

The Voluntary Sector Executives



Sometimes, the best way of supporting a person is to help them find support from their peers.

The chief executive's role is a lonely one – the truly effective leader accepts the inevitable distance between them and their people. But most CE's still need to share their hopes, ambitions and fears.

Health sector reform, the Personalisation Agenda, public sector austerity, market consolidation, commercialisation and competition, growing public need - **small to medium community-based organisations are facing unprecedented demand, change and uncertainty.** We wanted to provide a space for voluntary sector leaders to



Case study

explore the future and their position within it.

We sought and secured funding for a series of workshops designed for civil society leaders. **The aim was to help them develop robust and responsive organisational strategies** in light of and in spite of the environmental uncertainties. We considered the heart and purpose of their organisations, the challenges they faced and the places that they might end up. We looked at Complexity Theory and Legitimate Leadership, thought about planning in uncertain environments, considered developing services for new markets, and debated how to change workforce orientation. We used profiling to help diagnose our participants' personal attitudes towards risk and opportunity.

But more than this, much more than this, we facilitated trusting relationships between senior people from organisations in an increasingly



competitive market. And we provided a place where strategic managers could reflect on their day-to-day realities with the support of their peers.

One chief executive wrote: “I am more grounded in my ability to steer/steam through the changes ahead of us because I understand the world that has produced them better and that the resulting uncertainty is external to all of us.”

The acid test of this project’s success is the fact that, one year after this programme completed, **the members of this group continue to meet**, continue to share and continue to provide help for the most vulnerable in our society.

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