kier.

This population was seen as the key to building a diverse pool of successors. It had a diversity percentage that was higher than the senior leadership pool and had visibility/role-modelling that would inspire those at lower levels. Therefore, the commitment was made to aim for the female/Black Minority Ethnic (BME) representation in every cohort to be equal to (or higher) than current percentage in the target population.

Importance and Complexity

The programmes form a key part of Kier’s senior-level learning and development (L&D) offer, and associated career pathways. The proposed designs were complex, including face-to-face, webinars, online toolkits, action-learning groups and personal coaching. The complex logistics required project support from both Kier and Cranfield. The residential nature of face-to-face required Kier business units to fund their own travel and subsistence. Combined with the overall time away from the business devoted to learning, this required buy-in from senior business-unit leaders.

Sustainability

CEO visibility throughout every iteration of both programmes ensured the required level of support from ExCo, senior leaders has been sustained. This, along with programme success has also meant that buy-in from business-unit leaders has not only been sustained but grown. Business-units now actively champion potential participants for enrolment.
The L&D Initiative

Design and Delivery

Both programmes are built on Kier’s strategy, values, Operating Framework, Performance Excellence and culture, which including its focus on performance centred leadership.

Building Leaders

Learning Outcomes

• Make informed, strategically-aligned value-adding decisions that create/sustain Kier’s competitive advantage
• Create/sustain stakeholders’ trust and strategically influence business
• Use increased awareness of self and impact on others to develop collaborative networks generating business results
• Create reliable delivery plans which boost customers’ confidence and repeat business
• Manage high-pressure and/or changing situations
• Build and use confidence, empowerment and personal resilience, to inspire others and create organisational resilience.
The L&D Initiative

Delivery methods

Cranfield demonstrated that behavioural shift could be created with a unique Grounded Experiential Learning (GEL) business-simulation. GEL is a ‘just in time’ learning process, combining ideas, implication, experience, and reflection, delivered in a cyclical cadence. At its heart is a bespoke teaching-case comprising a developing (fictional) client story so closely replicating Kier realities that it feels real, thereby shortening the gap between transfer of learning to the workplace.

Grounded

Connected to Kier reality. Created from scratch, weaving in Kier processes, systems, language.

Experiential

The teaching-case mirrors Kier’s typical project life-cycle, posing a series of challenges/dilemmas, addressed by roleplayed-meetings with key stakeholders, played by Cranfield faculty. Participants, as a group, prepare the meetings. Some take part in the roleplay; others observe and offer feedback during detailed debriefings. Debriefs not only provide feedback on participants’ actions/behaviours, they explicitly link to learning content. This further grounds the learning within Kier reality to accelerate transfer of learning.

The ‘inspiration’ for the situations within GEL came from guidance from Kier executives on key themes and behaviours to be encouraged, and actual Kier experiences. The learning outcomes identified during analysis and the D4i Drivers, were explicitly embedded into the situations, ensuring that every conversation within GEL was aligned to business impact. Every Kier participant acknowledged the reality of the experience.

- Shift from teaching to facilitating a learning experience.
- Valuing tacit, experiential knowledge.
- Fostering personal reflection, discovery, realisation, assessment.

- Embedded in learner’s organisational reality.
- Collaborative effort with organisational insiders.
- Comprising performative aspects of work.

- Simulated meetings/events based on crafted ‘teaching’ case in a safe learning environment.
- Directed observation, peer reflections and feedback - options rather than answers, highlighting biases and heuristics.
The L&D Initiative

Initial Webinars

These introduced the learning objectives, methodology, faculty, the online-learning system, how to make the most of the learning experience. We clarified expectations; theirs, Kier’s, Cranfield’s. GEL’s purpose and role was explained. Participants were assigned to small business-simulation, learning groups.

Modules

First is virtual and the next are face-to-face. During Covid all moved to virtual, but as everyone was already used to maintaining engagement in a virtual setting this didn’t diminish the experience.

Topics included

- Facets of Leadership
- Drivers of Shareholder Value
- Commercial Negotiations and Levers
- Governance and Project Execution
- Performance-Centred Leadership
- Organisational Resilience
- Managing in Crises
- Developing Emotionally-Intelligent Relationships
- Innovation/Diversity/Inclusion as Sources of Competitive Advantage
- The Kier Challenge
  Participants were divided into diverse groups of 5-6, and each group allocated a senior sponsor who set them a genuine business challenge and worked with them to drive it beyond the formal programme. Groups met at key points during the programme – notably within Module 2 as this featured “innovation”, calling on support from Cranfield faculty, but also met outside programme schedule. Participants leveraged their learning and experiences to deliver recommendations and/or working solution to senior management at Capstone event. The senior sponsor provided participants formative feedback, observed talent development, gathering qualitative data for senior conversations about promotions/succession.

Building Leaders Learning Journey
Online-Learning

Bespoke Kier toolkit comprised short digital-learning modules, industry-expert podcasts, including some from Kier experts and senior stakeholders within Kier’s network. Participants reflected on how learning could be applied to their own context and submitted thoughts/ideas to Cranfield faculty for guidance and support.

Capstone Event

To an audience of peers, seniors (including the CEO), groups presented “Kier Challenge” findings: recommendations and plans to deliver improved business performance. Audience offered summative feedback.

Raising Leaders

Learning outcomes

- Use increased awareness of self and impact on others to create engagement and drive performance
- Apply strategic focus to operational delivery
- Effectively influence senior leaders and stakeholders
- Lead through uncertainty, anticipating problems and effectively balancing short/long-term gains
- Build and use confidence, agility and personal resilience which positively impacts own teams.

Bridging the Gap: Raising Leaders
Participant Kick-Off Webinar

This introduced the learning objectives, methodology, faculty, the online-learning system, how to make the most of the learning experience. Clarified expectations; theirs, Kier’s, Cranfield’s, and explored how to involve their own line-manager in their development.

Three vehicles for connecting thought and workplace learning

1 - Line-Manager & Participants Kick-Off Webinar

“You should never send a changed person back into an unchanged environment” - Steve Kerr, GE.
Line-manager involvement was deemed critical to success. To maximise transfer of learning to workplace, and facilitate tracking of participant progress, participants’ line-managers explored how to identify/create opportunities within day-to-day work for participants to put knowledge into practice, to stretch their capabilities. They explored how to engage, challenge and support participants, and support available for line-managers from Cranfield.

Immediately following these webinars, participants and line-managers have a 121 to consolidate understanding, agree objectives and potential opportunities for workplace practice and stretch.

2- Catalyst Groups

Allocated into diverse groups of 6-7 during the Kick-Off webinar, participants meet several times during the programme. Cranfield set the groups up for success by providing context and expectations during the kick off webinar. Kier then run the Catalyst introductory Kick off session to reinforce and set them up for success, the participants then self-manage, calling for further support if needed. Participants use groups to reflect, share learning, develop practice, co-coach and hold each other to account for implementing programme learning into business relevant actions.

3- Impact Log

Established during the webinars, participants build their individual Impact Log throughout the programme, recording reflections, successes and constructing a development story. Contained:

• SMART objectives
• Stretch activities
• Strengths/areas for development
• Results and feedback following psychometric assessment
• Reflections/learnings from modules, catalyst groups, operational practice

Used within line-manager reviews and Catalyst Group meetings to help them capture formative feedback they receive. Also enables participants to reflect, agree actions, and be held accountable for follow-through, and is a key tool for preparing for Capstone Event presentations.

9-month Programme Schedule

Facilitated events
Self-directed learning

Raising Leaders Learning Journey
The four modules alternate between virtual and face-to-face delivery. Raising Leaders began during Covid so all were delivered virtually, but as everyone was already used to maintaining engagement in a virtual setting this didn’t diminish the experience. Topics covered included:

- Motivators/limiting beliefs
- Flexing leadership style for impact and engagement
- Inclusive leadership, diversity’s strategic importance
- Strategy into action
- Negotiation, conflict management
- Networking/social capital
- Risk/Opportunity management
- Delivering through others
- Effective feedback to accelerate self/others’ development

Capstone Event

Participants demonstrate the value-add of Kier’s investment in their personal development, by presenting their consolidated reflections, learnings and transference to the workplace, to their peers, line managers and senior stakeholders within Kier, including the CEO.

Entry Requirements


"Building Leaders" participants must be "Fast Potential/High Impact" and keen to become Managing Director or Functional Lead within the next 5 years.

"Raising Leaders" Participants must be "Rising Star/Star-Future Leader" and "High Impact" and showing potential to progress to a senior management or future leader role.
Measuring Progress

The programme is designed with a content/activity/content/activity etc. cycle so that facilitators can constantly check the understanding of content delivered. Modules start with review sessions to gather information on acquired knowledge being actioned between modules. Each module ends with individuals sharing progress against own learning journey.

Kier’s Senior Learning Development/Talent Manager is present at every module to assist with connection of the learning to emergent challenges in the business, but also to observe/monitor individual participant involvement and progress. She works with Cranfield to address individuals’ engagement issues, and also provides reports to the senior team of observed progress and potential.

The programme sponsor is present for a Q&A session at every module, which provides further information on individual participants’ engagement.

Cranfield monitor the Virtual Learning Environment capturing information on individuals’ task completion and involvement in collaborative learning activities.

Emergent Challenges

Building Leaders was originally designed against Kier strategy which, at that time, focused on cost-savings/risk-reduction. Following Cohort 2, Kier’s new 5-year strategy focused on creating value through progressive data, requiring even more agile and innovative leadership decisions. Therefore, the GEL simulation and Module 3 content were both adjusted accordingly to emphasise leveraging diversity, innovation, wellbeing, and sustainable practices.
## The Impact - Building Leaders

<table>
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<th>Indicators aligned to programme goals</th>
<th>Building Leaders (M3-plus)</th>
<th>Participants’ impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Increase capability to act at higher levels</td>
<td>58% Have been promoted Kier’s average M3-plus promotion rate is 20%</td>
<td>Initiates conversations - 97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Increase retention</td>
<td>98% Retained since completion Kier’s retention is 87%</td>
<td>Initiated conversations on mental health and focussed on ensuring they feel valued in Kier. This brings optimum output from them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Increase diversity of the talent pool</td>
<td>38% Females on BL are promoted 25% employees at Kier are female, 40% employees on BL are female</td>
<td>I have influenced a range of senior stakeholders to enable us to retain talented people who would otherwise have left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Increase employee engagement</td>
<td>100% Black and Minority Ethnic Building Leaders participants promoted Kier’s promotion rate of M3-plus Black and Minority Ethnic employees is 5%</td>
<td>Improved Communications - 73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Positively impact Kier’s commercial success</td>
<td>95% Direct reports of Building Leader’s participant retention rate Kier’s average is 87%</td>
<td>I am now much more considered in my perspective and aim to understand other’s perspectives before making a decision.</td>
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Kier operates a 9 box-matrix to assess talent and impact, and “fast potential” are people who are viewed as having the capability to move upwards at least two roles.

### Participants’ impact
Participants were surveyed in relation to the Design For Impact Drivers, resulting in quantitative and qualitative evidence.

- **Initiated conversations - 97%**
  - “I initiated conversations on mental health and focussed on ensuring they feel valued in Kier. This brings optimum output from them.”

- **Improved Communications - 73%**
  - “I have influenced a range of senior stakeholders to enable us to retain talented people who would otherwise have left.”

- **New Insights into Operations - 82%**
  - “The course’s wider exposure to how Kier operates beyond my own silo has given me added confidence in the business and leadership team.”

Kier’s average M3-plus promotion rate is 20%, Kier’s retention is 87%, and Kier’s promotion rate of M3-plus Black and Minority Ethnic employees is 5%.
Priorities more closely aligned with Kier strategy - 73%

I ran a values-driven team workshop to plan our approach and strategy for 2024.

I am now shifting our culture. I communicate to ensure alignment with common goals, and am future-focused, using lessons learnt to improve performance. I prioritise people to ensure performance is consistently excellent.

More engaged with Kier values - 64%

The most senior leaders in Kier have been very open in terms of some of the issues they focus on at a strategic level. I have an enriched focus and sense of ownership in Kier.

I am now more invested and understand how my leadership affects the overall strategy.

More engaged with Kier strategy - 76%

Our customer management project data/approaches are being used in local planning for resilient and sustainable outcomes.

Sustainability and inclusion now much higher on my agendas at both local and national level.

Built new relationships – 85%

I have linked up people across our business and created new opportunities.

**Building Leaders Capstone Event**

Participants presented hard-hitting evidence and recommendations to their senior leaders to galvanise action. Here are some examples:

On Environmental, Social Governance (ESG)

“Construction is generally behind other industries on ESG reporting, company structure and external messaging.”

“78% of our tenders in the past year have had ESG Value questions – showing our customer and investors need us to demonstrate alignment.”

“Kier has good ESG credentials at project level but data is difficult to capture and evidence into the reporting that investors see.”

“We recommend creating revenue-related ESG targets.”

“Our ExCo need tailored ESG training.”

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“We recommend creating revenue-related ESG targets.”

“Our ExCo need tailored ESG training.”
On Talent Retention

"Line managers need training in how to hold better development conversations and use the 9-box grid appropriately."

"Learning team should review online materials, including Kier Learn, Mindtools, Taleo Learn, and review what else is available externally."

"Learning team need to test impact initiatives before investing in business-wide roll out."

On Talent Identification

"Create a more informal/localised process for discussing talent at a site level."

On Building Commitment from Talent

"Improve information at business division/sector level to make it easier for internal talent to understand wider business mobility opportunities."

On attracting wider audiences to make the business truly inclusive:

"Clarify the purpose and operating structure of the inclusion networks and how they interact with the business divisions."

"Increasing operative engagement by removing technical and behavioural blockers."

"Create tiered networks: allyship and active members with tailored communication to encourage membership."

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The Impact - Raising Leaders

**Raising Leaders (C3-M2)**

- **39%** Have been promoted
  - Kier’s average C3-M2 promotion rate is 20%

- **96%** Direct reports of Building Leader’s participant retention rate
  - Kier’s average is 87%

- **91%** Retained since completion
  - Kier’s retention is 87%

- **47%** Females on RL are promoted
  - 25% employees at Kier are female, 50% employees on RL are female

- **28%** Black and Minority Ethnic Building Leaders participants promoted
  - Kier’s promotion rate of C3-M2 Black and Minority Ethnic employees is 12%

- **19%** Promotion rate
  - Kier’s average is 7%

- **20** People who completed Raising Leaders are now supporting one of their own team members through the next Raising Leaders programme.
Participants’ impact
Participants were surveyed in relation to the Design For Impact Drivers, resulting in quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Initiated conversations - 97%

“...I am more people-focused in running my projects; it has a really positive effect on performance and morale.

“...I had courageous conversations with seniors regarding the impact of poor leadership on [construction sites].

“I've called out inappropriate beliefs held by individuals, in a way that was comfortable to both sides.

“I am using techniques learnt at Cranfield to improve engagement, performance and results of my team.

Improved Communications - 91%

“I have used stories to convey points and engage my team.

“I have been giving more positive feedback to my team, empowering them to take ownership.

“I have addressed poor performance and improved morale.

“...The “Submarine leadership” model changed me. I now lead with intent rather than instructions.

“I am more authentic and honest with my team and this is building better relationships increasing engagement.

Instead of hiding behind a desk I now brief teams in smaller, close-knit groups. This engages them more.

Am delegating more which is empowering others.

I have addressed poor performance and improved morale.
Cranfield provided me with tools in "courageous conversations and skilful negotiation" which have enhanced my personal performance and performance of my teams.

I am now more able to be direct and firm when faced with pressures.

New Insights into Operations – 89%

I am better at making decisions under pressure.

I collaborate more with suppliers, leading to success in bids.

I have been more decisive leading to time/money saved and/or progress made on [construction] sites.

Priorities more closely aligned with Kier strategy - 88%

I feel more able to translate the strategy for my team. They get more value from it.

I have stepped back from site delivery matters, and focus more on project objectives, and keeping senior management informed.

I am now actively collaborating with IT and suppliers to ensure we have the correct measures in place to support Kiers Cyber Essentials accreditation on suppliers’ portals.

By creating more thinking time I am now looking at the bigger strategic picture and finding opportunities.
More engaged with Kier values - 83%

Kier’s investment in me made my bond to the Values even stronger.

Because I have a better understanding about Kier Group strategy I am better able to promote Kier Group’s values towards customers which exceeds their expectations and builds their respect for Kier.

More engaged with Kier strategy - 86%

I now have privileged insight into the challenges of Kier ExCo; how new processes/strategies are developed/implemented.

By getting a reputation as a compassionate leader I have been invited to join regional project-management teams.

Built new relationships - 98%

My wider network enables me to adopt different approaches.

Now sharing market insights with procurement and site teams to validate and ensure up-to-date inflation data.

I now collaborate better on supplier contracts and get better results because I ask more questions and use my networks.

Others have seen a noticeable difference in the way I mobilise support of other project teams to achieve goals.

I have implemented impact & influence techniques with stakeholders to highlight required areas of improvement.
**Reflections and Concluding Remarks**

The Raising Leaders and Building Leaders programmes have both been exemplary in showcasing how investment in leadership development can positively impact a business at a strategic level. We designed the learning objectives of the programme with our minds on the end goal of achieving a strong succession pool for senior roles; to create leaders who understand and live by Kier values, can engage and motivate their teams to drive results, and who can make better decisions by being bold and future focused. From the point of view that we have not only seen promotion rate of the delegates soar, but also that of their direct report, it shows that the skills and behaviour being embedded by employees through this programme are filtering down through their teams... a true catalytic approach to leadership development and shared learning.

Louisa Finlay - Chief People Officer

Having enrolled over 300 employees on Raising Leaders and over 70 on Building Leaders we have seen a positive shift in the strength of our succession pipelines for senior leadership and ExCo level roles at Kier. The investment in these 2 programmes has been a critical step in our strategy to achieve a strong internal talent pool, and our high retention and promotion rates from both programmes has proven that they work!

Andrew Davies - Chief Executive Officer

Raising Leaders and Building Leaders are foremost personal development programmes, but they could also be viewed as change programmes. Sitting in a Raising Leaders workshop today, it is clear that the delegates want to be the catalyst for change; adapting their leadership styles and advocating for an inclusive environment that allows employees to bring their full whole self to work. This is a vital component in Kier achieving it’s cultural ambitions where the right behaviours drive the right results for the business.

Megan Williams - Senior Learning, Development and Talent Manager

Watch our Programme Impact Short Films

[Watch Programme Impact Short Films](https://blog.som.cranfield.ac.uk/cranfield-executive-development-kier-group)

[Watch Programme Impact Short Films](https://cranfield.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=5789afa9-ac85-4528-9009-b14a7113b43)
Impact

Key to Abbreviations used

BME – Black Minority Ethnic

CED – Cranfield Executive Development

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

ExCo – Executive Committee

D4i – Design For Impact

ESG – Environmental, Sustainability, Governance

GEL – Grounded Experiential Learning

HR – Human Resources

L&D – Learning and development

STAT – Strategic Tensions Assessment Tool

TUPE – The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)
Overview of Design for Impact

Design for Impact is Cranfield’s unique approach to managing and measuring the impact of our development programmes.

The pro-active approach to impact management is grounded in more than 10 years of research and has been in active use at Cranfield for the last 5 years.

At first contact with the client, we will establish impact expectations using a set of questions relating to five impact drivers. The five impact drivers are the mechanisms that deliver value to the client. An impact model will be created that explains how the design of the programme links to the impact expectations and what actions may need to be taken to manage any risks there might be.

Learning reviews will be conducted throughout the delivery to encourage participants to think about the impact their development will have on their activities when they return to their normal workplace.

Three months after the development a questionnaire and interviews will establish what impact the programme has had, who has gained the most and least from the development, and what factors explain the differences. This learning will be used to bring about improvements for the next cohort if there is one or will be provided as advice to the client for their use in the future.

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<th>Driver One: Communications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Conversations and Changes in Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed through facilitated discussions, the application of theory to the organisational context, the socialisation of participants and the input of senior sponsors. Changes in conversation during and after the development generate knowledge sharing; learning; coordination; and followership. Many participants go on to share what they have learnt within the development setting with their teams or facilitate new discussions about the topics discussed. This brings more people into discussions across the organisation.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Driver Two: Sensemaking</th>
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<tr>
<td>Logic, Problem Setting and Solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed through active reflection, witnessing a breadth of perspectives and the application of theory. Changes in sensemaking generate problem setting and solving; initiate new or amended actions; and changes in tolerance; empathy; and commitment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driver Three: Relationships and Networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community, trust, collaboration and followership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed through the socialisation of participants across the cohort and with senior sponsors. This may create a sense of community; build trust and followership; and increase the organisational visibility of individuals. The benefit to relationships may not just be interpersonal, but also break down silos between functions, units or geographies. Changes in relationships and networks can generate access to resources; and increase collaboration, learning, efficiency and innovation.</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Driver Four: Alignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Priorities, values and behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed through group discussion; direction; the leadership of participants and sponsors; the application of common frameworks; and mimicry. The alignment of behaviours and priorities has implications for the corporate culture and brand, potentially generating synergies and alliances for change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver Five: Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discretionary Effort and Commitment</td>
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Developed as a consequence of being invested in, being inspired by tutors, other participants or programme sponsors. Beyond the intervention, changes in the way the participants interact with their teams may also lead to further changes in levels of engagement amongst the wider organisational population. Changes in levels of engagement affect discretionary effort; wellbeing; productivity; and the retention of employees.

An impact model is created by identifying objectives for each of the Drivers we can improve the impact that development has.
9 box grids
Appendices

HIGHLY VALUED

- Is highly valued, and a strong performer but unlikely to move to a senior management role
- May be a subject matter expert or master in their field, may also have a preference not to change role or remit
- Reliable and trusted to deliver; exceeds against agreed objectives
- Is trusted and ensures others feel valued
- Works with colleagues to facilitate shared solutions
- Communicates clearly to colleagues and stakeholders
- Manages stressful, and difficult situations with ease

Development: May not require development or progression, but may be a suitable person to assist with training more junior colleagues
- May need to plan to upskill others in their expertise for business continuity

HIGHER IMPACT

- Is a high impact employee, exceeding performance expectations and is a good candidate for growth, either management development or continued career progression
- Employee indicates aspiration to progress their career
- Approach to work is disciplined and thorough
- Is trusted and ensures others feel valued
- Works with colleagues to facilitate shared solutions
- Is an excellent communicator
- Manages stressful, and difficult situations with ease

Development: Focus on specific skills, knowledge or behaviour gaps, i.e. what is needed to assist to the next level or broaden their current responsibility
- Aim to stretch and develop
- Consider FLMA, MDPA or Activate depending on experience

STAR - FUTURE LEADER

- Is a star and shows potential to progress to be a senior manager or future leader
- Has mastered current role; is ready and wants a new challenge
- Employee indicates aspiration to progress their career
- Takes the lead irrespective of hierarchy
- Is trusted and ensures others feel valued
- Works with colleagues to facilitate shared solutions
- Is an excellent communicator
- Manages stressful, and difficult situations with ease

Development: Next steps – consider increasing the scale and scope of their work
- Next steps – consider a new assignment which will stretch them in a significant way or provide them with new/imissing skills and knowledge.
- Retention is key
- Aim to stretch and develop
- Consider MDPA, Raising Leaders or Activate depending on experience

EFFECTIVE

- Employee is effective and delivers consistent performance against objectives to the requisite standard
- Is reliable and trusted to deliver
- Approach to work is valued
- Collaborates when asked to participate
- Demonstrates consistent and expected behaviours in accordance with Kier values
- Communicates clearly to colleagues and stakeholders
- Suited to role with routine tasks

Development: Focus on maximising performance through objectives
- May need to plan for a successor
- Seek to understand if employee is content in current role

KEY

- Employee is key, has potential for increased accountabilities and is meeting current performance expectations to the requisite standard
- Is reliable and trusted to deliver
- Approach to work is valued
- Is an integral member of the team and/or has integral skills required
- May have an aspiration to develop key skills or area of specialism
- Demonstrates consistent and expected behaviours in accordance with Kier values
- Communicates clearly to colleagues and stakeholders

Development: Focus on improving performance contribution, through clear and/or stretching objectives
- Further assessment of future potential should not be overlooked
- Identify personal development needs, training or development to support with career growth or improvement in self awareness, knowledge, skills or behaviours
- Consider FLMA or MDPA depending on experience

UNDER PERFORMING

- Employee is under performing and demonstrates limited potential
- Approach to work is not disciplined or thorough
- Is easily distracted from the end objective
- May not be open and honest about situations
- May not work collaboratively with colleagues
- Poor or inconsistent communicator

Development: Focus should be on; significant performance improvement through performance improvement plan, finding a more suitable alternative role, or exiting the organisation
- Have they been made aware of the performance shortfall?
- Is the manager having regular 1:1s?

UNDER-ACHIEVING

- Employee is currently under-achieving, and does not achieve objectives to the requisite standard
- Approach to work is not disciplined or thorough
- Is easily distracted from the end goal
- May not be open and honest about situations
- May not work collaboratively with colleagues
- Poor or inconsistent communicator

Development: Observe and implement performance improvement plan
- Focus on understanding reasons for shortfalls in performance
- Aim to maximise performance whilst assessing future potential and/or a more suitable alternative role
- Have they been made aware of the performance shortfall?
- Is the manager having regular 1:1s?

EMERGING STAR

- Employee is an emerging star, may have been recently promoted, and hasn’t had the opportunity to demonstrate stronger performance
- If the employee has been in the role a long time, there may be some issues or barriers
- Employee indicates aspiration to progress their career
- Approach to work is disciplined and thorough
- Is trusted and ensures others feel valued
- Works with colleagues to facilitate shared solutions
- Communicates clearly to colleagues and stakeholders

Development: Focus on coaching and a solid development plan
- If employee has been in role a long time, consider feedback on objectives vs expectations

Potential – ability, commitment and motivation
The ability to assume increasingly broad or complex accountabilities as business needs change during next 12-18 months

The ability to assume increasingly broad or complex accountabilities as business needs change during next 12-18 months

GOOD FIT AT CURRENT LEVEL OR BAD FIT

Upward or lateral move

Upward 2 grades or more
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</tr>
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<td>Focus on improving performance contribution, after which, greater challenge and/or broader scope may be realistic and likely</td>
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**Potential - ability, commitment and motivation**

The ability to assume increasingly broad or complex accountabilities as business needs change during next 12-18 months