Royal Mail Group

Creating a learning curriculum to help the Royal Mail Group "GetAgile"

Royal Mail Group are a truly unique organisation with a long standing history that stretches over 500 years. As part of Royal Mail's IT strategy the need to become more Agile was evident. Injecting agility into change project delivery was essential to deliver faster results to meet business needs. Royal Mail & QA worked collaboratively together to develop a bespoke Agile Awareness course for its staff that sit across technology functions in the business. This led to future role specific courses for the attendee's dependant on their specific role in the organisation.

The Challenge:

Royal Mail faces significant challenge from an uncertain UK business landscape, changing customer needs and a highly competitive market. They have a continuing decline in letters and fierce competition in parcel deliveries. Add to this potential for labour cost inflation and the impact from Brexit negotiations and Royal Mail faces a number of critical challenges in 2018 and beyond.

Their five-year corporate strategy relies on substantive technology enablement as Royal Mail enters the digital age. Consequently, Royal Mail's IT strategy has become an integral aspect of the wider business strategy. The 'GetAgile' IT strategy has three elements: Create a customer-centric, digitally-minded business; build an agile organisation; and architect Royal Mail's technology platforms to support flexible, faster delivery whilst remaining efficient.

The Solution:

The journey started in January 2017 in the form of a consultancy workshop between Phil Stirpe QA's Director of Agile and Projects, and Royal Mail's Senior Leaders to understand their GetAgile strategy and identify the roles and learning pathways.

Following the workshop, Royal Mail's GetAgile team was created. The appointed Royal Mail Get Agile Lead worked with QA Subject Matter Expert (SME) to design and develop a bespoke course covering Agile awareness and the GetAgile strategy.

Following initial pilots of the GetAgile awareness course, the outcomes were measured, and QA's SME met regularly with the GetAgile team to identify where improvements could be made to achieve better outcomes.

The course content was then updated to incorporate those improvements. This continued once the programme was launched, and the content was updated as required. For example, the Service Management community felt that a more DevOps focus was appropriate. As a result, a number of targeted variants emerged. These targeted courses led to better outcomes.

Following the GetAgile programme, QA then delivered a series of role specific courses to provide more effective learning pathways. This included training for Scrum masters, Product Owners, Service Managers, and Project Managers.

The final piece to ensure learning effectiveness and self-sufficiency, will be to provide key roles with coaching, in particular, the Product Owners.

QA transforming performance through learning

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The main features of the solution QA delivered to Royal Mail:

• Initial consultancy to scope out their requirements, identify pathways, discuss culture etc.

• Developed and delivered a bespoke GetAgile half-day awareness course to circa 255 employees.

• Regular stakeholder reviews to measure outcomes and effectiveness. Iterated content for relevance and effectiveness regularly

• Delivered role specific practitioner training. E.g Scrum Master, Product Owner, Agile Project Managers, Agile Testers

• Tailored Product Owner course to match RMG's PO role

• Supported the Service Management team with, 'Working in a non-technical Agile team' training course.

❝ We engaged QA to create a learning curriculum to help with the adoption of Agile working practices and enable us to execute the people strand of our GetAgile transformation initiative. One year into this journey, we are delighted with the contribution from QA and the feedback from our colleagues is consistently positive. **❞**

Alex Lorke
IT Portfolio Director

The Outcome:

Feedback from participants to the different stages of the GetAgile programme has been consistently very positive.

Royal Mail not only met its objective of capturing Agile delivery to a mass audience, but are now well on their journey to becoming a more Agile organisation.

A few comments received from the delegates included;

"I really appreciated the lack of Power Point training session"

"Great tutor, it was not death by Power Point worked well with format"

"Most trainers I met so far in QA courses have been very knowledgeable with real life working experience. This is very important, as I myself am not interested in learning theory. Much quicker to learn from someone who has already applied it and confirm it to work, and share it with the class"

About Royal Mail Group

Royal Mail Group are the UK's sole provider of Universal Service where 'one price goes anywhere.' They deliver 6 days per week to over 30 million addresses across the UK. Royal Mail Group deliver more letters and parcels to more addresses in the UK than all of their competitors combined.

The organisation employs nearly 160,000 people with one in every 185 jobs in the UK provided by the Group.

In addition Royal Mail have a European Parcel business called General Logistics Systems (GLS) who operate one of the largest parcel delivery networks in Europe. The way in which Royal Mail Group operates is changing as they are on a journey to enter the digital age.

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