

EMPOWERING YOU

Catalysts for Positive Change

The Top Talent programme was not something that I had heard too much about within the Public Sector until I was encouraged to apply in 2016 and I am so glad that I did! The opportunity to learn from and engage with other like-minded professionals across such a wide spectrum of the Public Sector is very hard to beat. The programme, through a real variety of exercises, provoked some great dialogue between the candidates forcing everyone to reflect on their own learning and practise. During the programme I gained real insight into a variety of techniques to help me better understand the behaviour of my colleagues and myself moving forward in this environment of sustained change in the Public Sector.

I jumped at the chance when Steve afforded me the opportunity to return to the programme and speak about my experiences to the new cohort in 2018. One of the key themes I took away from Top Talent was to look at, understand and embrace or change patterns of behaviour. I started to jot down my thoughts on the programme, as I would for any presentation I was delivering, before pulling together a few slides that I would speak to. It was at this point that I decided to break my normal pattern and do something I have never done before in my professional life and write a poem to about my experiences on Top Talent. If I never had any self doubt about this presentation before, I certainly did now! However, with a lot of positive self talk I convinced myself that this would be a totally different way to deliver my message. You can decide for yourself if this worked as the poem is included here.

My final point is that I would encourage anyone to take that first step and enrol. Go on, break that pattern and put your name forward as you won't regret it!



Top Talent and Me

Top Talent was the subject
That appeared in my mail
Two years ago
I remember it without fail

Not knowing the programme
Or what would it be
I did some research
And decided that this was for me

I filled out the forms
And applied for a space
I sat waiting to hear
If I was successful in that particular race

When I received the call
Telling me it was a go
I had a mixture of emotions
As I am sure you all know

What had I got into

And who would I greet
The challenge itself
Could I step up and meet

When we met Steve, Robin
And the rest of the team
They found a bunch of smiling faces
Looking ever so keen

The participants came
From far and wide
In the open plan office
There was nowhere to hide

We started with speed dating
On day one
A mixture of awkward, bizarre, engaging
And fun

After the start
And with the ice finally broke
Some sat quiet to get their bearings
And barely spoke

People operate differently
And in many ways
You'll find real value comes
From not only what someone says

Our job titles and experience
Covered quite a range
With one single goal
We wanted to 'effect meaningful change'

We spoke about leaders
And others who inspire
With the real goal being
To get us thinking and start burning a fire

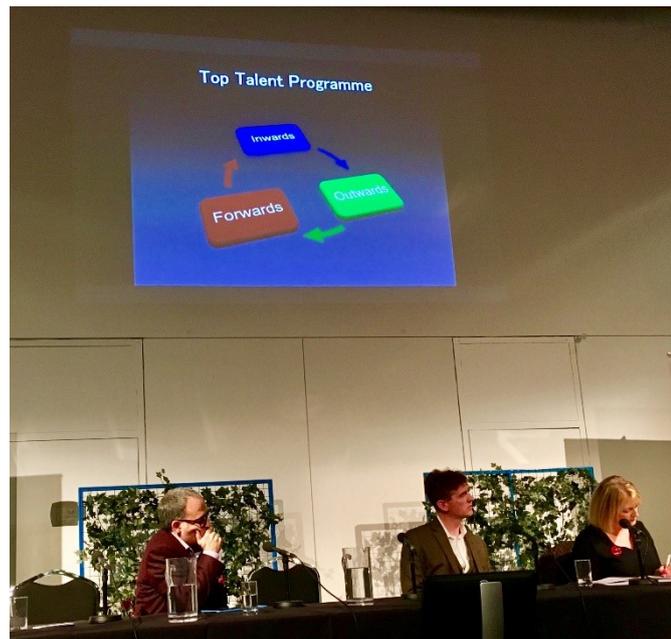
Shackleton, Pankhurst, Bligh
And those others that astound
Led with conviction in their beliefs
And encouraged people around

Their stories are legend
And impossible to recreate
But we can aspire to their qualities
And in our own way be just as great

Behaviour, Influences
And patterns to break
Fed our brains with connections
We started to make

The exercises and concepts
Caused us to think
At times we seemed far more productive
Over a drink

The Group Project was an area
Designed to get us to collaborate
However, it ended up being challenging, rewarding
And at times did frustrate



Personal Coaching is an area
I felt was not for me
But throw yourself in
You never know just see

We listened to guest speakers
Talking with passion and flair
Now I stand before you
With my own story to share

Onto the Conference
And our Greatest Show
It was less P.T. Barnum
And a lot more Oh No!

We drafted our pitch
Then changed it time and again
We wiped out good ideas
With the stroke of a pen

The discussions and disagreements
Were often fraught
At times I went home
Grabbed a beer feeling distraught

The workshops, the presentations
We worked hard to get the pitch right
At the end of the day
It went alright on the night

The key thing is that
All these things are not plain sailing
But not once did I consider
I would be better off bailing

Not everyone who started the journey
Saw it through to the end
For me I have a few
That I can now call friend

As people and leaders
It was about breaking the norm
Some more, some less
We all did transform

It's not about the certificate
Or a pass or a fail
But continually striving to make changes
Whatever the scale

Hopefully this poem
Has made it clear for you to see
How things went in the journey
Of Top Talent and Me