



MCA // CONSULTING
EXCELLENCE

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UK consulting is renowned around the world. Management Consultancies Association (MCA) members make vital contributions to the economy, public services and our national life. Consulting is a great profession, a real vocation. Consulting Excellence is the new hallmark of quality for management consulting firms, and marks a step-change for the industry.

In Consulting Excellence, MCA members have created a scheme that celebrates consulting's value and also commits them to the highest standards of ethical behaviour, client service, and professionalism. Available only to MCA members, Consulting Excellence is the new badge of quality in consulting. It will help clients make better buying decisions. It will promote collaboration between clients and consultants to achieve great outcomes.

And will help MCA firms recruit and retain the best people.

As a proud MCA member and signatory to Consulting Excellence, iMPOWER are adopting the nine principles of the scheme as they chime perfectly with our existing codes of practice, and how we operate as a business. Our commitments to the Consulting Excellence initiative are set out below.

Ethical Behaviour

1. We are responsible and good citizens

- We shape public policy.
- iMPower has allocated days in which it encourages staff to undertake Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) work to support local communities and causes close to its employees.
- Employees can nominate a charity each month, and we invite employees to speak about causes they are passionate about at company events.
- As a company we are committed to reinvesting back into the community and partake in the Give As You Earn scheme.
- In addition to a generous benefits package, we encourage health and wellbeing amongst our workforce by subsidising gym memberships, and providing a bicycle loan scheme.
- We use environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- We do not use disposable cups and plates, etc.

2. We conduct our business ethically

- We only bid for work that we have the capacity and capability to deliver.
- We price our work based on the number of days we think it will actually take to deliver it - we do not add in additional days to generate extra profit. We are always transparent regarding how our work is scoped and costed.
- We are honest with our customers about whether we think their desired outcomes are achievable.
- We pay our subcontractors and associates promptly, and do not withhold payment until we have received payment from the client.
- We pay our suppliers promptly.
- Our staff are all paid above the London Living Wage, and we ensure our suppliers pay their staff at this level too.
- Where mistakes are made and we over invoice, we take steps to ensure that errors are identified and corrected quickly.
- We take professional risks to deliver.

3. We foster an ethical culture

- Our process for promotion is transparent and open to all staff.
- We encourage staff to record their time honestly, and not 'hide' time to distort project performance.
- Our senior team all operate an 'open door' policy and welcome suggestions on how things can be improved.
- We have a Whistleblowing Policy which sets out that staff members raising genuine concerns will not under any circumstances be subjected to any form of detriment or disadvantage as a result of having raised their concerns.
- We stock our kitchen with Fairtrade products.
- We care about outcomes for citizens.

Client Service and Value

4. We provide excellent consulting services which deliver the outcomes clients seek and need

- 65% of our work is repeat business; thus evidencing that our clients are happy with the work we do and the outcomes we deliver.
- We carry out 'in-flight' reviews to ensure the quality of our work, flag any risks to successful delivery and maintain a focus on achieving outcomes.
- All of our projects involve coproducing outcomes with client staff; not only does this ensure better outcomes but it also means we can transfer skills and knowledge to local staff to ensure sustainability.
- Our project planning approach ('Storyboarding') means investing time in detailed planning and scoping to ensure that outcomes can be achieved within the project timescales.
- We focus on outcomes that our clients are trying to achieve and we challenge their thinking as we believe their specification will fail to deliver their needs, even if that means that our overall fee goes down.

5. We are transparent with clients and respond to their concerns

- Where data or resources provided to us are insufficient to deliver the project outputs, we flag this to the client and look to re-scope the project to take this into account.
- Our in-flight reviews give our clients the opportunity to raise any concerns with a member of IMPOWER's Executive Team. The review involves a thorough assessment of risk across the project and provides an opportunity for further mitigating actions to be undertaken.
- Our contracts include clear processes for change management; we recognise that client needs change over time and we have processes to ensure that we can capture and respond to these in a flexible way.
- Our contracts stipulate the need for regular and on-going meetings with project sponsors to ensure their views are regularly captured and reflected in the work undertaken.

6. We always strive to improve the value we can deliver to our clients

- We employ empathetic and experienced people who are passionate about transforming public services.
- We invest time in developing new tools and propositions to enable our clients to deliver sustainable change.
- All of our projects undergo an internal quality and risk audit after they have closed to ensure that our own high quality standards are achieved. Common themes are collated and training developed to address any inadequacies.
- All of our projects are subject to a 'Lessons Learnt Review' so that we can capture areas of success, and areas for improvement, and ensure that these are fed back in to how we scope and deliver future work.

Professional Development

7. We undertake training and professional development planning each year

- We prepare an annual training and development plan based upon the assessed skills gaps and needs of each individual.
- iMPower allocates all employees with a Performance Manager and Team Leader to help effectively support them in the bi-annual appraisal process and provide constructive feedback.
- We hold masterclasses so staff can share skills learned.

8. We promote strong core consulting capabilities and specialisms in our consultants and teams

- Productive and cohesive team working is fostered at iMPower with the provision of team and support networks, and professional development around team behaviour.
- We strive to build a solid foundation of consulting skills through the provision of core consulting training, and regularly assess capabilities against current and emerging business needs.
- iMPower encourage employees to pursue activities and events which enable them to increase their specialist knowledge and gain industry insight.

9. We support our employees' career progression, professional development and welfares

- iMPower welcomes all requests, where appropriate, for flexible and alternative ways of working.
- All staff are encouraged to provide feedback on our culture and working practices which we are committed to using as a base for continuous improvement.
- iMPower provides all new hires with a thorough and comprehensive induction schedule covering introductions to all areas of the business and protected time for shadowing. As a company we champion our comprehensive competency framework and use this as a consistent base for measuring performance.
- Consultants are encouraged to honestly reflect upon their performance, both with regards to specific project work and overall picture, and highlight any areas for development.