

BRITISH GAS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



YOU'RE A MAJOR UTILITIES COMPANY WITH A NEW IDEA TO TRANSFORM THE BUSINESS. BUT STAFF DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS OR HOW TO DELIVER IT.

Bringing the brand promise 'Doing the right thing' to life inside British Gas to help drive the business transformation.



CHALLENGE

British Gas was two years into a five-year business transformation programme that would result in a leaner, more customer-focused business, equipped to compete in the 21st century. The change involved was company wide and would result in new processes and systems across British Gas.

To help customers and staff navigate the change, British Gas had created an idea that sits at the heart of what the business and brand does. "Doing the Right Thing" is a promise to customers and a focus for all 27,000 employees in their day to day decisions and behaviours.

Having launched the idea in advertising, the business needed to inform and engage staff. Employees, particularly those in customer-facing roles, needed to deliver the promise to customers. Without the necessary understanding, tools or support to make it real, "Doing the Right Thing" ran the risk of becoming an empty promise.

Dave was appointed to help define and interpret the idea for all British Gas employees. We were tasked with helping employees understand, believe in and deliver "Doing the Right Thing" to customers, to each other and to shareholders.



SOLUTION

We identified a four step approach.

We put in place a programme to help employees understand the idea, apply it in their area of the business and then hard-wire those behaviours and actions into the processes, systems and culture of the company.

1. Culture Audit – To assess and understand the different cultures at British Gas, we spent three weeks in and across the organisation to explore working practices and employee engagement practices.

2. Awareness – The second step was to help raise awareness of the ideas across all areas of the business. British Gas is an extremely complex and fragmented company and simply ensuring that key messages get through is a challenge in itself.

3. Understand – The next stage was to help staff really understand "Doing the Right Thing" – what it meant, why it was important and how to bring it to life inside the organisation and for customers. This meant finding good examples of the values in action, sharing and celebrating these with the business and encouraging others to emulate these behaviours.

Some of our activities included:

- Making customers and their issues much more real and tangible for all areas of the company.
- A campaign to help individuals and teams contextualise the company results and the role that each area played (good and bad)
- Conceiving and launching a customer service academy internally (with external accreditation)

We then created a range of activities and communication to help staff use their understanding to make more correct decisions, more often, when dealing with customers.

4. Apply – Individuals and teams had applied the idea into their day to day activities, the business then needed to weave it into the processes and systems, so that "Doing the Right Thing" became second nature – it's just the way things get done. This involved everything from HR (induction, competency frameworks, reward and recognition) to IT (CRM systems), environments and marketing.

RESULTS

- 83% of the business are aware of and understand "Doing the Right Thing" and the supporting values.
- 76% of the business can think of an example of where they or a colleague has "done the right thing" for a customer
- 75% of customers believe that British Gas is 'Doing The Right Thing' for its customers
- British Gas received a Marketing Society commendation for internal marketing 'Engaging 27,000 hearts and minds' in 2005.



“Dave tackled the task with a refreshing energy and delivered a highly creative approach that has had a real impact on people’s behaviour right across our organisation.”

Nick Smith, Marketing & Strategy Director, British Gas

Clockwise from top left: We devised and rolled out a competition for staff to identify 'hero' behaviour; customer insights were used to help office-based and call centre staff understand what 'the right thing' was to do by customers; rather than create a 'values book' we gave staff a useful notebook pre-printed with values and stories; using the office environment as a channel to celebrate success.