

Case Study

Leadership Development

Keith Edmonson – Centre Manager, Lambeth Council

Keith Edmonson is a Day Centre Manager for Lambeth Council. The day centre is a local authority provision working with adults with a physical or sensory disability within Lambeth Council. The service includes working with the NHS in providing rehabilitation services, providing respite care and support, as well as vocational and employment opportunities.

The Day Centre Keith manages has been looking into the social enterprise model, and are at the beginning of their journey as they navigate the current public sector climate. Keith did not feel confident that he had the skills to lead his staff team and organisation through a process of change, and wanted support to develop as an individual in order to then develop the service he was leading.

In looking for support, Keith attended the Emerging Social Enterprise Leadership course run by [Social Enterprise UK](#) and delivered by [Real Partners CIC](#). The programme took place over several months in early 2011 and included personal development days, social enterprise visits and a networking event. Learning more about social enterprise and getting excited about the business model was a large benefit of attending the course for Keith, but most importantly, as the course was about him and for him, he was able to identify his strengths and weaknesses as a leader; figuring out the groundwork of his own leadership style and how he approaches his work.

As the course was attended by a number of other emerging leaders in the sector, Keith was encouraged to be travelling on a similar path with leaders who are on the same journey, despite having different focuses to their organisations; co-learning with leaders from small social enterprises looking to expand, as well as those looking to start up a social enterprise from a public sector or charity organisation. Taking time away from day to day business to hear from peers as well as experienced senior leaders who can discuss both their successes and failures was a helpful opportunity for Keith to gather his thoughts about the visions and direction of the service he manages.

The course has had a large impact on Keith's mindset and approach as a leader. The one-to-one coaching available helped Keith to identify issues around how he handles tasks and situations he doesn't particularly want to address, especially around people management, and gave him tools to prevent these situations reaching crisis point. The materials from the course are also now useful resources for Keith to refer back to as a reference as he continues his development as a leader.

Keith's advice for social enterprise leaders:



- **Have a vision – you've got to have the enthusiasm and drive yourself before you can lead your team through that.**
- **Expect late nights and early mornings!**
- **Stick with your vision regardless of what circumstances arise, although you will need to be flexible and consider different routes in order to achieve it.**

**For further details on Social Enterprise Leadership Development please contact:
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