

Getting Strategic with Digital Design

The opportunity

The challenge for Weaver – a highly successful digital design agency with international clients – was to get off the back-foot in their project work and become more proactive in shaping robust project plans with clients. Luke, Weaver founder and director, was getting frustrated by client commissions which were too often hijacked during delivery by lack of joined-up thinking and planning prior to commission.

"Jos has been instrumental in Weaver's recent reworking of our services proposition. She has also delivered effective and inspirational coaching and facilitation services to our clients. Quick to grasp the most complex of concepts, Jos is nevertheless a real people person — I challenge you not to warm to her as she guides you to embody the very best of your potential."

Luke Razzell, Founder, weaverdigital.com

Capella's support

After a series of coaching sessions focussing on Weaver's strategy for business development – conducted both face to face and on Skype – Weaver commissioned us to work with them to co-produce a new product for their clients, Design Launchpad. The aim was to fully unpack the thinking behind each design commission during an 'inception phase', using a combination of questionnaires, coaching conversations and facilitated workshops.

The strategy purpose workshop we now run with Weaver for their clients uses some of our favourite Breakthrough Method techniques. We start by using our pre-working research to tell the story of their business back to the group, a powerful way for the client to step back and see what they have achieved and where their major challenges are.

We then quickly move into customer and stakeholder needs analysis, using 'empty chair' role reversal, which allows participants to step into their customers' shoes and discover more about how their services and products could meet needs. Key messaging emerges from this phase. 'Future projection' activity then helps unlock unconscious thinking and solutions, by inviting clients to 'visit' a notional future where a great outcome has already been achieved, and describing key steps taken.

The outcome

Fast paced, purposeful and client responsive, these workshops are helping Weaver clients ensure they are evolving solutions the whole team can buy into, and spending their money on a design project which has been fully thought through, with powerful and consistent messaging. So everyone's happy!

Business Growth through Employee Engagement

The opportunity

The founder of Passion Inc, a highly successful employee engagement company with some of the biggest names in UK business on its client list, first approached us looking for coaching support: victims of their own success, Passion had to build capacity fast.

“I don’t know where I would have been now if I hadn’t met you a year ago. I could never have achieved what I have this year without your support.”

Capella’s support

Having found the coaching sessions transformative (visionary business planning in place, effective time-management strategies implemented) we moved to the next step: team development.

Training in commercial story-telling skills helped further develop and refine the team’s already highly developed communication skills. Developing collaborative working practices helped overcome the information sharing challenges created by a flexible part-time workforce. And perhaps most importantly, the team needed to understand and get fully behind their founder’s ambitious transformative vision for the company, ‘To help transform the competitiveness of British business.’

The initial story-telling skills workshop produced quick results. The next day an excited team member contacted us: “That was amazing! I used your techniques and just had the best client call ever. It really works!”

We ran two more workshops, using systems enactment work to map stakeholders and commercial territory, then giving the team a chance to fully get to grips with the company vision, input to its further development, and finally articulate how they could best contribute to team development and share their skills more effectively.

The outcome

Using our Breakthrough techniques allowed the team to clearly articulate the ‘Passion magic’ in a way which left them feeling really proud. Motivation and interest levels, already very high, shot up further once individuals saw how transferable skills and mutual support could be of huge use to address work-load issues in the team.

Next steps

Now Passion would like us to get more involved with their client work. “We want you to help us facilitate sessions for our clients so we can help them use storytelling and systems work to transform engagement with their workforces.” Something we’re more than happy to do.

Learning the art of Breakthrough Coaching

The opportunity

South Leicestershire College wanted to do a lot more to support their students in fulfilling their potential, developing wellbeing and leading aspirational lives. Their new Progress Coach team each had a case load of up to 120 students, and were responsible for running both 1:1 coaching sessions and a full programme of group tutorial sessions every week. With diverse backgrounds, and most having little experience of coaching or running groups, upskilling and supporting the team was a significant challenge for the college.

“Jos’s coaching and training programme got us to step out of our comfort zones and do our work to a higher standard than we dreamed possible, within a shorter timescale - and all with smiles on our faces.”

Capella’s support

We were commissioned to run a one-year development programme for the new team, including regular 1:1 coaching support and supervision. The need for this intensive resource commitment soon became apparent - after a buoyant and inspirational initial training day, the coaches were quickly overwhelmed by the practical and emotional demands of their new role.

Capella’s coaching 1:1 support for the team during this initial phase was so successful that their coach was affectionately nicknamed ‘The Wizard’, as staff were magically ‘transformed’, several from near collapse, during their 40 minute sessions. Key Breakthrough activities such as role mapping and reversal, script development, future projection and internal state work were instrumental in enabling this transformational magic to happen at speed.

Having experienced our techniques at first hand, the group were highly receptive to learning how to do the work themselves. During training sessions, they learned a basic ‘Coaching Drill’, then extended from this to learn specific Capella techniques which develop self awareness, self-agency and imaginative possibilities for coachees. This learning was underpinned by key psychology concepts (re-framing, growth mind-sets, solutions-focussed approaches, behaviour change techniques, somatic listening and mindfulness).

The outcome

The team wrote up case studies, revealing a level of confidence and skill in responding to the needs of highly challenging and complex student needs which amazed and delighted us. Motivation, engagement and team identity grew exponentially, with the team learning to self-lead collaboratively, and spreading their great practice sideways to teachers, managers and other staff who were involved with the Progress Coach project.