



# managementsors

creating sustainable business advantage



## Case study

Name: Mouchel  
Sector: Professional Services  
Location: London, UK

## Mouchel Builds In Productivity, STEP by STEP

A 28-week professional development programme at Mouchel delivers a lasting legacy of performance improvement

### Background

Mouchel's property services operation is responsible for one of the largest public property portfolios in the UK – including more than 2,000 schools and 4,000 other public buildings – and works closely with local authorities, providing asset management, architectural design, building maintenance, valuation and estate management services through long-term strategic partnerships.

Following its successful rebid for a five-year £24 million contract to provide property maintenance, estates management and design project work to Bedfordshire County Council, Mouchel's Bedford property services office needed to achieve productivity improvements that translated into bottom-line savings while boosting its service delivery and collaborative working capabilities.

### Key challenges

- Enhance cross-functional working to deliver complex projects faster
- Achieve 'best value' cost reduction targets set by local government customers
- Initiate proactive reporting to enhance customer collaboration and communication

### Key gains

- Delivery of 'right first time' solutions that boost business performance and deliver improved customer value
- Project delivery timescales have shortened – even for complex major works
- Improved communication and responsiveness have boosted customer perceptions of partnership working

## The challenge

Bedfordshire County Council's decision to re-sign with Mouchel had been influenced by a commitment to align more closely to the council's own operational objectives in terms of cost reduction, and to deliver higher levels of service to the council and its users.

Raising the overall performance of the property services operation was now imperative, as Colin Worboys, Property Operating Group Director at Mouchel, explains: "Our goal was to continually evolve and improve service delivery, while maintaining short-term delivery and profitability."

The team turned to Managementors to drive a 28-week professional development programme – STEP – that would enable sustainable quality and performance improvements. But as Keith Sands, Business Unit Director for the Property East Operating Group explains, achieving operational cost savings was not the only goal. "We wanted to transform our people's behaviours – through education, coaching and skills transfer from Managementors – and equip them to meet current and future challenges."

## The need for change

An operational review of the Bedford local unit – which incorporated a review of all client and contractor interactions – threw up some interesting findings.

Because staff at the site are primarily building surveyors, architects, services and structural engineers, managers largely relied on their teams to perform as 'self-starters'. This passive management style had led to lack of clarity around project ownership and diluted the control and management of customer contacts. In some scenarios this contributed to extended project times.

What's more, with no mechanism in place to undertake useful forecasting of workload by volume or type, it was difficult for managers to measure and assess operational performance on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

If customer satisfaction and perceptions of service delivery were to increase, the management team had to gain greater workload visibility and accountability for key performance indicators, and develop better reporting procedures. To do this, they had to become part of the change process.

*"We wanted to transform our people's behaviours – through education, coaching and skills transfer from Managementors – and equip them to meet current and future challenges."*

**Keith Sands,**  
Business Unit Director, Property East  
Operating Group, Mouchel



## Developing new skills

“The Managementors review showed our line managers needed support to become more effective and active,” confirms Keith Sands.

To ensure all areas of the business were aware of the objectives and scope of the project, Managementors initiated a communications programme – which included weekly progress meetings – and issue logs to enable staff to raise concerns that impacted on performance in a structured manner.

To empower the diverse workforce Managementors delivered ‘on the floor’ training and one-to-one coaching, together with formal training events for managers and supervisors – including a series of Active Management workshops. As Keith Sands explains: “We’re a people business – our design teams deliver innovation and applied thinking to challenges, and the systems we developed – together with the training delivered – had to take account of the individual scope and responsibilities of individual teams.”

Mouchel’s management teams were involved in the creation of a more effective forecasting and operational planning model, together with a reporting system that provided valid data on the overall performance of the operation, and each project in particular. This formed the basis for providing a value-added client-reporting structure.

The new process and system initiatives improved overall communication across the entire operation, leading to regular cross-unit and business meetings that helped create a more cohesive working approach. As a result, operational processes were redesigned and implemented with a high degree of ownership and acceptance.

Contact us to find out what Managementors can do for you

**Call +44 (0)1256 883939**

**e** [enquiries@managementors.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@managementors.co.uk)

**w** [www.managementors.co.uk](http://www.managementors.co.uk)

## Measuring the outcomes

The STEP project has generated some impressive outcomes. The unit’s primary client – Bedfordshire County Council – has noted a marked improvement in communications and response from senior managers and technical staff. Team leaders now proactively communicate with the Council, providing detailed updates on individual school programmes, which the Council communicates in turn to schools.

This responsiveness has, in part, been driven through the implementation of forecast and planning tools for both reactive and planned maintenance programmes, while new systems within the design team have helped to improve project delivery. All tools are now being transferred to Atrium, Mouchel’s automated management and reporting system.

As Keith Sands confirms: “A much more proactive service delivery is in evidence, and staff now take a greater ownership of projects and customers.”

The greatest impact of STEP, however, was the delivery of ‘right first time’ solutions, which in turn translated into an improvement in overall business performance, as Keith Sands verifies: “The return on investment has made the STEP project a sustainable, self-perpetuating model.”

As a result, the STEP project is now being implemented in other property services offices across the region. As Keith Sands concludes: “STEP has delivered significant benefits to our people, our clients and to our business.”

*“A much more proactive service delivery is in evidence, and staff now take a greater ownership of projects and customers.”*

**Keith Sands,**  
Business Unit Director, Property East  
Operating Group, Mouchel