

Learning and development strategy

The OFT aims to attract, develop and promote the best talent and create a supportive environment in which staff can learn and develop (Annual plan 2008-09). This strategy sets out how investment in learning and development supports achievement of this aim and that of Objective 4, 'Develop the skills and talent of OFT staff to deliver high quality outcomes and add skills to the economy' (Annual plan 2008-09).

We have identified four priority outcomes we want to achieve from our investment:

- everyone in the OFT has a shared understanding of the OFT's mission, vision and values
- the OFT's leaders are skilled at performance management, coaching and developing staff
- all our staff have the knowledge required for their role and know how to proactively manage their personal development
- staff can apply that knowledge and do so in line with our vision and values.

Our approach

A partnership approach to delivery

Implicit in achieving the above aim is a partnership approach between:

- **Staff/work managers** - the predominant source of coaching to staff members.
- **Staff members** – owning their personal and professional development.

- **Areas/groups** – arranging events designed to share knowledge and embed corporate processes across the OFT, taking responsibility for administering these events.
- **The know-how team** – organising and administering a programme of activities that support the implementation of the OFT's knowledge sharing strategy.
- **Learning and development business advisors** – providing leadership and direction to ensure OFT's learning and development strategy is implemented and embedded consistently across the office. This includes the management of core corporate training, the corporate learning and development budget and contracts with external training providers.
- **The Resource Allocation Unit (RAU)** – identifying and publicising project participation opportunities.
- **Heads of profession** – responsible for ensuring the maintenance of the OFT's specialist knowledge pool.

A learning culture

In the OFT, creating a supportive learning and development environment means being an organisation in which:

- every staff member makes maximum use of their experience capability, capacity and expertise in delivering on work objectives
- every staff member takes ownership for their own development
- the OFT facilitates and enables personal/professional growth
- managers are skilled at managing performance, coaching and developing individuals/teams
- managers and staff think and act corporately on learning and development

- on-the-job coaching happens naturally – often in an informal, ad hoc way
- everyone's contribution is valued:
 - work is allocated on the basis of what a staff member has to offer and how it might aid their development rather than purely by grade
 - partnership working is the norm - with OFT colleagues as well as external stakeholders
 - there is no 'iron curtain' between competition and consumer activities.
- succession planning leads to high performers and those with business critical knowledge/expertise being supported to help ensure the OFT's future capability and capacity
- there is a robust induction process that ensures new starters:
 - feel welcomed
 - understand their role, responsibilities and the resources available to them
 - subscribe to the OFT's business objectives, vision and values.
- information is readily accessible and knowledge is willingly shared
- learning is evaluated and action taken for improved performance.

Implementing the strategy

Our process for implementing the OFT's learning and development strategy is that of plan, do, review.

Plan

- we **gather training needs data** from corporate sources:
 - the latest staff survey results

- the latest internal audit on the HR function
 - the latest IIP reassessment report
 - participant post-course feedback and evaluation reports on large scale internal learning and development programmes
 - the PPDR process and the consolidation of learning needs.
- and from areas:
 - needs identified by area management teams as part of their annual business planning
 - group directors who consider, for example, the learning needs emerging from PPDR discussions within their group
 - team leaders of projects directly linked to the OFT's operating or knowledge sharing strategies.
 - using this intelligence and organisational priorities outlined in the Annual plan, we **identify key learning and development themes**. These are considered and agreed with ExCo.

Do

- we have in place a **team** comprising of three learning and development business advisors and one learning and development administrator who provide leadership, direction and advice on aspects of learning and development
- we have **policies, processes and procedures** in place that support the implementation of the OFT's learning and development strategy
- we implement a plan of internal and external learning activities
- we **allocate and manage funding** to ensure staff members have access to opportunities to **maintain the skills/knowledge** required of their current role, **maintain their Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** and **undertake personal development**
- we **research and identify** the methods best suited to meet:
 - individual, team and corporate learning needs
 - preferred learning styles
 - the OFT's MBTI profile.

- we put forward **nominations** for external schemes where these are in line with meeting the OFT's anticipated future capability requirements.

Review

- we **monitor and evaluate** learning and development activity and expenditure to ensure it delivers a good return on investment for both the OFT and the individual
- we evaluate data at corporate level from the following sources:
 - the annual staff survey which has a section of questions related to learning and development
 - internal audit of HR function
 - analysis of feedback from participants post-event
 - formal reviews of large scale training investment, for example, the leadership development programme; CA98 post graduate certificate
 - the IIP assessment report
 - aggregation of PPDR Part2s of staff across the office.
- at area level:
 - aggregation by directors of PPDR Part 2s of staff in their group
 - staff survey results by area.
- at individual level:
 - formally via the PPDR process
 - informal via ad hoc conversations between staff managers and their staff members.

Key learning and development themes for 2008-09

We have planned the following from an analysis of information gathered from the above sources and the OFT's 2008-09 Annual plan:

- ensure all new starters have a positive **induction** experience

- **embed Effective Project Delivery (EPD) and corporate governance** principles into the OFT culture and way of working
- roll out **phase two of the leadership development programme** which will focus on:
 - the manager as communicator
 - dealing with difficult performance management issues
 - engaging/motivating others.
- ensure each staff member is fully aware of their responsibilities under **Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation**
- develop and implement a **communications plan** to raise awareness of:
 - the OFT's learning and development strategy and related policies/procedures
 - the range of learning and development options available (including the launch of the **learning and development opportunities matrix**)
 - the role of each of the above partners in creating a supportive environment in which staff can learn and develop.
- maintain the delivery of a **programme of in-house learning activities and core corporate training courses** designed to satisfy identified corporate learning needs where in-house delivery will provide the best return on investment.
- make available opportunities:
 - for those with **business critical knowledge** to keep in touch with latest developments and maintain their CPD
 - for those with high potential to apply to attend **specified external schemes** identified by ExCo as aligned with the OFT's business needs
 - for those wanting to expand their horizons within the OFT beyond their current role. This includes ability to apply for **roles advertised on the RAU bulletin board** and for **funding to study for accredited qualifications** relevant to the OFT's business.

- **deliver** on these key themes and ensure the OFT's learning and development activity meets the standard required of an **Investor in People (IIP)** organisation within agreed budget allocation.

Annexe A highlights how successful implementation of the above planned activities (that is, learning and development investment) will make a difference to the four priority outcomes identified above.

Learning and development strategy
Annexe A
How successful delivery will make a difference

	Mission, vision, values	Leadership	Knowledge	Delivery skill
Induction	By raising awareness of why OFT's exists, our approach to delivery, what OFT expects and what new starters can expect from OFT	By providing a local induction that makes new starters feel welcomed. Board and senior management participation in the corporate induction programme demonstrates a real interest in people as individuals		By providing those new to staff management with the knowledge to effectively operate OFT's performance management processes
Embedding EPD and corporate governance	By ensuring staff are aware of the key principles of OFT's style of project working	By providing each project team leader with the tools/techniques to create a successful project delivery environment for their team		By ensuring project teams are aware of, and implement, good practice project management and make best use of project management tools/techniques
Phase two leadership development programme	By encouraging participants to revisit the 360° report they received in phase one before each module. The 360° instrument was designed around OFT's core values.	By assisting leaders to be first class performers across the full range of managerial activities	By equipping managers to be able to identify their staff's development gaps and coach them towards continuous improvement	By providing managers with the opportunity to enhance their skills at coaching, communicating and motivating/engaging staff towards successful delivery
Awareness of Freedom of			By mitigating the risk that	

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How successful delivery will make a difference

	Mission, vision, values	Leadership	Knowledge	Delivery skill
Information/Data Protection legislation			sensitive information is lost and/or is used inappropriately	
Awareness of learning and development options available (communications plan, learning and development opportunities matrix)			By providing tools and information to help staff plan and action personal/professional growth	
Delivery of in-house programme of learning and development activities			By assisting staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skill required for their role	By providing opportunities for staff to learn new and/or enhance their existing skill/knowledge
Delivery of in-house programme of core corporate training courses	By raising awareness of skills/knowledge that underpin the achievement of OFT's mission, vision and values	By ensuring managers are clear about their responsibilities in eg the PPDR process		By providing staff with the opportunity to develop the skill/knowledge defined by OFT as core to its business
Maintenance of business critical knowledge and CPD	By ensuring staff have the knowledge to deliver OFT's vision to "make markets work well for the consumer"		By providing funding for external training uneconomical to provide in-house and/or OFT lacks the internal resources/expertise to	

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How successful delivery will make a difference

	Mission, vision, values	Leadership	Knowledge	Delivery skill
			deliver	
Putting forward nominees for external schemes				By successful participants making an increased contribution to OFT's current and future capacity to deliver
Facilitating/enabling expansion beyond current role	By making a visible demonstration of OFT's commitment to developing the skills and talent of its staff		By assisting staff to gain the knowledge that enables them to make a wider contribution to OFT's work	By bringing on internal talent. This is motivating to the individual and helps them to make an increased contribution
Meeting the IIP standard	By providing an external validation of OFT's achievement of Objective 4 "Develop the skills and talent of OFT staff to deliver high quality outcomes and add skills to the economy" (Annual Plan 2008/9).			By external validation that OFT's learning and development activities support delivery of OFT's business objectives