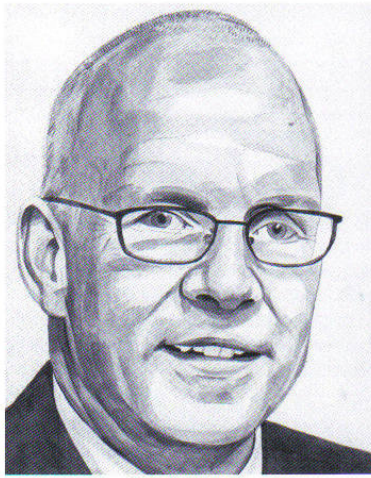


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In View
Healthy mind

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



“Commissioning a creative workshop seemed an interesting and new way to get the different groups talking together and move things forward.”

Andrew Young is chief executive, Durham and Chester-le-Street Primary Care Trust.

He discusses the benefits of bringing people together on the Intensive Innovation workshop.

When I first heard about the Intensive innovation workshop I was interested for several reasons. The trust was grappling with the integration of district nursing and social care but we were finding it difficult to generate dialogue between all the parties involved. Commissioning a creative workshop seemed an interesting and new way to get the different groups talking together and move things forward. I also wanted to help the executive committee develop as the ‘creative engine’ of the trust and generally to foster open and constructive relationships. On the other hand, I was also very clear that I didn’t want to generate long lists of creative ideas that would cost substantial sums of money to implement!

Anne Miller, the director of the organisation providing the workshop, came up to discuss my objectives and the key issues. She also met with the integrated care project coordinator and sat in on a partnership board meeting. She then designed and facilitated a one-day workshop for us. This was well structured and useful. We had 15 participants: most of the trust directors, plus two GPs, two nurses, a pharmacist and five people from the health and social care forum at the county council.

The day started with an exercise looking at ‘Integrated care: why do it?’ Although initially some of us didn’t really see the point of going back to basics like this, it was surprisingly useful because Anne used it as a way to focus the group and start a constructive dialogue. Very quickly, we had a set of the different stakeholders’ concerns and requirements and were starting to convert these into a list of ‘wishes, musts and opportunities’. We have quite a significant difference between the Durham and the Chester-le-Street parts of the trust, so it was useful for the group to explore the different points of view in a constructive, creative and challenging atmosphere.

We then chose four challenge areas to explore using an interesting tool called the Creativity bullseye. Our topics were: how to make progress faster, engaging front-line staff, dealing with the fear of loss of professional identity, and dealing with the differences of opinion about co-location of staff.

These were difficult topics, but the bullseye made exploring them very stimulating. The process is very simple, forcing people to probe for the multiple root causes of the issue you have chosen in order to fill in all the segments of the bullseye chart. It’s hard work, but surprisingly effective at opening up the debate and developing new ideas.

Once we had completed the bullseye charts, the whole group came together again to discuss them. We chose our favourite four options, and this time teams generated ideas to resolve the issues. Quite unexpectedly, two teams that were looking at different topics came up with very similar ‘hub and spoke’ structures to resolve the co-location issue. There were also some useful ideas for involving front-line staff in designing their own model, within a proposed framework. Both these ideas have since been adopted and have been very constructive.

I thoroughly recommend the workshop as a way of moving things forward.

The Intensive innovation workshop is open to executive teams from one or more organisations. It can be run at a time and venue of your choice.

For more information, visit our website at www.modern.nhs.uk/leadership/executive and look for The development portfolio link, or contact anne.miller@tcp-uk.co.uk

Above: Andrew Young