

THE MCA AWARDS 2022

YOUNG CONSULTANT AND TIMES CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

PUBLIC SECTOR PERFORMANCE

Results business: Marnie Grant helps services to build on their strengths



AMIT LENNON

Smart solution to supporting the NHS

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the UK with one patient diagnosed every ten minutes, according to Breast Cancer Now.

The NHS Breast Cancer Screening Programme invites women aged 50 to 71 to have mammograms so they can be diagnosed as early as possible when the disease is easier to treat, ensuring they have the best chance of a good outcome.

Along with bowel cancer and cervical screening, it is one of 11 historic national screening programmes in England. Founded in 1988, the breast cancer screening service is one of the longest established and saves about 1,300 lives each year.

While those most at risk of breast cancer continued to be screened throughout the pandemic, additional measures were put in place to fully restore services that had been affected.

Breast screening remains a priority for the NHS and it is now inviting more people for mammograms than before the pandemic, with additional NHS investment to increase capacity and workforce.

Reviewing the data to understand where extra support was needed most following the pandemic has been key to ensuring people were seen for breast screening as quickly as possible.

As part of these plans, the NHS Breast Cancer Screening Programme worked with healthcare management consultancy CF to develop an analytical tool, designed to support enhanced data analysis.

The project saw a 35 per cent increase in those starting treatment in December 2021, compared to the same period in 2020.

"This work is a great example of how we can use data and digital solutions to support the recovery of services," says Steve Spoerry, director of NHS Screening Recovery.

partners and get support faster."

Grant and her team, working with the council, started by investigating whether the council's existing assets – such as the workforce, partner organisations, voluntary sector partners, community groups, and friends and family of those in need – could be utilised in better ways.

Collecting and crunching this data enabled PwC's team to clearly show progress and double down on things that were working well. "We could say: 'We've tried a new process or built a new relationship with the voluntary sector, and by tracking it, we've seen these results.' Evidencing this kind of thing is what enabled us to drive positive change."

Ultimately, by identifying the great work that was already happening and enabling more of it, the team was able to play to the council's strengths and build on them. "In every social care team, there are amazing examples of employees coming up with people-focused, innovative solutions,"

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PwC's Marnie Grant is winner of both Young Consultant and Times Consultant of the Year at the MCA Awards 2022

The structural challenges facing the adult social care sector in the UK have been well documented. From rising demand and difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff to spiralling inflation, the industry is facing a perfect storm as the country heads into winter.

Last year, the government announced an investment of £500 million into the sector but it has been made clear that funding alone will not fix adult social care's underlying problems.

For PwC consultant Marnie Grant – winner of both the Young Consultant and Times Consultant of the Year awards – these challenges are well understood. In 2021, she helped lead a large adult social care transformation for a local council.

In the wake of Covid, levels of isolation had increased along with

requests for support, but the council was dealing with growing pressures on services across the board and staff shortages due to illness.

"Covid added huge pressure to the council's teams and they were working phenomenally hard to try to support some really vulnerable people," explains Grant. "But it also showed just how capable and passionate the communities were."

A big part of this was simply setting out a set of goals that each party could get behind and move towards together. "It was about having a clearly defined strategy of what everyone was committed to achieving, learning from what worked during the pandemic and using this to shape future ways of working," Grant says.

Another part of the solution was to work in frontline blended teams consisting of council, partners and PwC to examine a person's journey from start to finish and identify opportunities for improvement. She adds: "We needed to understand where we could do things differently, work better with

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Changing the conversation about the menopause

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DIVERSE THINKING

EY's Sonia Sharma on being a champion for inclusion

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FIT FOR SUCCESS

Grant Thornton teams up with Sport England

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PLANET FASHION

How climate-conscious brands can trace garments back to source

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Tamzen Isacsson
Chief Executive,
Management Consultancies Association

Q&A

Management consultants are making a positive change to key industries

• **What are the main areas that clients are asking for help with at the moment?**

MCA member firms are assisting tens of thousands of organisations across the UK and the world in business-critical areas. We are in a period of transformation in society and that is reflected in an unprecedented demand for consultancy services. Client investment in digital technology remains at historical highs and there is strong demand for specialist skills in the fields of supply chains and decarbonisation. Our consultants are delivering a positive impact in multiple areas, as the projects in this year's MCA Awards highlight. This goes from fortifying cyber security in our defence sector to keeping our financial institutions secure, reforming adult care, improving breast screening and delivering safer railways.

• **What makes management consulting such an attractive career?**

In management consulting you will get so many rich experiences because you are

interfacing with multiple companies, which are juggling varied challenges. You will be entrusted to deal with some of your clients' most intractable problems at critical moments. Carrying that responsibility, winning the trust of clients, solving problems and then delivering is incredibly rewarding. I have the privilege of sitting in on many of the MCA Awards interviews; hearing the passion people have for their clients is incredibly motivating. This is a profession where you can get a diversity of experiences and you will be intellectually challenged. You will never get bored. And your personal and professional development never ends.

• **Management consultancy is dynamic and fast-moving. How does it offer personal development, career longevity and leadership opportunities?**

Our member firms provide brilliant training for new recruits joining at entry level or after working in another industry. On average, MCA members invest eight

days of training and development per year for each member of staff. Many stay in the profession for decades and our network of Young MCA consultants provides workshops on career mapping along with inspirational talks from senior leaders. The Chartered Management Consultant Award was developed to give consultants a professional pathway in their careers, along with a commitment to high standards. If you join one of the 50 leading firms backing the Chartered Award, you will have the opportunity to work within a high-quality learning and competency framework. This requires the demonstration and maintenance of individual professional competencies and the ability to prove yourself as a leader.

• **The industry has made a concerted effort to be inclusive. Why should it be a career option for women and people from underrepresented backgrounds?**

Our industry values diversity. It should be and is a career option for women and people from underrepresented backgrounds. Reading the interviews in this supplement will demonstrate that anyone can be successful in this industry, regardless of their background, with firms making huge efforts to ensure they are encouraging diversity and inclusion at all levels. Through our Consulting Excellence principles, which all MCA members adopt, we embrace diversity and inclusion and understand the positive benefit of having people from

different backgrounds working for our companies and clients. We recruit and retain people from a diverse talent pool and strive to build cultures where difference is respected and celebrated. Furthermore, we are committed to developing diverse future leaders and ensuring their progression in the industry. At the MCA we are supporting efforts to share best practice, which includes encouraging the collection of data to assess diversity and inclusion policies.

• **How is rising inflation having an impact on the industry? Are management consultants doing their bit to mitigate the cost of living crisis?**

All sectors are being impacted by rising inflation and this is a priority for our clients. Our members are providing critical support to tackle these issues to ensure frontline services are not heavily impacted and that our public services are able to work efficiently. Better productivity is how the best organisations cope with inflation – yet often managers don't have the time or the tools to deliver it. The same goes for how organisations are set up. Reimagining how a product or a service is made or delivered needs external support. As an industry, we also contribute hundreds of millions of pounds a year to charitable projects across the UK, particularly to those impacted by the cost of living crisis.

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Thrive.**

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OLIWIA WIDUTO JOHN WHITE JENN PATERNOSTER SOMYA VENKAT
JONATHAN EIGHTEEN JIM LENGA-KROMA SHIVANI MAITRA STEFFANY IVEY LAURA TAVENER
JORDAN OLNEY NATALIE COX USMAN ASLAM EMMA HASLAM EMILY WILSON RACHEL
CHARLTON TOM HITCHINGS LIAM DAVIES KATHERINE WILSON SARAH WELLS
EDGER SAMIER ABOUSAADA HUGO WISEMAN ERIKA MANTOURA JOSH GRAHAM
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SIMRAN MOHANI RAHUL NERUR MANTOURA RACHEL PATSY NEVILLE MARTIN ASPELL HUGO WISEMAN ERIKA MANTOURA JOSH GRAHAM

CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR



Ready to learn: the key to staff retention? Upskilling the workforce

In good company

How a partnership between AstraZeneca and Deloitte allowed thousands of employees to reach their full potential

Attracting, developing and retaining talent have all raced up the agenda of best-in-class companies such as AstraZeneca. The Cambridge-based global biopharmaceutical firm, which developed the first Covid-19 vaccine, has a decades-long reputation for helping millions of patients worldwide.

As part of its plan to harness the capabilities of its 83,100-strong workforce, it has put in place a strategy to “produce growth through innovation” by making the company a great place to work.

Marc Howells, vice president of global talent and development at AstraZeneca, explains: “If you are creating an environment where diverse teams of talented people can learn, stretch and grow, that becomes an attractive factor for employees. That in turn allows us to continue scientific invention and to work on breakthrough medicines.”

As part of the transformation of AstraZeneca’s talent, learning and development operations, Deloitte helped to establish a global talent and development centre of excellence, created shared learning services and built an IT infrastructure to support learning.

Deloitte also designed a new funding approach to identify cost savings. Its impact speaks for itself. AstraZeneca now makes an astonishing \$8 million-a-year saving, despite delivering to an employee base that has grown significantly. According to Howells: “The programme has become a big retention tool – staff who have gone through the learning and development interventions

are staying at twice the rate of normal attrition levels within the organisation.”

Compared to 2018, the range of programmes has grown by nearly 600 per cent and is now available in 14 languages. Perhaps most significantly, the number of employees who now feel their skills are being stretched and developed stands at a positive rating of 89 per cent, up 10 percentage points since the programme started.

As a result, Deloitte and AstraZeneca’s learning transformation was highly commended in the MCA Awards’ Change and Transformation in the Private Sector category.

The two companies had worked together on previous HR projects but it’s the first time that Howells and Jonathan Eighteen, a director within Deloitte’s Human Capital practice, have worked together. “Deloitte has a strong reputation in the global market in terms of business transformation, support, breadth of skills and resources,” says Howells. “It also has a deep expertise in the learning transformation space.”

Crucially, this initiative had internal buy-in from the start. After it had been signed off, Eighteen, as project director, got to work with his team at the end of 2018. Howells and Eighteen ensured that a senior representative from every business unit from the pharma group was involved. AstraZeneca’s chief HR officer also co-sponsored the project.

89%
of employees
feel positively
developed



It’s helping us to grow leaders who are aligned to our purpose

Eighteen led a core leadership group of three to four Deloitte practitioners, but drew on a multidisciplinary team of up to 40 during the project. For example, Deloitte specialists in learning technology, strategy, change and organisational design were among the experts pulled in from the UK, US, Belgium, Israel and India.

Key to the project’s success was the deep, interpersonal relationship that developed between the management consultant and the client. “There has been a fantastic chemistry between the two firms, sharing the kind of values in terms of what we’re trying to achieve,” says Eighteen. “The strong relationships, clarity of the plan and the ability to adapt were all crucial ingredients.”

However, Eighteen points out that he and his team weren’t just bringing a “cookie-cutter approach” to proceedings. “We were genuinely trying to make a difference, work in partnership and drive new, innovative ways of working,” he says. “A key reason for success was the way we were able to incorporate a healthy degree of challenge. This led to several breakthrough solutions being identified.”

Howells adds: “On numerous occasions, people commented that you couldn’t tell who was AstraZeneca and who was Deloitte. That brought a richness to the thinking and the innovation to find solutions, plus a level of support to test whether the ideas we were coming up with were the best step forward for the business.”

The pandemic, however, provided a potential obstacle. “It would have been easy for AstraZeneca to say: ‘We are in crisis and are trying to provide a vaccine, so we are going to turn these big projects off.’ But it stayed the course,” explains Eighteen.

Within four weeks of the first lockdown, AstraZeneca was able to transition all of its learning offerings on to a digital platform. The company doubled down, putting its top 150 leaders through an immersive programme at the height of the pandemic. “It enabled them to lead through Covid and have the skill set, the tenacity and the resilience to deal with the complexities of that environment,” says Howells.

Deloitte and AstraZeneca’s work has been shared with other organisations, including the World Food Programme. “One of the legacies for AstraZeneca is that it is now not just a best-in-class organisation inside the industry around this topic, but it’s held up as an example worldwide,” says Eighteen.

“The project meant thinking about how we can enable people to realise their potential faster,” adds Howells. “For example, those who have been through a development centre are promoted 25 per cent quicker than their peers. It’s helping us to grow leaders who are aligned to our purpose. We have ended up with an incredibly successful outcome – one that is now building a legacy within the organisation.”

John Crowley

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

1,300
lives are saved
each year
thanks to breast
screening

“The pandemic inevitably presented challenges as our services came under pressure, but NHS staff, alongside partners, have worked incredibly hard to increase the capacity of our breast screening services, making them more accessible than ever before – with evening and weekend clinics as well as convenient screening vans in local communities.

“Invitations are now being issued above pre-pandemic levels, and we are actively encouraging women who have been invited but haven’t attended an appointment to contact their local screening service to book one as soon as they can – regardless of when they were first invited.”

As a result of this collaborative working, most services are back on track and have cleared the longest waiting lists.

Dr Jo Andrews, a former clinician and partner at CF who supported this work, said: “We started by working with the NHS England team getting into how the breast cancer service programme operated. We needed to get to grips with the data to reach a common understanding of where services needed most support.”

Delving into the data enabled CF to identify the breast screening teams that were on track to recover quite quickly and those that needed more support in reaching women. They were also able to look at the different models the NHS screening services were using to deliver the service and therefore where and what type of support was needed to fill any gaps.



We needed to get to grips with the data to reach a common understanding

By identifying interventions and providing a new tool to offer more appointments than usual, including outside usual hours, it meant that the service could work to reduce any delays. “The amount we were able to do during that time was game-changing,” adds Andrews.

Dr Louise Wilkinson, NHS national specialist adviser for breast screening, added: “Breast screening saves lives as cancers can be diagnosed and treated earlier than they would have been without screening. Therefore, the ongoing investment, accessibility of services and innovation into the programme is crucial for supporting the NHS to deliver such an important service to thousands of women in England each year.”

CF and the NHS Breast Screening Programme in England have now been jointly honoured by winning Performance Improvement in the Public Sector at the MCA Awards through this partnership and collaboration.

Gabriella Griffith

Tap into student ambition

A centralised IT system is helping one university to provide better support

In a competitive market for higher education, universities are under more pressure than ever to provide students with a rich and supportive experience.

But many are trying to deliver that experience with outdated IT systems and infrastructure. This was the challenge that London South Bank University (LSBU), with the help of professional services firm PwC, was determined to confront.

“We’re committed to continuously improving the student experience, recognising that this begins even before they join us,” explains Patrick Callaghan, dean and professor of mental health science at LSBU.

But an IT infrastructure

comprising more than 30 different systems, including a student records set-up that was approaching the end of its life, was getting in the way of that.

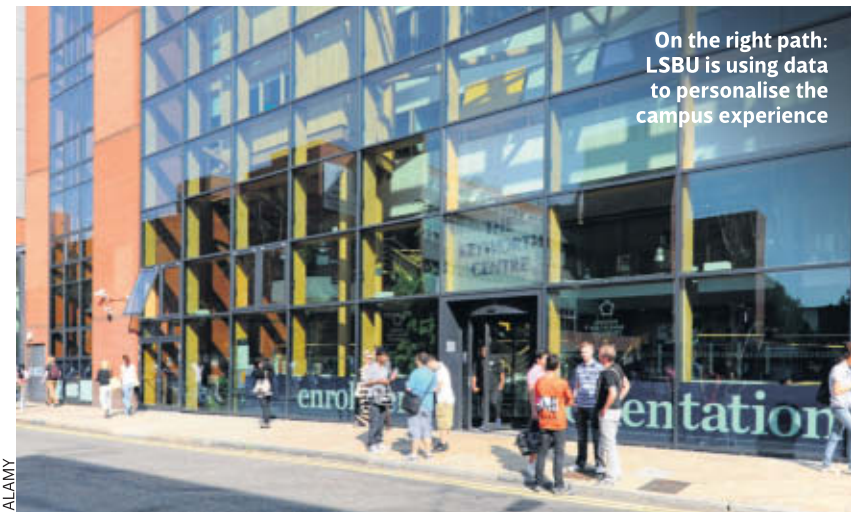
As a result LSBU partnered with PwC to build a single IT system that would give students far more support at every stage of their journey with the university – from registering for open days before joining, all the way through to graduation.

The university wanted a system that would make it easier for students to engage with their academic courses and teachers – to book appointments with staff online, for example. But it also wanted to strengthen its mental health and wellbeing support, especially with students suffering the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

For Caitroina McCusker, partner and head of education at PwC, the project was a significant but inspiring challenge. “None of the existing systems were capable of talking to one another, and while there was a wealth of student data, it was all held in silos, making it very difficult to get insight from it.”

Working together, PwC and LSBU installed a completely new IT platform at the university. The project, known as LEAP, was built on the foundations of Salesforce’s Education Data Architecture model.

The work has brought financial benefits and is on track to deliver



On the right path: LSBU is using data to personalise the campus experience

cost efficiencies of £8 million. But Callaghan says it is the broader benefits that students will really value.

“This shift is enabling us to deliver a much more personalised learning experience to each student,” he says. “It puts them in charge of activating the help and support they think they need.”

In recognition of their work, PwC and LSBU were winners in the Technology Transformation category at the MCA Awards.

LSBU has begun to make much greater use of data thanks to the integration of the new system. For example, it can quickly identify students beginning

to struggle. The data shows when students are not visiting the campus, not using library facilities, or not meeting deadlines, which enables early intervention before students start thinking about dropping out.

Similarly, the system can be used to identify students who may need additional mental health support.

“One of our broader goals at LSBU is to increase social mobility through education,” adds Callaghan. “The new IT system is already supporting that goal, enabling us to interact much more personally and actively with each of our students.”

David Prosser

Congratulations to our MCA Awards 2022 winners

When we take their human ingenuity and expertise and combine it with the right technology, we’ve shown how we can deliver sustained outcomes that make the difference.



Marnie Grant
Young Consultant of the Year
and The Times Consultant of the Year



PwC and London South Bank University
Technology Transformation



Delivering Better Outcomes for Children in Care
Best Use of Thought Leadership



Alicia Leavitt
Apprentice of the Year



PwC and National Grid
Change and Transformation
in the Private Sector



And our highly commended finalists

PwC’s Green Jobs Barometer Best Use of Thought Leadership

PwC with Network Rail Strategy

Honor King Apprentice of the Year

Guy Watmore Chartered Management Consultant of the Year

Adam Kavanagh Young Consultant of the Year

Caroline Canham Team Leader Consultant of the Year

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SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

Healthcare's roadmap to net zero

The true carbon footprint of this global sector was only recently discovered – now it's time for action

Global engineering and consulting firm Arup and nongovernmental organisation Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) have been highly commended in the inaugural Sustainability Award at the MCA Awards.

Their pioneering work – calculating the carbon footprint of the global healthcare sector and then providing a roadmap and the tools to reach net-zero emissions – has been fed back to 54 medical institutions across 21 countries. This represents more than 14,000 hospitals and health centres that have committed to halve emissions by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050.

Perhaps the biggest takeaway from the project has been the scale of the challenge. “We had some back-of-the-envelope calculations but we didn't know what the size of that carbon footprint was globally,” says Josh Karliner, director of global partnerships at HCWH.

They calculated that a startling 4.4 per cent of total global net emissions was down to the healthcare sector. If the global health sector were a country, it would be the fifth biggest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world.

“The figures are astounding,” Karliner adds. “Even though health is in the preamble of the United Nations climate convention [signed in 1992, when 154 nations committed to protect the integrity



Stepping out: it took innovative research to bring hospital emissions into focus

of the global environment], it has not been perceived as an emitting sector and so this was super innovative work that was needed.”

HCWH has been working for more than 25 years with the global health sector to help it reduce its environmental footprint – but its collaboration with Arup came about following a chance meeting.

Kristian Steele, associate director and head of climate change digital services at Arup, has been involved in understanding environmental effects and emissions for around 15 years.

Karliner and Steele had a meeting of minds at a conference hosted in 2017 by the United Nations. During their discussion, Steele identified that HCWH's climate narrative on healthcare was relevant to other sectors, including the built environment, in which Arup has expertise.

“I could see the projects and programmes of work I'd been delivering in the built environment could work in the healthcare sector in a way that Josh was looking for answers and information to drive his programmes,” says Steele.

The first output of their collaboration was the publication of HCWH's Climate Footprint report in September 2019. Ben Ashby, a senior consultant in Steele's team, says: “Both organisations took something of a risk because although we have track records and knowledge of health systems, no one had done this before.”

The project moved beyond this initial stage. The second part of the programme, the publication of the Global Road Map for Health Care Decarbonisation, laid out the basic solution. The work provided an evidence base for HCWH and

partners to lobby for healthcare decarbonisation at Cop26, the global climate summit held in Glasgow in 2021.

Since the event, almost 60 governments have committed to low carbon healthcare and many are committing to zero emissions.

Karliner says: “We've helped define the issue and accelerate the potential for transformational change. We have national ministries of health moving forward on the issue.”

The third part of the strategy is Operation Zero, a collaboration – starting with European governments – that is turning environmental pledges into programmes of action. “While we talk about net-zero healthcare, nobody really knows what it looks like yet. Providing the technical tools to public and private health sectors around the world is key and we're working to try to make this happen,” adds Karliner.

Steele says Operation Zero will empower governments to set up a baseline and roadmap for the decarbonisation of healthcare.

Arup has gained in many ways from working on this project. Steele says that it wants to be a thought leader in this space, not least because it has a thriving business in traditional engineering, logistics and supply chain management services within healthcare.

There was also immense personal satisfaction: “You're challenged, you're working on complicated models and interacting with healthcare leaders from the World Bank through to top research entities,” says Steele.

Parminder Bahra

Experts are on the money

KPMG helps Tesco beat challenges to roll out cloud-based payroll and HR system

As supermarkets faced the challenge of meeting shoppers' needs in the darkest days of the pandemic, transforming a colleague payment system may not have seemed important.

But a team combining Tesco's people department and professional services expert KPMG persevered, convinced the huge undertaking would bring worthwhile improvements for employees and company alike, as the supermarket continued to play a critical role during the pandemic. Successful trials and



pilot schemes for the cloud-based pay and HR system – called the People Programme – ran at a few pilot stores, in all offices and in Tesco's banking division in 2019.

Then, despite the pressures caused by multiple lockdowns, these trials were followed by successful rollouts of the system last year. Some 260,000 staff have fingertip access to pay and human resources information; and the scheme will be extended over the next two years until all 300,000 employees across the UK are covered.

They can check their salaries, look for overtime opportunities, arrange leave and update banking details on their mobile phones and other devices.

KPMG has supported Tesco on its People Programme since late 2017. The supermarket asked the team to undertake a review of the new payroll system – and KPMG recommended redesigned leadership and governance structures.

Under KPMG's guidance, the smooth implementation of the programme has brought recognition in the MCA Awards: Tesco and KPMG were highly commended in the category for Performance Improvement in the Private Sector.



KPMG brought leadership, rigour and governance at the right moment

Kevin O'Sullivan (left), the KPMG partner involved in the scheme, recalls planning the trials and rollouts at a time when Tesco found itself at the centre of the “challenge of feeding the nation”.

Supermarkets were grappling with supply issues caused by the pandemic, panic buying and the need to protect staff and shoppers with social distancing in stores. O'Sullivan says: “The introduction of the programme is a tribute to the motivation shown by those working on it.”

Tesco people director Robbie Dagger adds: “We always knew of the scale and complexity of what we were doing.” He praises KPMG's role in overcoming the challenges of building

the system, saying the consultancy brought “leadership, rigour and governance at the right moment”.

The initial rollouts were managed in stages, each involving 60,000 to 70,000 employees, until all UK stores were covered. In the final stages, the system will go live for office staff in India and Tesco's operations in the Republic of Ireland and other European nations.

At the same time as making life simpler for the workforce, and establishing exceptional accuracy on pay, the system has given significant cost and efficiency benefits to Tesco.

Further evolution is expected, bringing more improvements to the employee working experience while enabling managers to organise their teams more effectively. The addition of new applications is intended to create a one-stop shop offering employees information on rewards, benefits, training and more.

KPMG hails a “truly collaborative effort” – its expertise matched by Tesco's determination to “live up to its core philosophy that it is people who make the business”.

Colin Randall

SOCIAL VALUE

Taking a fresh look at midlife

When perimenopause began playing havoc with the lives of two high-achieving entrepreneurs, they set up an organisation that would help companies and their employees during the transition

Sam Simister was at the top of her career, enjoying a busy life as a board director at Innocent Drinks, when her world was turned upside down. “I started having anxiety attacks and I couldn’t remember what I was doing from one day to the next,” she recalls. “It turns out that I was perimenopausal – and woefully unprepared for it.”

She bumped into her good friend Heather Jackson, a dynamic, high-achieving founder who had recently sold her company to pursue new adventures. Jackson told Simister that she was also feeling terrible and was on antidepressants. “I said, ‘I don’t think you’re depressed, you’re

perimenopausal,’” Simister explains. Both women were shocked that they hadn’t been better prepared for the menopause and decided to support other women who might be feeling the same.

They commissioned a survey of more than 2,000 women aged between 35 and 60 to try to understand how women in midlife were feeling. This became the basis for the GenM Invisibility Report. “The data was pretty shocking. Two in three women felt blindsided by the menopause and one in two felt unprepared,” says Simister.

The research found that a one-stop shop for all things



Change makers:
Heather Jackson (left)
and Sam Simister,
founders of GenM

2 in 3
women feel
‘blindsided’ by
the menopause

menopausal was very much needed – and so GenM was born. But it quickly became apparent that trying to offer products, advice, books, ambassador programmes and blogs was stretching the pair too thinly. “We felt like busy fools,” explains Simister. “We wanted to create a commercial business – not to make money but to fund the change we wanted to see, and realised we needed a different approach.”

That’s when they contacted Leeds-based brand consultancy Propaganda. The team started to look into what GenM was trying to achieve and quickly came to the conclusion that for a start-up trying to be a one-stop shop required too much resource and investment.



We have built a foundation for increased visibility and collaboration

“The Invisibility Report actually gave us the idea,” explains Laura Chappill, one of Propaganda’s planners. “The research told us that 94 per cent of the menopause audience felt that they would benefit from brands being more inclusive, while 88 per cent told us that they wanted the workplace set up in a better way to help them through that transition.”

The team at Propaganda proposed that GenM could become a menopause partner for organisations – a professional body enabling brands of all shapes and sizes to reframe how they see the menopause. In this way, GenM would help them better cater for an underrepresented community with products and services while ensuring that the brands’ internal policies acknowledged the reality of the menopause and supported women through it.

The team came up with a pledge that partner brands can sign up to for three years. Depending on their size, organisations pay a fixed price in one of four tiers. To ensure this isn’t a tick-box exercise, a proactive programme has been created, involving thought leadership events, research and awards, to bring about concrete change. “The model is a holistic commitment around better educating, representing and serving this audience,” explains Melanie Beer, an account director at GenM.

“Partners pay a fee to access a range of tools and membership benefits.” Twelve months after launching, GenM is now working with 65 brands, ranging from big names such as M&S, Boots and Next, to smaller start-ups such as Wild Nutrition and Simba.

Partner sign-ups have generated £370,000 in that time, and that is projected to rise to £850,000 over the lifetime of those partnerships. For its recent awards programme, GenM had more than 30 entries from brands making a difference for the menopause. Following the launch of its Shattered campaign (aimed to help men understand the mental health implications of menopause), GenM reported a 49 per cent increase in online searches for “menopause”. Propaganda and GenM won the Social Value category at the MCA Awards.

“Through its strategic thinking, Propaganda was able to point out why business-to-business would be a better model for us,” says Simister.

“Brands are realising there needs to be a cultural change and they can be a part of driving it,” says Beer. “No one hits puberty without being warned of the impacts, why is this allowed to happen in middle life?”

Putting together a clear strategy is something Propaganda is proud of. “There are a lot of conversations happening in this space and it’s easy to veer,” says Beer. “But we have stayed true to GenM’s vision while building a foundation for increased visibility and collaboration.”

Gabriella Griffith

Congratulations
to our MCA
Awards finalists



Jessica Ridout
Team Leader Consultant
of the Year Finalist



Fathima Rahman
Inclusion Award Finalist



Rebs Foran-Coutts
Inclusion Award Finalist



Technology Transformation
in the Public Sector with
Public Health England Finalist



Technology Transformation
in the Public sector with
DHSC Finalist



Social Value with the
Home Office Finalist

BEST USE OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

A clarion call for carbon reduction

EY paired the leaders of today with those of tomorrow, each group driving the other towards climate action – and a greener future

Glasgow's Cop26 summit last year laid bare the urgent need for action on the climate emergency. The government had launched a roadmap called The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution some 12 months before the global gathering, but businesses across the country were also looking for steps to follow in the short term

Following a conversation with a global utility client, EY created the UK Climate Business Forum.

"We still had the question, 'Well, what can I do tomorrow?'" explains Samuel Pachoud, consulting energy transition leader at EY. "After some internal discussions and then with clients, we decided a good way to start answering that was to bring leaders together, both cross-sector and multi-generational, to include the leaders of tomorrow."

The forum is made up of two boards: the Business Leaders Board and the Future Leaders Board.

The first comprised C-suite business leaders from ten blue-chip companies, including Asos, BT, EDF and Network Rail.

The second featured young individuals aged 18 to 30 from a diverse array of backgrounds and with a strong knowledge of vital sustainability challenges.

The groups met once a month, separately to begin with, before coming together as one group to discuss their ideas.

To create a framework, the UK Climate Business Forum was framed by four central topics related to the UK's transition to net zero emissions and aligned with the government's Ten Point Plan: consumer-driven decarbonisation; climate jobs; the green and levelled-up infrastructure; and trade decarbonisation.

"We started by adding ideas to a shared visualisation board. No idea was a bad idea," says Hanna Leeson, a senior environmental engineer at BAE Systems who, at the age of 27, was on the Future Leaders Board. "Eventually we started grouping these together under key themes and gave a weighting to the ideas we thought were a priority."

The two very different groups brought a range of perspectives, with each challenging the other in a variety of ways.

"I didn't feel any resistance from my peers to the idea of working with future leaders," says Paul Spence, director of strategy and corporate affairs at electric utility EDF and a member of the Business Leaders Board. "We definitely got a bit more ambition from the future leaders, who said, 'Don't just say no, think about how we can say yes', and I'd say we contributed a sense of how to make things work in reality."

The result of these workshops was a set of 11 commitments that

articulated actions, ambitions and priorities for business and for government. These ranged from a biodiversity action plan and green investment strategy to EV fleet conversion and the further education of employees.

"Some of these commitments, such as on EV fleet conversion, gave us the confidence to push forward with things we were talking about already," says EDF's Spence. "Others, such as including carbon footprint information on all of your products, challenged us, as it's completely different depending on which industry you're in."

As soon as they had finalised their list of 11 commitments, the groups' attention turned towards how the government might be able to support these from a policy perspective.

They took the Climate Business Forum report and presented the findings to the then minister of state for business, energy and clean growth, Anne-Marie Trevelyan.

"She was very keen to hear what business and future leaders had to say," recalls EY's Pachoud. "After a 45-minute presentation from us,

she came back to say she was pleased to see this level of engagement and was taking our points into consideration."

The report was published in collaboration with *The Economist* and became one of EY's most successful campaigns, with over 10,000 website visits and more than 1,000 downloads of the report.

It is now also forming the basis of a new service offering from EY.

"We started what we now call EY Carbon based on the framework of the report," says Pachoud. For the members of the boards, it has been an inspiration for their own climate action going forward.

"A lot of like-minded organisations were willing to stand up and make commitments," says Spence.

"For the Future Leaders Board, I think it provided us with optimism that your voice can be heard," adds Leeson. "There are opportunities to speak to the people, like directors, who can be change-makers."

In recognition of its work, EY was highly commended in the Best Use of Thought Leadership category at the MCA Awards.

Gabriella Griffith



Voice of the people: activists march in Glasgow during Cop26 last year

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Grant says. "We asked what was enabling these solutions to happen and, in some cases, not happen, so that we could be more encouraging." Grant adds that the council "recognised the strength of ... communities during the pandemic to rally to support one another. It started to think about how it works to support this more."

The council asked PwC's consultants to help accelerate and implement these new ways of working through community partners to "help people maintain their independence".

Thanks to Grant and her team's work on this with their client, the council was able to make a difference. Collectively, they saw lower demand for formal care, with teams working to enable patients to get the targeted support they needed in the home and community.

"There were also much better outcomes for those who did require



care. This was because they had people at their disposal with more connections in the voluntary sector. It meant that everyone could work collaboratively to offer much more complete packages of support, which met needs and lowered important issues like isolation."

Growing up in Gloucestershire with parents who both worked in the public sector has helped shape Grant's thinking. She is most proud of her ability to build strong relationships with people who may have been sceptical about the value she can bring. Grant also recognises the huge impact of being able to draw a clear connection between the work happening at the front line of care and the work she and her team were doing at a strategic level.

"I think often part of the challenge for our clients is that they have to move at pace and they have so much to do," she says. "Having



Everyone coming into this firm should be putting forward new ideas and challenging the status quo

someone come in with fresh eyes and say, 'If we just did this a different way, this is what it could mean to all of you' is immensely powerful."

As a young consultant working in a complex field, humility plays a large part in Grant's success.

"There can be a misconception that I'm coming in to tell someone how to do their job, but this is not the case. I need all of the expertise and skill sets from the client's side to get the results," she says.

In her downtime, Grant enjoys travelling to new places around the world. But looking to the future, Grant says she wants to play a role in the evolution of the consulting sector. Showcasing that consultants have humility and the same drive as clients to achieve positive change ensures that young consultants have an important place in that evolution.

"Big challenges require new ways of thinking and I want everyone coming into this firm to know that they should be putting forward new ideas and challenging the status quo."

Grant sees young people as the key to some of the issues facing the industry. "The challenges we're helping our clients to solve are only getting bigger, particularly with funding in the public sector," she says.

"The only way we'll lift the bar is if people coming into the firm have the confidence to speak up."

Gabriella Griffith

**TEAM LEADER
CONSULTANT
OF THE YEAR**

From rebel to leader

Father's ultimatum spurred teen on to a stellar career

As a rebellious teenager, Jessica Ridout was issued with an ultimatum by her father that proved to be a turning point in her life. He said he was unwilling to pay the private school fees for her final A-level year and told her to choose between college and finding a job.

Two decades on, Ridout sees that ultimatum as the spur to her later success. "It was a pivotal moment in my life," she declares. Now a principal data strategist with defence, security and aerospace multinational BAE Systems, she was a finalist at the MCA Awards in the Team Leader Consultant of the Year category.

When her father put his foot down over her behaviour, Ridout went to college to do a computing BTEC. This gave her the equivalent of the A-level points she needed to get into Sheffield Hallam University, where she went on to graduate with honours in computing and software engineering.

Seven years at BT and then HSBC provided valuable programming and systems analysis experience. She joined BAE Systems Digital Intelligence in 2012 as a data analysis consultant, and became a senior and then principal consultant. After this she was promoted twice more to executive manager, leading teams of consultants on finance, telecoms, media, transport and government projects.

Ridout now heads a large team of consultants spearheading the delivery of one of the Home Office's most critical projects, which gathers and analyses diverse data to detect and tackle fraud, organised crime and illegal migration. It's a role that requires multidisciplinary skills and a clear understanding of the myriad challenges facing the government department.

Ridout says she's a "consultant to the fingertips" and prides herself on, as she puts it, "strong delivery" of clients' needs. "It's also important when leading a team to get them to see your vision and take them with you to deliver the common goal."

She regards it as indispensable that her teams enjoy their work.

"That's how you get the best out of people," Ridout says. In that respect, she also mentors young employees.

Ridout also hopes to explore other challenges within the wider BAE group, adding: "The sky's the limit."

Colin Randall



INCLUSION AWARD

Facing facts: Sonia Sharma has developed a groundbreaking speed-mentoring scheme at EY



Breaking barriers – and building teams

Sonia Sharma has come up against prejudice – from the classroom to the meeting room. Now the EY partner champions diversity and inclusion for young colleagues from underrepresented groups

She has been on quite a career journey. From a shy schoolgirl growing up in Essex, Sonia Sharma is now delivering large-scale transformational programmes as a partner in EY's Energy and Resources Practice.

"Our family moved from Barking to Chigwell when I was 13 and I found myself the only Indian girl in school," she explains. "It wasn't an easy experience – I did come up against quite a lot of racism."

"I felt so different and I just wanted nothing more than to be white. I remember coming home and telling this to my mum. She responded immediately: 'No, you shouldn't feel that way – you should be proud of who you are.'"

Sharma grew up within a close-knit wider family, surrounded by grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins in nearby streets, who gave her love and life lessons. "I remember summer picnics in the park and seaside trips to Southend. But alongside that I was taught the virtues of having honesty and integrity."

Sharma's hard work at school earned her a place at the London School of Economics. Goldman Sachs spotted her talents and a career in investment banking opened up for her.

"I quickly realised I wanted to be solving problems working with clients on a day-to-day basis in large teams, and feeling like I was making a difference."

After applying for graduate consultant schemes, she worked at a small management consultancy and in-house at Tesco, before EY came calling. With a stint in the retail space under her belt, Sharma now works with FTSE 100 water, electricity and gas companies as well as defence contractors. She is currently working with a leading mining company.

"I work with heavy asset-intensive industries but being able to bring my experience to bear from other sectors has been really exciting," she says.

Sharma's championing of diversity and inclusion (D&I) earned her the Inclusion Award at the MCA Awards.

Talking of her own experiences, she says: "I have had situations in the past regarding inappropriate behaviour and comments, and assumptions made around my capability as an ethnic minority. Over the years, I've figured out how to navigate that in a way that holds people to account to drive understanding and awareness."

She adds: "Being inclusive isn't

only the right thing to do – it's also important because the client problems we're trying to solve now are so much more complex than they've ever been, and the tried and tested methods don't always work. So you need a team who come from different backgrounds, who have different insights, new ideas, to be able to bring some of those solutions to our clients."

Sharma says there have been times when she has been the only woman or person of colour in the room. "I really feel that's changing on the client side; they're telling us they want to work with a diverse team. I have a female client at the moment and it's really important for me that I help to make



You need a team from different backgrounds who have different insights and new ideas, who can bring solutions to clients

her successful in the same way that I am doing with my teams."

She feels diversity is incredibly important for the future of the industry but inclusion "is much harder to do".

The consultant's own work in this area is considerable. Probably her most eye-catching initiative has been a groundbreaking speed-mentoring programme at EY. The scheme has developed pathways for employees from under-represented groups to build relationships with partners.

"It culminated in a speed-mentoring event where each mentee got to ask a mentor one killer question. And the mentor had to answer it within five minutes. It was really interesting how the mentees went about it." The mentoring scheme has clearly created strong networks for the future.

"Management consultancy was historically set up in a way that you've got to be 'known' to be successful and get to partner. And that's something that I don't think women and ethnic minorities always appreciate. I was told if you work hard, you're doing well. No, that's not always the case, not if people don't know what you're doing."

Sharma says EY has been extremely supportive since day one, giving her access to a "network of coaches, mentors, leadership programmes and initiatives that I may not have got at other organisations".

Having recently taken up boxing in an Essex gym ("doing something definitely out of my comfort zone"), she remains laser focused on helping younger consultants on their career path. As for her views about achieving success with D&I, she says: "This needs to constantly be chipped away at. Across society, there's still so much underlying prejudice. And with the gender pay gap being as it is across UK business, we've definitely got a lot more to do."

"I think it's an ongoing journey. I think there's more understanding now as to what businesses need to do differently. We all need to be working towards this. It's a joint effort. I think we have a long way to go, but I remain optimistic."

John Crowley

RISING STAR

Success brings best of both worlds

One young consultant puts her rapid progress down to understanding people's challenges across a business – and turning them into opportunities. Honesty and authenticity come in very handy, too

Micaela Solis probably couldn't have chosen a more inauspicious moment to join Simon-Kucher & Partners and the consulting sector – or a more difficult speciality. She began her career at Simon-Kucher three years ago, just months before the pandemic arrived. And she wanted to work with consumer-facing industries and businesses, as consumers were set to be told to stay at home. In practice, Solis reflects, she and her colleagues had no choice but to rise to the challenge. There was also value in the opportunity to work with clients during a precarious moment for the industry, when business leaders were being forced to think about every aspect of their companies. "I'm interested in working with businesses to help them achieve sustainable profit growth over the long term, and sometimes that does require strategic change," Solis says.



I did philosophy so I'm academically rigorous – but I'm people-focused too

"It's important to find some quick wins, particularly when a business is having problems, but I also want to build that long-term narrative, and that can mean focusing on transformation."

The key, Solis believes, is to be as open-minded and collaborative as possible: "I've always worked in a way that feels natural to me, which is to be honest, open and authentic. That seems to resonate with consumer-oriented businesses."

She is especially keen on tasks where there is an opportunity to see the bigger picture and work with people from across the business. She points

to a nine-month project with a major confectionery company as an example of work that made her feel particularly proud: "We had a chance to take a holistic look at the business, working with people across all its functions. We were able to really get to grips with their challenges and opportunities – and to think about how they could move forward."

This approach – understanding the complexities of a business and working closely with its people – reflects Solis's interests and aspirations. "I did a philosophy degree, and I did think about staying in academia, because I like to work through structure and frameworks," she says. "But I also knew I wanted to do something people-focused as well as academically rigorous." Consulting provides the best of both worlds, she believes.

Solis, who was a finalist in the Rising Star category of the MCA Awards, is keen to play a role in enabling others to develop, working as a mentor to junior team members. "I'm very conscious I didn't know anything about consulting when I first came into my role, so it's important new colleagues feel comfortable about asking questions."

She is also determined to help the sector widen its intake, and has been involved in the launch of a project with Talent Tap, a charity focused on social mobility.

Participants in the project offer mentoring to 16- to 20-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping them to explore educational and professional opportunities.

"I went to a state school in Manchester myself and I didn't have a typical consulting background," she recalls.

"We're an industry that has some work to do to look more like its clients – and I'm passionate about being part of that."

To that end, Solis believes in action. She recently organised a recruitment event and invited a prominent Black British historian to speak at an event during Black History Month.

David Prosser

Real deal: Solis says honesty is the best client policy



MCA 2022 award winners and highly commended

PROJECTS

BEST USE OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP SPONSORED BY SAVANTA

Winner

PwC with Children in Care

Highly commended

EY with the UK Climate Business Forum
PwC with Green Jobs Barometer

CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Winner

PwC with National Grid

Highly commended

Arca Blanca with Landsec
Deloitte with AstraZeneca

CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Winner

Atkins with the Ministry of Defence

COMMERCIAL IMPACT

Winner

Curzon Consulting with Ramsay Health Care UK

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMATION SPONSORED BY SAGE INTACCT

Winner

PwC with London South Bank University

Highly commended

Coelus Consulting with Shell Energy

INTERNATIONAL

Winner

EY with SAP

Highly commended

Arup with the Authority for Reconstruction with Changes

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Winner

Proxima with Baxters

Highly commended

KPMG with Tesco

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Winner

CF with the NHS England Breast Screening Recovery Programme

Highly commended

Arcadis with Network Rail
Atkins and Faithful+Gould with High Speed Two (HS2)

PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

Winner

BearingPoint with Bupa

SOCIAL VALUE SPONSORED BY EQUITEQ

Winner

Propaganda with GenM

Highly commended

IBM Consulting with the UK Health Security Agency (HSA)
Netcompany with the Department of Health & Social Care

STRATEGY

Winner

CF with North Central London Community and Mental Health

Highly commended

Arca Blanca with Avast
PwC with Network Rail

SUSTAINABILITY AWARD SPONSORED BY IPSOS UK

Winner

IBM Consulting with Fashion Trust

Highly commended

Arup with Health Care Without Harm
KPMG with UCL

INDIVIDUALS

YOUNG CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Winner

Marnie Grant, PwC

Highly commended

Aakash Phulwani, EY
Adam Kavanagh, PwC
Elizabeth Bradley, Proxima

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Winner

Alicia Leavitt, PwC

Highly commended

Akram Halim, Arcadis
Grace Blake, IBM Consulting
Honor King, PwC

RISING STAR SPONSORED BY GRAYCE

Winner

Yeshua Carter, EY

Highly commended

Tim Deeker-Harris, Proxima

TEAM LEADER CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Winner

Matthew Nimmo, Inner Circle Consulting

Highly commended

Will Browne, CF
Caroline Canham, PwC

THOUGHT LEADER CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Winner

Angela Spatharou, IBM Consulting

Highly commended

Catriona Campbell, EY

TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Winner

Jonathan McNaught, EY

Highly commended

Akhil Nair, GHD Advisory
Lee Crooks, KPMG

INCLUSION AWARD

Winner

Sonia Sharma, EY

Highly commended

Josh Graham, Deloitte
Aidan Moran, IBM Consulting

EXPERIENCED LEADER AWARD

Winner

Julie Neal, Vendigital

Highly commended

Sean Casey, EY
Adam Smith, NECS Consultancy

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Winner

Michael Robinson, KPMG

Highly commended

Tracey Gilbert, IBM Consulting

CHARTERED MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Winner

Susannah Lindsay, IBM Consulting

Highly commended

Matt McCabe, EY
Guy Watmore, PwC

OVERALL

BEST NEW CONSULTANCY

Winner

Blurred

PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Winner

CF with the NHS England Breast Screening Recovery Programme

THE TIMES CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Winner

Marnie Grant, PwC

CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

'Spies' stalk the MoD for secrets

Intruders are wandering the defence ministry trying to fool staff into giving up sensitive data. But there's no need for alarm – they're part of a training mission to strengthen our resilience against cyberattacks

W

hat an extraordinary scenario it is: criminals walking through the corridors of the Ministry of Defence, trying to trick staff into giving away government secrets. But the "spies" are actors, and they're part of a programme to train defence workers to spot and resist cyberthreats. The programme is the creation of Simon Pavitt, head of the MoD's cyberawareness, behaviours and culture (CyAB&C) team, and management consultancy Atkins.

3,850
staff engaged in
threat simulation
exercises

They have been using immersive methods to put staff on guard about cyberthreats by entertaining, engaging and even conning them into engaging in risky behaviour – and so elicit positive behavioural change. (In the project, all "war games" are, of course, conducted in a secure space within the MoD.) The immersive training features "floor walkers" – actors (including Richard Smith, a principal consultant project manager at Atkins, below) who tread the



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USB trick: flash drives are used to con victims into handing over data

corridors of the MoD to encourage personnel to take part in potentially harmful cyberactivity, and then show them the error of their ways; there's an "escape room" where MoD staff face a simulated cyberattack. And different sections of the armed forces compete in a cybersecurity-themed game show.

Simulated threats teach MoD staff to spot social engineering, when someone is persuaded to do something that they wouldn't do if they were fully informed. "If I can persuade you to plug in a USB stick that I give you, I've probably got access to your company's network," explains Pavitt. Employees could be even less cautious about, say, a freebie novelty USB cup warmer someone might give them: "Even the most secure people can have



We're changing the narrative on cybersecurity – it's not a taboo subject anymore

their priorities focused elsewhere and will fall foul of a very skilled social engineer," says Pavitt, who once worked as a magician – which he likens to social engineering.

He continues to work with Atkins to teach staff safe cyberbehaviour, and the consultancy has the right people for the job: "We've brought in people who are very well versed in developing novel communications and engagement activities," says Stephen Dewsnip, a behavioural scientist and principal consultant at Atkins.

Pavitt and Dewsnip's immersive approach has been effective. The floor walker threat simulations, for example, engaged 3,850 MoD staff: in one exercise, a worker stood on their chair in a busy office and shouted: "No, Mr Cyber Threat!" – bringing the cybersecurity issue to the attention of everyone around

them. "It's great to see that reaction," says Dewsnip. It's vital to prepare for real-life threats with staged ones. Dewsnip adds: "The CyAB&C programme provides the opportunity to practise those behaviours because you don't get the chance to practise them in real life until it's a real situation."

Pavitt says they have also changed the narrative on confronting others about their behaviour. This makes it easier to have a conversation about cybersecurity but also to challenge colleagues. "There's a whole load of social pressure that comes with that. Imagine you're having to tell your colleagues that they're doing something that could cause risk to the organisation."

It's potentially even more awkward in the armed forces where following the chain of command is a given. Dewsnip says this has not been a problem: "The MoD wants to empower its people to be able to do the right thing. Part of that is being able to challenge because that's what helps keep the organisation secure."

The work of Pavitt's team and Atkins is exciting interest. Senior ministry leadership have recognised their efforts; other government departments are getting in touch to

learn more about the training; and they won the Change and Transformation in the Public Sector category at the MCA Awards. They are also contenders for three other major awards.

"We are starting to change the narrative towards cybersecurity," says Dewsnip. "Now it's not an ethereal, taboo subject where people are afraid to challenge risky behaviour: people at the MoD want to proactively do the right thing."

Parminder Bahra



CHARTERED MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

Full steam ahead for digital star

Susannah Lindsay had to learn fast after starting maritime consultancy with IBM – now she's been named Chartered Management Consultant of the Year

It was a client relationship from a previous project that changed the course of Susannah Lindsay's career at IBM Consulting. She had worked with a client at a big oil and gas company on an energy project, and when he was promoted to a new area of the business, he got in touch. "He asked me to come on board to create a digital strategy for a client in shipping," she explains. Their experience of working successfully together before was vital, helping make up for the fact that neither of them knew much about the shipping business.

In March 2021, Lindsay entered the world of maritime – enabling a client in a very traditional industry to harness digital tools to improve employee safety, boost efficiency and meet net zero targets more easily.

One of her first projects involved bringing shipping locations and temporal data sets together. The plan was to help the business respond quicker to incidents by understanding where hundreds of ships were. "What's been really interesting is how this project has grown," says Lindsay. "The more people who see it, the more use cases and insights we generate, which has been awesome."

She started building trust and strong client relationships in the sector, and put the business case together for IBM Consulting to create its own shipping division. Sensing the opportunity, IBM went with Lindsay's idea and started scaling a team of people focusing on the maritime industry.

"I now lead a team of around 40 people doing a range of really innovative projects. I like to describe them as my crew of consultants," says Lindsay, who was promoted to associate partner in July; she also won the inaugural Chartered Management Consultant of the Year Award at the MCA Awards. The new division is harnessing digital to improve the operations and commercial viability of shipping

clients, and is a commercial success.

Lindsay has found that being a Chartered Management Consultant has benefited her professionally *and* personally. "I used to struggle with how to introduce myself to clients," she says. "The job titles I used often were not recognised by clients or didn't align with the value I bring. Becoming a Chartered Management Consultant means I'm part of an accredited, respected group of professionals, something instantly recognised by clients. Introducing myself as a Chartered Management Consultant has opened doors to

new opportunities and closed the door on my imposter syndrome."

The move into shipping wasn't Lindsay's first big shift in trajectory. With a master's in astrophysics, she had originally won an internship with IBM Research as a software engineer in 2011. But during this induction, she secured a patent for an invention in assistive healthcare for people with multiple sclerosis.

"I realised that the part of the internship I enjoyed wasn't sitting coding, it was talking to users to try to understand what they were struggling with and why," she explains. "That's when I started having conversations about how to make my job more about working with human beings to solve their problems rather than coding."

Lindsay's passion for people encouraged her to help the staff community at IBM Consulting: she leads the people agenda for more than 400 colleagues in IBM's industrial section.

"I became interested in inclusive culture when a previous manager asked me to help set up the LGBTQ+ Ally programme," she explains.

"We've rolled out over 2,000 rainbow lanyards. I've since heard a story of somebody who joined IBM Consulting because, when she went into her interview, the interviewer was wearing a rainbow lanyard and she immediately felt she could be herself."

Gabriella Griffith



At the helm: Susannah Lindsay captains IBM's shipping team

PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

Coaching gets healthy results

Bupa's audit function needed treatment – so coaches were called in to make it more commercial and sharpen up efficiency

How do you build a more commercial and connected global internal audit (GIA) function in a regulated business that has traditionally prioritised technical skills and compliance? That was the question facing Bupa chief audit officer Jeremy Eagles as he tackled the challenge of increasing the relevance, speed and impact of GIA in the fast-changing environment of healthcare and insurance.

Eagles' response was to turn to consultancy BearingPoint and its Active Manager programme, which works with frontline managers and teams to equip them with new skills to drive performance.

Active Manager offers a 22-week programme, delivered in the workplace through a unique coaching approach and applied to a business's specific problems and pain points, explains Louisa Latham, senior business adviser at BearingPoint. "It's about helping

9% amount the initiative reduced audit cycle times by

people with behaviours and processes in the context of their individual responsibilities," she says.

Such projects sometimes meet resistance, particularly from skilled professionals already doing their jobs effectively. "It does require a mindset shift and it can be difficult to get people to accept that there may be different ways to do things – or even that it's fine to try things that don't ultimately work," Latham admits. "You do have to earn people's buy-in."

In Bupa's case, that buy-in came as the programme began to deliver tangible benefits. Audit cycle times started to come down, for example, and engagement levels with the rest of the business began to increase.

The company was particularly keen to ensure momentum would be sustained, so Eagles asked BearingPoint to work with a group of colleagues who would be able to champion the teachings from the Active Manager work after the initial coaching period had finished.

"We deliberately took a significant cohort of our people and asked them to become specialists in this so that we could embed it for the future," he



You need a mindset shift so people accept it's fine to try things that might not work

says. "That was disruptive, because it took those people away from their operational responsibilities, but it was important – we've all been on management and leadership courses that are forgotten about in a few weeks, and we didn't want that here."

The results speak for themselves. Bupa's operating processes are now working very well; audit efficiency is up, with a 9 per cent reduction in audit cycle times; and employee and stakeholder engagement is at a record high. BearingPoint and Bupa also won the People and Leadership category at

the MCA Awards. Key to the initiative's success, says Eagles, was the effort BearingPoint made to tailor its programme to Bupa's needs. "I was initially sceptical because, although I was very impressed by BearingPoint's capabilities, I was nervous about how much time they would take to understand what Bupa and GIA needed."

Says Latham: "It helped to focus on the 'so what?'. We were very clear about the outcomes required, so we had to get to know Bupa to work out how to achieve them."

David Prosser



Activating leaders: Louisa Latham and her team worked with Bupa to optimise team performance

SUSTAINABILITY

A bond shared by everyone

When KPMG joined with UCL to help with a debt issue, an innovative approach resulted in a win for the university and the planet

As the UK emerged from its third Covid-19 lockdown in March 2021, the leadership of UCL decided there was no time to lose if the university was to raise money on favourable terms, as Matthew Swales, University College London's director of finance services, explains.

"We had a target of £300 million to raise for our capital programme, and interest rates were at a historic low," he recalls. "We decided it was the optimal time to go for it and we wanted to get the fundraising done by the summer."

There was one challenge. Based on the long-term horizons of its investment plan, UCL could see that a bond issue was likely to be its best option, but this would be an entirely new venture for the institution.

The university needed a lead adviser for the issue and engaged KPMG's debt advisory team, led by Marc Finer. "UCL is so widely

respected that it's a prize name in credit markets as well as in higher education, so we expected strong interest from bond investors," he says. "But we were determined to get the best possible outcome."

Early on in the process, the team agreed that issuing a sustainability bond was key: to link financing strategy with the values of the university, demonstrate UCL's commitment to sustainability goals and take the benefit of a pricing advantage at the same time.

With the proceeds earmarked for a range of green and social projects, it was an easy choice, adds Swales.

"There is some additional process around a sustainability bond, but what it gives you is real accountability," he says.

"The moment you issue this kind of debt, you are holding yourself accountable to third parties, committing yourself

Green future: with its sustainability bond, UCL made strong environmental commitments



to a sustainability framework and accepting the scrutiny of independent assurance."

Nevertheless, the work involved in a debut issue can be onerous, particularly for an organisation like UCL, with a large community of stakeholder groups to be engaged.

"We spent a lot of time working with different committees and decision-making bodies around the university to get the information we needed to meet the bond's

requirements, and to get people comfortable with what we were suggesting," says Molly Pearson, an associate director at KPMG.

KPMG also had to help UCL secure a credit rating from Moody's before they could begin pitching the bond issue to investors.

That was challenging amid the pandemic, but the Aa3 rating UCL had been aiming for was secured.

As a result, UCL's £300 million 40-year sustainability bond was launched at the end of May 2021, the first time a higher education institution in the UK had issued this type of debt. Priced at 1.625 per cent, it was the lowest interest rate ever achieved in the sector, and was oversubscribed with investors.

KPMG and UCL were highly commended in the inaugural Sustainability category at the MCA Awards.

For Swales, the outcome was a validation of UCL's ambition. "We came to this process with a real sense of aspiration and KPMG shared that from day one," he says.

David Prosser

CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Tech teamwork reinvents the customer experience

How Cognizant helped Royal London elevate its online offering, with a host of positive results

Founded in 1861 and now the UK's largest mutually owned life, pensions and investment company, Royal London is proud of its heritage. But it is also determined to offer customers a variety of ways to interact seamlessly with it, including through digital channels.

"As a purpose-led mutual, we help customers protect themselves and their families but also invest in their tomorrow. This is a shared responsibility and we are on a journey to use technology to simplify those experiences," explains Will Pritchett, Royal London's group chief information officer. "We have to embrace technological and operational change to deliver the value outcomes expected."

Working with different parts of Cognizant consultant group, Royal London has taken the first steps of that journey, implementing a new digital landing zone for customers. The portal enables customers to authenticate themselves securely, check the status of their products and make changes where necessary. Crucially, the service is fully integrated with Royal London's back-office systems.

Carrying out this work has had tangible benefits, with customer service

metrics increasingly sharply. Employee engagement has also increased, with staff now finding it easier to access customer data – giving them more time to support customers who have more complicated and sensitive needs.

Cognizant and Royal London were both MCA Awards finalists for Change and Transformation in the Private Sector. However, Pritchett insists this is only the beginning for Royal London, which is now embarking on further transformation work. "The changes we've made have worked really well, but it was just as important to demonstrate culturally that we can use technology to deliver customer outcomes in a different way."

Greg Eden, client director of Zone, Cognizant's customer experience-focused subsidiary, says one important ingredient in making that case was to look at change through the eyes of the customer. "If you can identify the moments that really matter to customers and focus on the challenges they face at that point in time, the ideas will really flow," he says. "Otherwise, you can get stuck in the technology and not move across into the business case."

Urmy Urmston, principal consultant at Contino, the transformation consultancy owned by Cognizant, adds: "We didn't go into this work as consultants that would deliver a project, then just hand it over," he says. "Everyone involved worked as a single team, whether they came from Contino, Zone or Royal London itself."

David Prosser

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BEST USE OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Late win that saved England's gyms

Meet the heroes whose compelling report helped to secure government funding and stop Covid-hit English leisure centres closing for ever

Our objective was nothing less than to protect the country's public leisure services sector," says Kevin Mills, director of capital investment for Sport England, of the groundbreaking project it completed with Grant Thornton in the face of the pandemic.

As Covid-19 engulfed the UK in early 2020, there was increasing worry about the future of public facilities such as leisure centres, gyms and swimming pools.

The facilities had been forced to close, depriving their operators of revenue from customers, but they largely fell between the cracks of support from central government for local authorities and private sector leisure businesses.

"We could see there might be a catastrophe," Mills recalls. "It looked like many of these facilities were going to be forced to close permanently – that would have caused huge economic damage, but also deprived local communities up and down the country of facilities that play a vital role in improving people's health and wellbeing."

Working with Grant Thornton, Sport England set out to build the case for further government support. Alongside the professional services firm, it developed an insight report to present to officials that not only detailed the crisis facing the public leisure sector but also proposed a carefully costed solution.

"Our challenge was to tell the story in the most compelling and detailed way," says Phil Woolley, a Grant Thornton partner and leader of its public services insights and consulting team. "And we were

determined to demonstrate the importance of the sector in terms of both economic and social value."

The report had to be developed at speed, as public leisure operators were rapidly running out of money.



The leisure sector was going to have a catastrophe – people were desperate

"The pace of delivery was vital," adds Mills. "Operators were becoming ever more desperate and we had to be able to tell them help was on the way."

The fruit of this labour was a data-led report that explained in painstaking detail how the public leisure sector was at risk of near complete failure, with the potential loss of £910 million of social and economic value, and the closure of facilities used by almost nine million people.

The study also pointed out that since the ultimate financial liability was held by local authorities, the financial burden of the failure of the public leisure sector would inevitably fall back to the Treasury.

Crucially, Sport England and Grant Thornton had come up with a model for resolving the crisis in the public services sector. "A key challenge was to show we could come up with a practical solution," Woolley says, and the report directly led to that solution: the government thankfully responded with the £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund, which ultimately supported 268 local authorities. As a result, more than 1,000 public leisure facilities across England were able to reopen as the Covid-19 crisis eased.

The project was nominated for Best Use of Thought Leadership at the MCA Awards, and more than two years on, Sport England is still reaping the rewards of the initiative, says Mills. "One enduring impact of the project was that we realised we needed much better data on how public leisure facilities are used.

"Building on the study, we've worked with Grant Thornton to develop a platform that gives us far more detailed information about participation rates in sport and leisure than we have ever had before."

David Prosser



Sporting chance: the joint report ensured leisure centres survived

SHUTTERSTOCK

COMMERCIAL IMPACT



Smooth operators: Curzon forensically finessed Ramsay's procurement data

Surgical analysis saves medical group millions

Consultancy's in-depth procurement data review and a touch of personal chemistry lead to massive cost efficiencies

The successful partnership between Ramsay Health Care UK and Curzon Consulting demonstrates the importance of first impressions and personal chemistry in the management consultancy business.

Chetan Trivedi, Curzon's head of healthcare practice, was personally recommended to Ramsay CFO Peter Allen when the company faced considerable procurement and cost issues – and he liked what he saw.

From their first meeting sprang a relationship that has saved millions of pounds for Ramsay Health Care UK, which operates a network of 34 healthcare facilities across England.

As Covid struck, Ramsay's relatively small procurement team had to deal with supply chain disruption. Covid exposed over-reliance on a single income source: elective activity like joint replacements, which stopped overnight; but a high fixed-cost base remained. Efficiencies therefore had to be found.

"Chetan came with a personal recommendation from a colleague in the business who had worked with him in the past," recalls Allen. "When we reached out to Chetan, there was good chemistry straight away.

"He made some observations in that meeting which gave us a great deal of comfort that he was the right person to transform our offering."

Trivedi insists: "I came with a great team, but the chemistry element that Peter talks about is very important. It's a special feeling on both sides in a first meeting when you think: 'I can work with this person.' But it also comes down to having the confidence to work with the entire consulting firm, not just the partner. And if you get that vibe, that's a positive step forward."

Allen's intuition was on the money. After an opportunity assessment, Curzon was invited to identify savings. "The Ramsay procurement team had the ability," says Trivedi, "but they lacked the confidence to challenge clinicians and hospitals on the way that they were spending their money.

"If you're in purchasing, you don't have to go with the status quo. You can say: 'Hold on a minute. We've done that for the last ten years – do we need to continue to do the same thing? Can we look at it in a different way?'"

The key was to forensically analyse and organise Ramsay Health Care's purchasing data to enable better buying decisions. Ramsay was sitting on huge amounts of data, but it was

resting in disparate systems which were hard to parse. Curzon stitched these data sets together and used the insights gleaned to build a coherent, company-wide view of purchasing.

The consultancy also engaged with Ramsay surgeons to make sure they were using the most appropriate cost-effective medical products for particular patients. A consultant's priority is, of course, to provide safe care and excellent healthcare outcomes. But by using rock-solid data from Curzon's proprietary algorithms, Trivedi showed that using some cheaper products didn't mean delivering worse patient outcomes.

Work on using the right prostheses for hip replacements in accordance with best practice and the Get It Right First Time initiative proved to be effective and supportive for both clinicians and patients. Trivedi explains: "One of Ramsay's leading consultants turned around and said: 'I've never seen data presented this way. Now I've seen this, I don't want to be an outlier. What do I need to do to change my practice?'"

Peter Allen adds: "This wasn't a race to the bottom. We continued to hold the line on quality, working with big global partners. But by presenting credible data, our medical consultants actually wanted to listen and learn."

Curzon was tasked with developing a strategy and an operating model for the team to deliver £15 million in savings over three years. Currently the cost savings are pushing eight figures after 18 months of the journey. This is all the more impressive as it was achieved when Ramsay had to pivot during the pandemic into PPE and PCR testing, and the Ramsay and Curzon teams never met face to face during the nine-month period working together.

The team worked on the project from Hong Kong, Ireland and Germany – and their efforts won Curzon and Ramsay the Commercial Impact Award at the MCA Awards.

Ramsay Health Care has subsequently worked with Curzon to build out internal data sets it still employs. Allen adds: "Curzon's work showed us that we needed to revolutionise what we were doing in the procurement space, to be able to then procure not only during the pandemic and through the pandemic, but also into the future to deliver the right level of service for the rest of the business."

John Crowley

Fashion's global threads

Climate-conscious brands can now trace a garment right to its source

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extiles is one of the most polluting industries on the planet. Fashion production makes up to 10 per cent of humanity's carbon emissions, 20 per cent of industrial waste water and a staggering 85 per cent of all textiles go to landfill each year. It's an industry that needs solutions fast.

"The figures are astronomical," says Adam Mansell, CEO of the UK Fashion & Textile Association (UKFT). "The industry knows sustainability is an enormous problem to tackle but within that there are a series of challenges and one of those is traceability."

With such a globalised industry,

one garment can now travel across three continents before it reaches its destination. Following materials to their source is a huge challenge for retailers but understanding where something has come from and how it was made is the key to addressing sustainability issues.

Backed by funding from the government agency Innovate UK, a team at Leeds University pulled together a consortium of partners, including UK Export Finance and IBM, to address the issue.

With rich experience in supply chain challenges and big data solutions, IBM Consulting adopted a novel approach.

85%
of all textiles
go to landfill
each year

"A lot of solutions go from the product backwards to trace the source, but it's a slow and expensive process so not really repeatable," explains IBM executive partner Keric Morris.

"We decided to take it the other way and go 'fibre forwards', which turns the job from a tracing solution into a data ingestion solution – if we can get supply chain partners to input data at every step, the tracing happens automatically."

IBM, which won the inaugural Sustainability Award, set about creating a data collection platform that could be used by everyone from a cotton farmer in rural Africa to a non-governmental organisation



First look: retailers can get a window into every level of the supply chain

(NGO) or a big retailer. The team worked with four retailers – New Look, H&M, Next and N Brown Group – and three NGOs to deliver a pilot that managed to trace notoriously difficult uncertified cotton back to the source.

"The people part is the trickiest bit," says IBM's Tara John Douglas-Home. "How do you persuade supply chains that have historically kept information secret to share data about their production processes?"

IBM used blockchain technology to ensure the information shared would be encrypted. To the user on the front end it remained an easily navigable interface. While the background technology was the

same across the programme, the team also created white-labelled interfaces to ensure the supply chain stakeholders were comfortable.

"We had brands saying, 'If our competitors are on this platform, we don't want to be' – so by creating white-labelled components, we can offer different user experiences but can pool the data into the same engine," adds Douglas-Home.

Having started out with four retailers, the team now has 12 and is continuing the roll-out, not just in the UK but globally.

"The business case is different for each part of the supply chain, the key thing is what each company does with the information," says Morris. "For some it's about more efficient reporting, for others it's about direct action."

From big retailers to farmers, the need for action on sustainability in processes and supply chains is mounting. "This will reduce the cost of their compliance. The requirement to report supply chain ESG and create digital passports for products is coming down the track fast," says Douglas-Home.

Mansell admits he didn't think they would be able to get the industry to collaborate: "I've been proved wrong," he says. "I was heartened to see the retailers put aside their commercial differences because they understood the problem was bigger than them."

Gabriella Griffith

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