



SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE



Accenture with School of Hard Knocks

School of Hard Knocks (SOHK) is a charity that inspires and enables individuals to gain and retain employment. They work in the most deprived communities of the UK with the socially excluded. They seek to break the cycle of unemployment by offering a unique combination of: job application and CV workshops; time spent on the rugby pitch learning the principles of team work, hard work and healthy living; sessions with a psychologist to get to the root of the problems faced by participants. A television show featuring their work is produced by Sky Sports.

Accenture Strategy began working with the charity through the desire of a strategy consultant to use his charity day allowance to make a significant and measurable impact. This grew to a programme of 20 consultants working across 15 strategy projects in a pro bono capacity. All projects were strictly focused on enabling the charity to help more people gain employment, with the aspiration of achieving world-class standards in all deliverables and outcomes.

The charity faced several challenges: growing their organisation to match the size and impact of their brand; identifying the right organisations to partner with for mutual long-term benefit; bidding for work in new ways; and organising themselves correctly for success. All of these challenges needed overcoming and were framed under the question of *how can we help more people in the UK's most deprived communities gain employment and independence?*

The Three Year UK Strategy was defined with the client. The consultants brought the right mix of structure, creativity and industry insight to pair with the client's own innovative thinking and expertise. The outcome of the engagement is a charity that has a clear direction of travel and whose ambition has been stretched. An understanding of the projects required to achieve this was embedded, and the planning to operationalise these projects has been done. The charity has a strategy consulting partner secured to assist them long term.

Consultants from across Accenture Strategy were selected for the projects because they exhibited the right skills, as well as a passion for the work of the charity. A strong, trust-based relationship quickly developed.

SOHK now has: a Business Club providing the range of skills they require; an increased number of ideas that can be managed through to project launch using bespoke project management tools; a media strategy to ensure the charity reaches all those in its target audience; and a strategy consulting partner. Accenture Strategy has exhibited the skills found across its newly launched business in a project setting that also brings huge benefit to many communities in the UK. This programme perfectly aligns to Accenture's objectives in both Corporate Citizenship and Marketing.

Ken Cowen, CEO of SOHK:

"We have found working with Accenture Strategy to be incredibly valuable. By bringing an outside perspective and wide range of relevant expertise, they have helped to clarify our thinking, improve our processes and have also challenged us constructively where appropriate... We see them as a key partner and we hope to continue to build our partnership as the charity grows."