

TACKLING RACIAL INEQUALITY

Good Practice Case Studies

LB Hammersmith & Fulham
Get Ahead

By creating its own highly flexible approach to career progression that is based on individual's needs, H&F's Get Ahead development programme is helping to 'grow their own' talent pool, embed a coaching culture and open up more internal opportunities for personal and career development.



Problem we were seeking to address

This is a challenging time for local government with fewer resources to meet increasing demand and expectation and as such the council needs to be able to attract and retain the right talent.

We want to 'grow our own' and harness the talent we already have. In Hammersmith & Fulham, our People Strategy sets out how we will aim higher, proudly investing in our employees, because we believe that enthused and well-motivated staff do a much better job serving the borough's residents and our customers.

We want to provide a significant and comprehensive career development programme for our valued workforce.

The solution or actions/proposed solution or actions

The initiative is sponsored by our Chief Executive, Kim Smith. Support is provided by the strategic resourcing team and the learning and talent team combined.

Get Ahead is a 'choice' programme for those self-starters who want to push ahead with their careers.

It's not for everyone and so we are running this alongside our usual learning and development programme.

Partners involved

LB Hammersmith & Fulham

H&F Way Inclusive
Workplace and Race
Equality Working
Groups

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Get Ahead is designed for individuals who want to put in extra time and effort to succeed faster, and who are driven and committed to developing their potential within the organisation.

Get Ahead Development will deliver a less generic approach to learning and career development and be dependent on the individual's needs. It works by opening up more internal opportunities for personal and career development by offering practical initiatives, a job profile site, jobs set aside for internal candidates to grow into, embedding a coaching culture across Hammersmith & Fulham, secondments, acting up, shadowing and work experience, as well as a programme of development, coaching and support.

We're offering flexibility in our approach for personal development so that colleagues can feel free to pick the times and events that suit them.

Management approval is not required. It's totally up to individuals.

The main elements of the Get Ahead initiative are:

1. Managers across the organisation will be required to consider offering any vacancies within their teams as a secondment opportunity in the first instance.
2. Individuals seeking career moves will be required to upload their personal profiles highlighting their skills and attributes onto our talent pool.
3. Working with individuals to support the career development discussions.
4. Offering coaching opportunities.

The Get Ahead initiative is designed to offer staff at all levels of the organisation the opportunity to develop and to help them to meet their career aspirations. What Get Ahead will provide is:

- Current skills, knowledge and ability assessed against an identified career pathway
- Encourage staff to set up a profile onto our talent pool to get recognised alerts to vacancies within the organisation
- Coaching or mentoring
- Training self select or be recommended

What's special about Get Ahead is that it uses a blended learning approach, essentially based on a non-qualification route to progression. Colleagues are provided with opportunities to get a new job or gain work experience through shadowing, project work, coaching, secondments, internal opportunities or soft skills training - all underpinned by a learning and development plan tailored specifically to employee needs and, where possible, employee career aspirations.

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197 development opportunities have been advertised since January 2019. 109 permanent opportunities, 68 secondments and 11 project-based learning/shadowing opportunities have been offered in the same time period. Furthermore, it is now mandatory for all job opportunities to be advertised via Get Ahead before being externally advertised.

Contact



Mary Lamont
Strategic Head of
People and Talent

Desired outcomes/delivered outcomes

- To support staff development and career progression – optimising talent management
- To promote secondments, internal job opportunities, training and other career development opportunities
- Retain our Talent and Grow our Own; and embed a coaching culture across Hammersmith & Fulham

Get Ahead has had a great take up in line with the last staff survey results, which highlighted that staff wanted to be developed. The programme currently has around 200 employees registered out of a total workforce of 2,034.

The Get Ahead programme has successfully seen 77 employees appointed into Get Ahead roles including the current Director of Finance and Director of Resources who sit in the strategic leadership team. The programme has given employees the opportunity to Get Ahead in their career, either progressing into senior roles or making a lateral career move. This in turn has initiated the development of some amazing success stories of career progression and opportunities for employees at all levels.

Learning/evaluation

While we have collected data to evidence the success of the programme, this has been limited and we are currently developing our BI reporting approach to further support the longer-term success of the programme. As a result, we are developing robust and transparent data sets to provide us with the enhanced intelligence to provide reassurance, specifically, that we are supporting career progression of ethnic minority staff. We are doing this in conjunction with our staff-led working groups (H&F Way Inclusive Workplace and Race Equality Working Groups) to ensure an inclusive approach where we can be confident about monitoring outcomes and enhance our offer even further.

We are reviewing Get Ahead in response to our gender and ethnicity and pay data - so please get in touch if you want to know about Get Ahead going forward.