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Learning and Development

CASE STUDY

Sellafield Ltd - Behavioural Skills

October 2024

The Challenge

Sellafield Ltd is the company responsible for safely decommissioning the Sellafield Site on behalf of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. We are the world's most complex nuclear facility and has been at the centre of Britain's civil nuclear history ever since its foundation in the 1940s. We currently directly employ around 12,000 people and are owned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) which is a non-departmental public body of the UK government.

We procure training internally as well as via a Dynamic Purchasing System Framework. The Framework, which began in August 2018, means all work is bid for through mini competitions via two LOTS. Cosensa is one of the suppliers for LOT 2 – Behavioural Development.

In 2019, we conducted several Job and Task Analysis sessions from various roles within the organisation. This included both key safety roles and functional roles and covered a wide range of levels, leaders, technical specialists and critical safety delivery roles. The result was we identified a need for several training requirements which required we engage with external training partners on our Framework.

The Solution

During this contract there were five competitions to deliver courses which would help us meet the learning needs identified through our training needs analysis and job task analysis activities. Cosensa was ultimately successful in all those competitions and supported us with the development and delivery of following courses:

Facilitation Skills – two-day course delivered in the virtual classroom with proposed Action Learning Sets
Mentoring Skills – blended learning with pre read and one-day introductory course
Panel Based Interviewing Skills – one-day course delivered as a virtual classroom
Coaching Skills – blended learning with pre read and one-day introductory course
Attendance Support & Welfare - half day programme delivered onsite with pre-read
Disciplinary & Complaints - half day programme delivered onsite with pre-read
Managing Performance - classroom delivery with pre-read
Organisational Skills - blended learningwith pre-read, prep work and one-day introductory course
Stakeholder Management & My Contribution - one day programme delivered in the classroom
Personal Resilience – one day programme delivered as a virtual classroom
Self-Confidence and Assertiveness – one day programme delivered as a virtual classroom
Professional Communication Skills – one day programme delivered as a virtual classroom

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We initially worked with Cosensa on the design and delivery of our **Facilitation Skills** course in 2020. This is a bespoke course designed in close consultation with our business representatives to ensure an exact match to our desired learning outcomes. Cosensa proposed a blended approach consisting of course delivery, action learning sets, and follow up observation and feedback. The course was developed to upskill those facilitating complex events, as well as staff who will occasionally be called upon to facilitate groups, meetings, and teams. Eighty staff were originally identified as requiring this training as part of our Transformation Programme; however, this was made available to a much wider group. Throughout the contract there were 72 deliveries of this programme to 434 delegates; there is an accompanying Case Study specific to this - Sellafield Facilitation Skills.

Cosensa won our second mini competition in 2021, the objective being to design a one-day **Mentoring Skills** course. We requested Cosensa's training consultants bring 'Best Practice Industry Methodology' to the content of this one-day course. This course was designed to be delivered as a virtual classroom and this landed well with the delegates; 41 events were delivered by the end of the contract period, upskilling 459 delegates.

To date 407 deliveries supporting over 5,200 of our colleagues

The 2021 contract also included a requirement for Cosensa to deliver our **Panel Based Interview Skills** training course which we were keen to re-engage after a period of non-delivery internally. Given this, we had a high demand to complete this training to support internal processes and the programme was delivered 50 times in total. Cosensa provided a responsive turn around to bring the course back online and understood our priorities, aligning the delivery accordingly.

Part of the same competition has been the delivery of a one-day **Coaching Skills** course which was created by our training team. Unlike the other two courses, this was delivered on a face-to-face basis. Cosensa's trainers completed Train theTrainer activities at the end of 2021 allowing them to deliver this for us going forward. The Cosensa training team delivered this course to 41 cohorts over the course of the contract.

A further mini-competition won by Cosensa in August 2022 was a more extensive requirement than previous competitions: to design and deliver both **Stakeholder Management & My Contribution** and **Organisational Skills**, and to deliver and bring Best Industry Practice to existing Sellafield programmes:

- **Attendance Support & Welfare**
- **Disciplinary and Complaints**
- **Managing Performance**

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Stakeholder Management & My Contribution was a new one-day programme to build the skills, knowledge and behaviours of delegates to support effective collaboration. Similar to the Mentoring Skills programme, we needed Cosensa's expertise and their training consultant to bring their experience and knowledge to the design of this course. However, unlike Mentoring Skills, we required this be delivered in a classroom environment. This programme was successfully delivered 16 times over the period of the contract.

We had determined the need for an additional course: **Organisational Skills**. The objective of this training was to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours to effectively enhance personal organisational skills. This programme was delivered remotely using the virtual classroom Teams environment and the course was carefully constructed to take into account the specific needs and working environments for those at Sellafield. By the end of September 2024, this programme was delivered 18 times to 206 delegates.

As part of this requirement, we had three courses which were previously delivered by internal staff at Sellafield:

- **Attendance Support & Welfare**
- **Disciplinary and Complaints**
- **Managing Performance**

All three of these courses are highly sought after and a decision was made to engage the support of an external provider. These formed the final part of this mini-competition which Cosensa had successfully bid for. Once again, Cosensa's facilitators brought their industry expertise to enhance the delivery of these programmes and they were supported by Case Workers in the classroom to ensure they are relevant and on-point with the current Sellafield approach.

The demand for these courses was high and Cosensa delivered these twice monthly to help meet the requirements of the business: **Attendance Support & Welfare** (41 deliveries, 563 delegates) and **Disciplinary & Complaints** (41 deliveries, 491 delegates). Likewise, **Managing Performance** proved a very popular programme and was delivered 37 times to the end of September 2024 supporting 448 line managers in our business.

Cosensa's expertise and dedication, combined with their strong organisational approach, make them a valuable partner in developing our team's skills and confidence.

Remote Learning Courses

In September 2023, Cosensa successfully bid for the final mini-competition we ran as part of this DPS. This required the delivery of three programmes as virtual classrooms over Teams:

- **Personal Resilience**
- **Professional Communication Skills**
- **Self-Confidence and Assertiveness**

This smaller contract is ongoing and these courses are each delivered on a monthly basis by Cosensa. Although designed by another training provider, Cosensa picked these courses up and have successfully delivered them for 12 months to a total of 1380 delegates. The content is regularly reviewed by Cosensa and our agreed review process considers any proposed amendments carefully before implementing them.

The Approach

We have been impressed with Cosensa's innovative approach to design. They have included a variety of learning methodology that engage our people in the training, including a number of Sellafield relevant case studies bringing theory to life.

The team at Cosensa also had four demonstration videos produced. They sourced, engaged and project managed a professional video company to record these. The first video observes a mentoring scenario in practice. This scenario progresses to the coaching course where the person previously being mentored, becomes the coachee in a related on the job coaching scenario. The final video is on panel based interviewing training and relates to the relevant recruitment for a post at a level approved by Sellafield.

Cosensa's trainers have done an excellent job of designing and writing the scenarios, by working closely with our operational representatives. The scenarios are authentic to Sellafield and our staff who attend the courses can relate to them. Cosensa have also been very helpful in offering expert advice on development of our panel based interviewing course, adding new and interesting practical application activities e.g., the panel levelling activity.

The Outcome

The courses Cosensa delivered for us number **407 deliveries to date**, **supporting over 5,200 delegates.** The delivery of the Remote Training contract is ongoing until September 2025, with the option for us to extend and courses scheduled for one session each month on Teams.

We have received excellent feedback from delegates across the business, demonstrated by the results collated below:

Evaluation Activities

Cosensa noted as part of their tender submissions they use the Kirkpatrick Model to assess programme effectiveness. This was clearly demonstrated by the reports they produced focusing initially on Levels 1 (reaction) and 2 (post-course learning). These first level assessments originally involved manual data collection using printed forms. However, this proved inefficient, so from August 2023 the online tool Cosena use called Coursecheck.com was used, streamlining reporting and ensuring data security.

To analyse deeper impacts at Levels 3 and 4, follow-up questionnaires were sent to 194 delegates from May to July 2023, covering all courses delivered to that date. With a 72% response rate, results indicated an average **33% improvement in participants' performance against objectives**. Feedback highlighted themes of better stakeholder engagement, improved communication and coaching, increased confidence, structured planning and broader process understanding. Many applied skills broadly, enhancing job efficiency and communication, with training reinforcing existing skills while introducing new methods.

With our support, Cosensa went on to conduct Level 4 analysis. This involved gathering managers' feedback to evaluate workplace application of training. Managers of the 140 respondents were contacted, yielding a 26.43% response rate. Findings indicated a **42% average improvement in delegate's knowledge and confidence.** Managers reported practical application of skills, such as handling attendance, supporting staff welfare, mentoring, interview panel participation, and supplier engagement. Some training reinforced knowledge for the more experienced managers in the cohorts, confirming procedural understanding.

This has proved to be a valuable piece of work for us as we don't often get the chance to explore in detail the impact or effectiveness of our training delivery.

Social Value

Although there was no Social Value requirement stipulated at the point of contract with Sellafield, Cosensa proactively offered to contribute to the Cumbrian community. This led to a collaboration with Bedrock Basics, part of Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service and the Transforming West Cumbria programme. This initiative, funded by Sellafield Ltd and the NDA, aims to address entrenched social and economic challenges.

Bedrock Basics sought to engage non-profit organisations in West Cumbria on health and safety topics, targeting 30 organisations over six months. Cosensa allocated a £1,000 budget for 30 eLearning licenses covering courses such as Risk Assessment and Fire Safety. Gordon Henry, the Bedrock Basics Development Officer, spoke very highly of his engagement with Cosensa. In particular, he valued the trial access he was given to assess course suitability and also the promotional support and management of eligibility checks provided by Cosensa.

Initial engagement fell slightly short, so adjustments were made including the addition of hygiene-related courses which improved participation. Cosensa's flexibility and ongoing support were praised, leading to 19 organisations benefiting from the courses and the 30 licenses available. This engagement opened new opportunities for Bedrock Basics to connect with various groups, enhancing community outreach and training access.

Gordon highlighted Cosensa's dedication, noting Laura's involvement and understanding of community needs as instrumental in fostering a strong partnership. There is a full Case Study associated with this delivery which provides more detail and a full testimony from Gordon.

Testimony

Working with Cosensa has been instrumental in the success of our behavioural skills training initiatives at Sellafield Ltd. Their flexibility, commitment, and ability to tailor each course to our specific needs have been impressive. Through excellent contract management, regular review meetings, and effective scheduling, Cosensa ensures a seamless experience, adapting promptly to our evolving requirements. The quality of their training, covering everything from Facilitation, Coaching, Mentoring through to Performance Management, has consistently received excellent feedback and evaluation results from our staff. Cosensa's expertise and dedication, combined with their strong organisational approach, make them a valuable partner in developing our team's skills and confidence.

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