



Change Learn Grow

Management v Leadership:
Which is most important?

How to
flourish in
the modern
workplace

Get ready for
the **VUCA World**

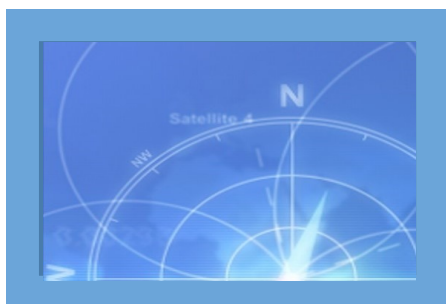
Discover the power of drama for
learning and assessment



Explore our
transformational
portfolios

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OUR TEAM HAS WORKED ACROSS MANY SECTORS

Business and Financial
Services Retail and Consumer
Local and Central Government
Engineering and Construction
Emergency Services
Technology and
Communications

Manufacturing and Logistics
Pharmaceutical and Health
Social Housing
Hospitality and Leisure
Power and Utilities
Charity and Voluntary
Education and Training

The World is Changing and so are Pearlcatchers!



Welcome to the VUCA world and our new Change, Learn, Grow magazine.

The term VUCA perfectly describes the world that we now live and work in – and the challenges this presents for people and organisations.

Volatile – the rapid pace and disruptive nature of change

Uncertain – the lack of predictability and surprise events

Complex – multiple factors and no single causes or solutions

Ambiguous – misunderstanding and haziness around what events mean

This certainly rings true for the world of learning with the rise of new technologies, 70:20:10 and modern workplace learning, budget reductions and ever-increasing pressures to reduce time away from the workplace. The modern L&D / OD / HR team need to adapt to stay successful.

The Pearlcatchers team love learning and embrace change and the new opportunities it brings. Since we were founded in 2002, we have evolved many times and recently have wanted to gain clarity on the products and services we offer. We spent summer 2018 going through a very cathartic process of questioning everything to refresh our offering and create our own VUCA Prime (seen as the antidote to VUCA). This involved:

Creating a **Vision** of what we want to achieve and what is important to us – which is ultimately enabling people, leaders and organisations to thrive in the VUCA world.

Speaking to clients, partners and experts and reading some of the latest research to gain an **Understanding** of what clients want and need from us.

Giving **Clarity** on our offering by creating four clear product portfolios to support and enable people, leaders and organisations.

Demonstrating **Agility** by continuing to build our eclectic team of experts and creating flexible processes to support the emerging needs of our clients.

Our new Change, Learn, Grow magazine will introduce you to our four portfolios with a range of interviews, articles and case studies. On pages 4 and 5, our customers describe 'the Pearlcatchers Experience'.

We hope you enjoy our magazine and are inspired to take action to enable your people and organisation to change, learn and grow.

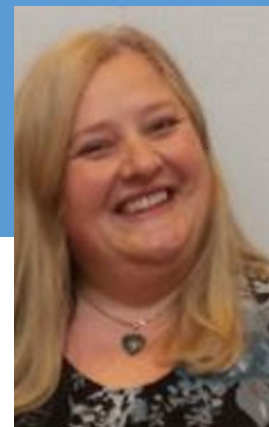
We would love to support you on your journey, so please contact the team to get started – 01753 670 187.

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Who are these Pearlcatchers People?

This is a question that Michael Barton, Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary, asked himself during an interview where he talked about how Pearlcatchers have helped in creating the most successful police force in the UK*.

But this set us thinking about how we market not just our products and services but the experience of working with Pearlcatchers. Our clients tell us that when looking for a people and organisational development partner, it is the ethos of an organisation and the way its people work with them that is crucial to their decision.

But how do we demonstrate that without trotting out the usual values and platitudes that anyone can write? We decided to let our customers do the talking – as they are people who really know what it is like to work with us.

The image on page 5 summarises some of the key words that describe our offering and have been used in feedback we have received. The rest of these pages are dedicated to quotes that pull out what our customers tell us are the key features of 'The Pearlcatchers Experience.'

* According to the HMIC Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy, Durham were the only force to receive and maintain three Outstanding ratings since 2015.

By the way, Michael answered his own question by saying...

Not only do they catch pearls, but they give everybody in the organisation the grit in the oyster so they can all manufacture their own pearls. They are the pointed difference, where they are the mirror to encourage your people to see themselves for what they are rather than what they believe or would want themselves to be.

Dynamic, creative, engaging and will adapt, even on the day, to meet the learners needs, demonstrating their knowledge of their subject, which is second to none
NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

Commitment and focus towards ensuring all delegates had a meaningful learning experience with the intention of not only bringing about real behavioural change but also providing tangible return on investment
CLINIGEN PHARMA

FABULOUS. It has given me confidence to move forward. Actors were excellent, they made the scenarios very real and provided constructive feedback, which set people at ease
ADACTUS HOUSING GROUP

A true learning awakening that I will benefit from immediately
INGERSOLL RAND

Inspiring
BUPA

Everything - communication and support was always available and whenever I asked for help I received an immediate response... I would recommend you highly
COTTSWAY HOUSING



One of the best training experiences I have ever had
CROSSRAIL

Facilitators were able to flex on the day, rather than fulfil a rigid plan. Content was highly relevant, it pushed me out of my comfort zone and made it very clear what I need to work on going forward
TESCO

Pearlcatchers are a great organisation to collaborate with ... it was a personal experience from start to finish
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Pearlcatchers provided our organisation with the platform and experiences for sustainable improvement, unlike other consultants who create a dependency!
DURHAM CONSTABULARY

Programme was all about us and not some 'off the peg' product. This meant that it delivered much more than expected by allowing the growth of the association through the leadership team. It has helped us to deliver huge organisational changes and improve the way we work as individuals
HOWARD COTTAGE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

The programme has raised a number of useful discussions and pathways for moving forwards. The approach created a comfortable environment, which led to effective learning and discussions. It brought colleagues closer together and felt like it was building team capacity to take the next steps in structural leadership
ALLIANCE HOMES



What really stood out for us was that Pearlcatchers really did their homework ... they gained a thorough understanding of our culture and people within our organisation
CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Your flexibility and desire to bespoke the programme to our organisation combined with your engaging delivery and extensive leadership knowledge and experience were key to its success
WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

This organisation never stands stills and always brings fresh ideas and a different perspective to training
FORVIVA GROUP



What We Do

Pearlcatchers enable people and organisations to change, learn and grow.

Change: we support implementation of strategic and cultural change through consultancy and upskilling key employees

Learn: we enable individuals and leaders to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to embrace uncertainty

Grow: we facilitate the transfer of learning into action and ongoing growth, results and sustainability



FUSION

The Catalyst for Organisational Learning and Agility

Beyond Training

To Learning

The Fusion of Our Knowledge and Experience With Yours

Beyond Change

To Agility

LEARNING

Modern workplace learnscape
Upskill L&D and OD
Design learning interventions for in-house delivery

AGILITY

Strategic Change
Smart Working
Culture and Competencies
Performance Management

We have seen real cultural change come as part of this project. Pearlcatchers offered a Train the Trainer which empowered people to become facilitators and created sustainability to deliver it ourselves. Pearlcatchers are a great organisation to collaborate with.

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



IGNITE

Developing Leaders in Real Time and Real Life

Making It Happen

Core skills for managing people, performance and day to day operations

Making It Better

Mindset and techniques for leading people and organisations. Setting strategic intent, with flexibility on how to get there

DEVELOPING MANAGERS

Step Up to Management
Management Essentials
Management Responsibilities
Performance Management
Managing Change

KEY PROGRAMME FEATURES

Build connections, competence and confidence
Responsive delivery to meet emerging needs
Action learning with measurable results
Developing the individual to impact the organisation

DEVELOPING LEADERS

Advance Transition to Leadership
Leading an Adaptive Learning Organisation
Emotionally Intelligent Leadership
Building Cohesive Senior Teams

Pearlcatchers have transformed leadership within Durham Constabulary and have left a legacy of long-lasting cultural change. Your passion was not only inspiring but helped shape our organisation to become one of the top performing forces.

DURHAM CONSTABULARY

Our products and services are split into four main portfolios:

Fusion: for organisational learning and change

Ignite: for management and leadership development

Flourish: for personal development and wellbeing

Praxis: for drama-enhanced learning and development

An overview of each portfolio is provided below and the remainder of the magazine is dedicated to interviews, case studies and articles that provide more detail.

Pearlcatchers partnership approach to working with us means we continually review and develop delivery methods and key messages ensuring they reflect our organisational direction

NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL




Integrated Personal Development and Wellbeing that Works

Personal Skills	Professional Skills
To flourish in a VUCA world	To succeed in the modern workplace
PERSONAL Look after your body Know and believe in yourself Get motivated, stay focussed Relate to others Create solutions Develop resilience Learn to adapt	PROFESSIONAL Express yourself Connect with customers Work with others Facilitate people and projects Support feedback and learning Change and improve

The feeling of personal empowerment that comes from realising you can manage your own emotions and reactions more effectively is wonderful ... whole programme was very useful, made it a lot easier to accept and embrace change and thrive in it.

CLINIGEN PHARMA



Drama-enhanced Learning and Assessment that Makes it Real

Assessment	Learning
Realistic scenarios to demonstrate competence in practice	Demonstration, exploration and practice to turn theory into action
DESIGN Tailored, realistic scenarios for in-house delivery Assessment Centre exercises Training videos	PROFESSIONAL ACTORS Provision of role players for recruitment, assessment or development
	DELIVERY Actors to demonstrate and practice techniques Bite-sized drama interventions

Use of actors really brings it to life... the scenarios were 'magic juice' and increased my confidence hugely... easily the best course I have been on at Tesco.

TESCO



FUSION

The VUCA world means organisations cannot afford to stand still or focus on 'one transformational change at a time'. We need to move beyond 'just change' to agility.

The rise of technology and informal learning means we can no longer focus on formal training that just ticks boxes. We need to move beyond 'just training' to learning.

Our Fusion portfolio creates the catalyst for this transformation by fusing our skills and knowledge with yours. We have provided three case studies which show how we have supported clients with key challenges and the sustainable results we have achieved together.

Cambridge City Council

Creating a Smart Working Culture

The Challenge

Cambridge City Council appointed Pearlcatchers to support their Office Accommodation Strategy, reducing desks and requiring employees to work more flexibly / remotely.

Pearlcatchers Process

We first agreed a common definition for Smart Working (SW) to incorporate where, when and how people work. The office moves focused on the first two elements, but our client was keen to take the opportunity to incorporate the 'how' aspects and embed a smart working / continuous culture. We identified two major objectives – firstly to support staff and managers in the physical moves and transition to the new ways of working; secondly to create the skills and culture to embed smart working into 'business as usual'.

To achieve this we designed and delivered four workshops for staff at all levels based around our model for Successful Smart Working:

- Creating an SW Culture enabled department managers to plan for the strategic and cultural implications.
- Managing the Transition – introduced line managers to the wider concept of SW and explored the practical implications of the changes, including creating a Team Transition Plan to support people through the change process.
- Leading SW - was a skills development module for line managers to support them in adapting their management style to suit the new ways of working with more focus on managing by outcomes, coaching and delegating.

SW – What it Means for Me – explained the principles / implications of SW for employees, gave the opportunity to discuss their concerns, provided support on adapting to the change, including a Personal Transition Plan.

Transformational Results

In a six week period we ran 30 events, attended by 230 participants, who left embracing the changes and taking positive actions to make it a success.

"Completely demystified the whole Smart Working thing"

"I found this course very useful and really kind of made me think that there is no need to be anxious"

"I will plan with management to ensure we can work as efficiently when not all together and be open minded, support colleagues through the change to Smart Working"

Following our programme, the office moves ran smoothly and we presented a detailed end of programme report with recommended actions to ensure sustainability. The client has now engaged us to carry out a follow on programme to embed smart working into departments not affected by the moves. Vince Webb, OD Manager said:

"What really stood out for us was that Pearlcatchers really did their homework and gained a thorough understanding of our culture and people within our organisation."

"Sharon and her team were able to provide expertise and experience in supporting the council to move forward, in establishing a Smart Working environment and culture, offering appropriate practical solutions and supportive recommendations"

Samsung

Upskilling Internal Training Team

We have worked with Samsung since 2012 to support their internal training team in keeping pace with the latest thinking in learning and the changing requirements of their internal customers. We initially ran our two-day Accelerated Learning Facilitator workshop incorporating design and emotionally intelligent facilitation. In small teams, they worked to redesign aspects of their existing courses, then ran these and received feedback. We ran this programme again after a number of new team members had joined to ensure consistency.

"There were no weak spots on this course! Sharon was fantastic – informative, knowledgeable, well prepared and positive. It has been the best training I have ever been on"

In 2017 the team wanted to improve the way they evaluated their training. So we delivered a customised two-day programme incorporating learning outcomes, setting outcomes and a range of evaluation techniques. The teams worked through the process live on some of their programmes.

"The course was outstanding just what we needed. I can't wait to put it all into practice"

The team then asked us to support them in their plan to offer 'performance coaching' alongside classroom training.

We designed a programme that incorporated core skills development alongside facilitating their planning in terms of outcomes, the coaching model they would use, the process and the implementation. The programme resulted in the team having the commitment, confidence and competence to start performance coaching sessions with their sales force.

"Best and most successful workshop I have ever been on. I could feel the energy and enthusiasm that it has instilled in the team and yes, we will be busy with plenty of actions to implement over the next few weeks and beyond"

To transform your organisation ask the team about Fusion — 01753 670 187

Surrey County Council

Supporting In-house Delivery

The Challenge

The client required a learning and development partner to design an interactive workshop on dealing with challenging customers for them to deliver in-house. As many of their facilitators were new to training, we recommended including skills training for them as part of a four stage programme.

Pearlcatchers Process

Stage 1: we spent time with managers clarifying objectives and exploring specific challenges, using this to design a draft workshop using drama scenarios to bring the situations to life.

Stage 2: the facilitators attended the workshop to engage in the content and see how the day would run. They also provided feedback on the content from which we made amendments.

Stage 3: facilitators were upskilled on delivering training with confidence and enthusiasm.

Stage 4: they then co-facilitated part of the workshop and received feedback.

Transformational Results

The in-house facilitators successfully rolled the workshop out to 400 + employees. Feedback from in-house facilitators included:

"Best training course I've attended. Tracey ran the workshops with enthusiasm and care. She gave the feeling that she really cared how we were going to be in our training sessions"

The client reflected on the programme:

"We have seen real cultural change as part of this project. Biggest impact was how practical and impactful the training was in terms of key messages that can be recalled easily and fed into the culture of the workplace. Pearlcatchers are a great organisation to collaborate with and created sustainability to deliver ourselves"





IGNITE

Management v Leadership: Which is Most Important?

Is it just us or are we focussing too much on leadership to the detriment of management? We are often asked by aspiring managers “what is the difference between management and leadership, and which should I be focussing on?”

As with most things in our VUCA world, there is no simple answer, but it’s an interesting question to explore. Let’s start with getting clarity on the difference between them. There is a lot of debate on this topic, so purely as a starter for 10, I’d like to offer these suggested definitions:

- **Management** is about ‘making things happen’. ‘Managers’ focus on managing people, performance and day to day operations. They ensure that things get done in the right way, at the right time and to the right quality standards. It is about carrying out a series of tasks using core skills to get agreed results through people

- **Leadership** is about ‘making things better’. It is about seeing what is possible, making sense of ‘potential futures’, creating and getting buy in to a vision and setting strategic intent. However, it also involves being flexible on how to get there and taking prompt course correcting actions when things change. It is about enabling people and the organisation to constantly learn and improve

In our fast-paced world, you might be forgiven for thinking that management is a ‘bad thing’ – an outdated set of behaviours that need to be replaced with leadership. So, do we need everyone to stop managing and start leading? I don’t think so. Take a look at our example of the importance of both management and leadership aboard a ship.

Organisations need both management and leadership to survive – but getting the balance right is challenging:

- Organisations with too much management and too little leadership will struggle to adapt
- Those with too much leadership and not enough management can easily fall into complete chaos

We want to create successful organisations that blend high leadership and high management to enable them to meet today’s commitments to customers while adapting to inevitable changes. But even this is too simplistic as different situations will require different ratios of management v leadership.



Leadership v Management on Stormy Seas

Think about explorers looking to find new opportunities and lands:

- If the Captain doesn’t set the vision and the initial route, there is no journey to go on together
- If the First Mate doesn’t ensure everyone knows what they need to do, they will never leave the harbour
- If the Sailors do not have sufficient food and water, they will become hungry and potentially mutinous
- If the Captain and his Navigator do not keep their eyes on the sea and weather ahead, they may not be able to change course before a storm hits potentially capsizing them
- If the Bosun does not ensure that the sails are maintained, they will not work when they are needed. If he is not able to muster his team to implement the change of course, they will never reach their destination

And this is why management and leadership are equally important.

I remember in my early days as a manager, there being quite a clear differentiation between those who were managers and those who were leaders. Generally, the first and second line managers focussed mostly on making things happen, more senior leaders focussed on the strategic / organisational aspects of 'making things better' and L&D focussed on individual learning and development. But several things have occurred in recent years to turn this on its head:

- Flatter structures have resulted in more strategic / future focussed tasks being pushed further down the organisation, with first line managers often expected to take part in organisational projects
- Rapid, major changes mean that managers at all levels need to fulfil traditionally 'leadership tasks' of managing transitions and supporting their staff through 'constant change'
- The rise of informal, 70:20:10 and modern workplace learning has resulted in a greater focus on manager's supporting the learning of their team members in the workplace
- Concepts such as systems thinking and continuous improvement have identified that the best ideas don't always come from those in senior positions, leading to a drive towards empowerment to make local changes

So where does that leave us now?

It is clear to me that leadership is no longer a 'job', or something only done by senior managers. The ability to embrace and adapt to change is a core 'life skill' for everyone on the planet (and is one of the seven Personal Skills in our Flourish portfolio).

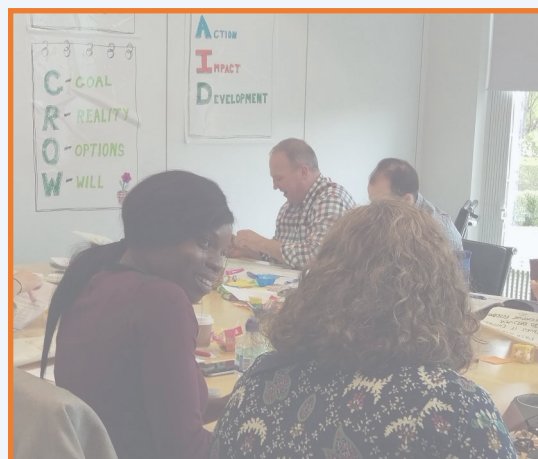
Organisations need leadership at all levels – with people who can see beyond today to a better future, to challenge current unproductive practices and use their emotional intelligence to build strong relationships and influence others. But they also need to ensure that today's work gets done. So, management and leadership today are actually complementary tasks and behaviours carried out by the same people, rather than disparate roles.

However, with inevitable budget and time constraints the current focus tends to be developing leadership skills for those in middle to senior management – and reducing or cutting training on core management skills. This is certainly borne out by the number of proposal requests we have received on 'leadership development' in the past 18 months.

We believe that both aspects are equally important and today's VUCA world calls for a new breed of leader who has the competence and confidence to switch between management and leadership tasks. Pearlcatchers can ignite your leadership potential by refreshing core management skills and facilitating the transition to agile leaders. We create customised programmes for leaders at all levels, which are built around the following principles:

- True action learning with measurable results
- Cohesive individual, team and organisational development
- Intelligent application / modification of proven techniques
- Responsive programme delivery to meet your emerging needs
- Building connections, competence and confidence
- Working with the individual to impact the organisation

*This article was written
by Sharon Young*



To learn more about how we can ignite your leadership potential, please contact us –
hello@pearlcatchers.co.uk



FLOURISH

Modern life and the world of work are changing rapidly – and so are the skills and qualities necessary to survive and thrive. Pearlcatchers Director, Sharon Young, explains how and why we have developed our holistic Flourish portfolio, which combines the key personal and professional skills individuals need to thrive in the stormy seas of a VUCA world.

What inspired Flourish?

To flourish in challenging VUCA times, successful individuals need to have a range of 'life skills'. The World Health Organisation describes Life Skills as "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life." Using global research and our own experience, we have created seven personal skills that apply to everyone.

In addition, new ways of working – such as remote / smart working, digital / global communication, partnership working, innovation and empowerment require employees to learn new skills to be successful in the modern workplace. So, we have developed seven professional skills. The skills (and the specific techniques within them) will depend on the role that each individual carries out.

What makes this different from other models?

Most importantly, it is an integrated model incorporating both wellbeing and personal development. We looked at a lot of models as part of our research and found that wellbeing was often approached as an 'add-on' or HR activity rather than a part of the core personal development offering.

What do you hope to achieve by creating Flourish?

Simply, we want to enable as many people as possible to change, learn and grow, so they can thrive in the modern world.

In addition, the emphasis is not simply on acquiring knowledge, but translating this into practical results. In line with UNICEF principles, our personal and professional skills programmes focus first on mindset, then acquiring skills and knowledge that lead to tangible behavioural change.

How does this work in practice?

We start by working with individuals and developing their personal skills and confidence to deal with the complexities of the modern world. This incorporates much of what was previously called 'soft skills', such as communication and adaptability. Individuals self-assess their areas of focus and create personalised development plans. We then take a 'pick and mix' approach to professional skills with employees and managers, identifying which are most relevant to each role / person.

So, what would a customer / participant get on a Flourish programme?

Whatever is most important to that individual and the organisation. We can offer a wide range of interventions to suit your needs, such as:

- Flourish Foundation workshop as part of an 'away day' or Learning Needs Analysis for a team or organisation
- Interactive bite-sized sessions on key skills to 'pick and mix' from or support your existing wellbeing programme
- Tailored professional skills sessions for teams, such as MS Office Team Coaching
- An integrated personal development and wellbeing programme for employees

Talk to the team about how your people can flourish in a VUCA world — 01753 670 187





Professional Skills in Practice

Lack of time is one of the biggest challenges in the busy workplace. Technology and applications like MS Office can save huge amounts of time – if you know the top tips relevant to the tasks you carry out. Who has attended a workshop on Excel where half of it is not relevant to your job and you find it hard to translate the learning?

To overcome this, we have created Dr Office Team Coaching surgeries. Our 'Dr Office' will spend time with a team understanding their role and challenges, then show them live how they can maximise their use of relevant MS Office applications.

For our client Clinigen Pharma, we ran a tailored team session on Maximising Productivity through Outlook. Feedback included:

"Practical demonstration of Outlook use ...will help me to better plan my day"

"The training was directed towards my specific role ...I learnt lots of new things, including quicker and easier ways ... will definitely save me lots of time"



Personal Skills in Practice

We supported West Midlands Police as part of their Learning at Work week. We ran a half day Flourish Foundation workshop to introduce the personal skills, provide top tips and enable participants to assess themselves against each area, receiving a personal profile after the event.

We then ran a series of bite-sized sessions on each of the skills for employees to attend those most relevant to their personal development.

These included: Maintaining Motivation and Focus in Difficult Times; Embracing Change and Uncertainty; Laughter for Personal Wellbeing; and Building and Maintaining Positive Work Relationships. Feedback included:

"Thanks for another brilliant event! These courses make such a difference around morale. It's good to know that wellbeing is being addressed and in such an easy, user-friendly way".

"Just wanted to thank you for today's workshop. I actually felt more positive as I left the building!"





PRAXIS

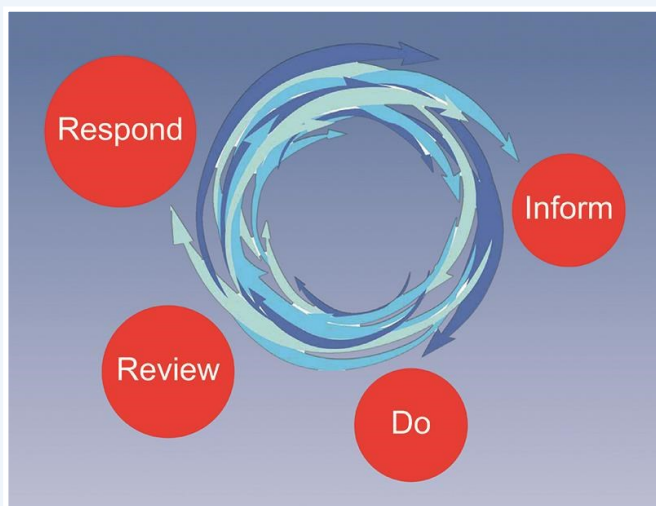
Drama-enhanced Learning and Assessment That Makes it Real

Our Learning and Development Manager, Tracey Palmer-Hole, explains how we use drama to bring learning and assessment to life.

So why has Pearlcatchers decided to introduce the Praxis portfolio?

Pearlcatchers have been successfully integrating drama into our programmes for over 16 years. However, unlike the majority of role play companies, it has not been the core of all our learning interventions, just one interactive tool we use. As such, many clients were not aware that we offered this service, so decided it was time to raise its profile.

Praxis is not a new term – it can be traced back to the times of Aristotle and the concept of theory, action and reflection. Pearlcatchers are practitioners and so our focus is on enabling learners to turn theory into action. We use our Praxis cycle to show how we take participants through the experiential learning cycle.



With drama-enhanced learning, we first **inform** about a theory / technique, then use actors to help participants **do** something with that model, then **review** the experience using feedback or group discussions and decide how they intend to **respond**.

"I enjoyed the scenarios and sketches which drove me to question and improve my management behaviour and skills"

It's not just about role play then?

Definitely not. In fact, because 'role play' has such a bad reputation we use the term scenario practice. Role play isn't conducive to learning, we actually encourage people to try new things and make mistakes as that is how we learn. We create a safe environment which enables participants to experience a situation as near to reality as possible and try out different ways to handle it.

Drama can be used in lots of other ways too. For example, our Coachable Moments sessions use a combination of coaching and practice with an actor to work through challenging conversations. See further examples of how our drama-enhanced learning in practice on the opposite page.

How does your approach to using drama differ from other role play companies?

For us, drama is one technique that is carefully woven throughout a programme, rather than just an add-on session focused specifically on the drama aspects.

We use drama to support managers at **North Tyneside Council** deal with difficult employee performance conversations, using our multi award winning POW! Courageous Conversations model. We first use the actors to create a typical conversation and participants feed back on the areas the manager needs to improve. 'Hot seating' helps them to practice open questions to 'get beneath the surface' of the employee. The actors also demonstrate other models – such as personality types and conflict modes – and we use forum drama to demonstrate giving feedback badly with participants coaching the manager to improve as we rewind and replay the action considering their advice. In groups, participants work on a realistic scenario and plan how they will use our '7 Pearls of Wisdom' and try out different techniques and styles. They work through the scenario as a 'tag team' with each participant taking part of the conversation. The facilitator and actor provide constructive feedback.

To enhance your learning with drama, ask the team about Praxis — 01753 670 187

Drama-enhanced learning in action

As part of a leadership development programme for **Tesco**, participants provided a short briefing on a real-life challenging conversation they were experiencing. Our actor took on the role of the other person and provided constructive feedback. They then replayed some or all of the scenario, discussing how to improve certain aspects. We often see light-bulb moments during these feedback conversations.

“Use of actors really brings it to life and the scenarios were magic juice and increased my confidence hugely”

As part of a two-day coaching programme for **HMRC's Contact Centres**, we created scenarios based on real performance issues which were played out by actors and explored by participants. *“The actors were excellent, brought reality to it, made you consider the psychological side.”*

At **Crossrail** we used 3 actors and realistic scenarios (based on research visits to construction sites) to bring to life the potential implications of poor health and safety behaviours and show how to change attitudes and see things differently.

“This was a fresh way of thinking about behaviours and how they can influence. The session was fun and engaging with real life simulations that were really effective. They challenged my own views and thoughts on how I can influence others”.

On our Winning Behaviours – Bringing Values to Life workshop for new managers at **Southern Housing Group**, we created scenarios around employees ‘not living the values’ and incorporated our Thought Bubbles technique to pause the action at various key points to consider the thoughts and feelings of each actor – and how these influenced their actions.

“I haven't seen the use of actors before and this was very effective. Great opportunity to ask questions and think through process and action”



And what about using drama for assessment?

Drama-enhanced assessment allows candidates to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in practice. Some people can ‘talk a good story’ in interviews, but this may not reflect how they would act in real life. Scenarios, such as employee conversations, briefing sessions and team discussions, give a more realistic picture of current competence. We work closely with clients to both build assessment centres and exercises and to provide fully trained assessors and actors to support the process.

Drama-enhanced assessment in action

We have supported West Midlands Police since early 2017 through a massive change to their promotions process using assessment centres. We met with the client to understand the new process and their key objectives. Consistency and transparency were key for them, as was having a diverse group of actors to reflect the demographic of their employees. We created a process which has produced excellent results across 145 assessment centre days and over 800 candidates for management levels from Sergeant up to Chief Superintendent.

We created a briefing pack for our actors and then arranged a briefing call with the team to answer queries, agree a consistent back story for the character and, ultimately, ensure they all played the character the same way. The actors were required to provide verbal and written feedback to the assessors. After the first of each assessment block, the actors reviewed the day and fed back key points or amendments to the rest of the team to ensure consistency in their approach.

Client feedback included:

“The actors gave great performances - whole heartedly in character but within realms of script – and, as importantly, provided honest and accurate feedback on candidate performance”

Our relationship with our actors has been a key part of ensuring success for our client. One of the team said:

“Pearlcatchers really understand actors and it is the perfect company for an actor to work for. I feel very supported and haven't felt like this with other role play companies”

Change Learn Grow

Here are some of our
amazing clients



*Space for your
logo here!*



pearlcatchers

www.pearlcatchers.co.uk

T: 01753 670 187