

## Influencing and negotiation skills

## Balfour Beatty



### Background

Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Limited (BBCEL) is one of the largest construction companies in the UK and 15th largest in the world. It provides engineering, construction and service skills to customers for whom infrastructure, quality and reliability are critical.

Superior influencing and negotiation skills play a crucial part in Balfour Beatty's success. To be continually effective, these skills need to be regularly honed and always fully up to date. BBCEL therefore sought to put in place 'Psychology of Influencing and Negotiation' training as part of the Director's continuous skills development.

BBCEL specifically sought the expertise of Blue Edge's Chartered Occupational Psychologists to design and deliver training to enable Directors to really 'get under the skin' of people when influencing and negotiating.

### Our solution

Blue Edge psychologists designed a fully interactive workshop, combining short presentations on leading edge negotiation techniques with 'real play' simulations. Techniques covered in the training included:

- Questioning techniques
- Active listening skills
- The impact of body language
- Influencing internal/external stakeholders

The 'real plays' were created by Blue Edge, in partnership with BBCEL. These content specific scenarios provide a 'live' opportunity for delegates to try out approaches in a simulated business environment:

- Learning to 'read' the personality of others to enhance negotiation skills with a difficult customer
- Practicing different conflict handling techniques when dealing with a sub-contractor dispute
- Focusing on interests (and not positions) when influencing an Environment Agency representative

These role plays were supported by immediate feedback from Chartered Occupational Psychologists to enable delegates to hone and strengthen their skills.

### Benefits of the project

- 'Psychologically friendly' influencing models that can be readily understood and applied to the commercial world
- Delegates equipped with the latest 'breakthrough techniques' to ensure they have the edge when negotiating
- Opportunity to receive objective and 'live' feedback from Chartered Occupational Psychologists

The training was extremely positively received by all the Directors, who are keen to roll the programme out to Project Managers and Team Leaders at BBCEL:

*"I was impressed by the day, and will make sure others see the benefits and are keen to attend."*

*"The Role Plays were realistic; putting structure to the negotiating process."*

*"I enjoyed the day, and learnt from it."*

