Line Managers Questionnaire Analysis

The questionnaire was issued to *796* line managers in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (the Department). They were identified by Grade and selected from the phone book; line manager grade would be Higher Executive Officers and equivalents. From the population sample I received 161 responses; this is a response rate of 20%.

Question 1 asked for the respondents' grade, I was delighted to see that I had responses from the Administrative as well as the technical grade.

Question 2 asked how long they had been in their current grade. There was a lot of experienced responding with 46% being in the management grade for over 10 year.

Question 3 showed I had a good mix of Managers from all function in the Department, i.e. Administrative, Inspectorate, Technical and Veterinary. The largest being on the administrative side with 44%, however that is reflective of the staff numbers in the areas.

Question 4 asked Do you manage staff? 25% of respondents do not manage staff so that is why they did not answer questions about management of staff i.e. Question 5.

Question 5 asked whether or not, as a manager, they believed Induction is helpful. 90% said yes and only 2% said no. The other 8% can be attributed to some who do not manage staff not answering the question.

I was interested in the response to Question 6 asking if the respondents ever took part in elearning before. Just over 53% said they had not. In my opinion there is great exposure to online technology, such as internet banking and booking flights/ticket, in everyday life that some people learn without realising it. Although it could be argued that although they learn how to use such systems there was no formal elearning training given. This was reflected in discussion in the focus groups.

Question 7 asked to what extent staff use the internet for their day to day work. Over 46% said they use it more than once a day with over 86% using it more than once a week.

Question 8 asked, in the manager opinion, would new staff use an elearning Induction Course. Over 82% said they believed new entrants would.

Question 9 asked what areas should be covered in an elearning module for Induction. A comprehensive list can be found in Annex I.

Question 10 asked for links to Ezone where information can be found for areas identified in Question 9.

Question 11 whether Managers would prefer staff trained face to face or 100% online. 46% present of respondents said a blended approach, 50-50, would be best. Less than 5% stated higher than 50% for elearning would be beneficial.

Question 12 asked if Managers would prefer staff to complete training at their desk or away from the office. Over 55% said they would prefer staff to be out of the office.

Question 13 asked how long would managers release staff to complete training. It was interesting to see that less than 13% would release staff for anything less than a day. Respondents could give multiple answers to this Question so the percentages are not totalling to 100%, indeed they total 118%.

Question 14 asked for reasons to Question 13. Most managers see a lot of value in staff being out of the office and receiving training in that type of environment. Releasing staff for one to three hours they believe can be disruptive. Some related their answer directly to Induction training.

Question 15 asked to list any problems new entrant may have faces. A comprehensive list is included in Annex II.

Question 16 asked for any other comments. A comprehensive list is included in Annex III.

Q9. Please list any areas that new entrants to your Division would need to be aware of.

Area
Department Overview / Structure
HR issues including PMDS and PeoplePoint
Legislation & Regulation (National & EU)
Schemes
Duties / Responsibilities / SOPs / Procedures
Health & Safety Incl Laboratories
Computer Training
IT Security
EU Institutions
Customer Service
Official Secrets Act / Ethics / Confidentiality
Animal welfare
Accounts / salaries
Ezone
Training available
Quality Systems ISO
Audits
Food safety
Legal Services
Building layouts
Probationary Period
SAP
CAP reform
Employee Assistance Officers
Conflict
Procurement

Q15. Please list any problems new entrants to your Division have faced.

Problems
IT Systems i.e. T&S - SAP - CORE
Understanding DAFM & EU
Lack of knowledge
Lack of Training
Policies and procedures
Timing of Induction Course
Departments Geographical spread
Legislation & Regulation
Other priorities = no training
PMDS & PeoplePoint
Lack of structure for new staff
Lack of skills
Communication
Culture
Terminology
Grade structure
New to Department or Service
Salaries
Suitability for area
Lack of Risk Assessment

Q16. Any other Comments

Comment
Online should not replace existing Course
A lot of new entrant don't know Department
Ezone out of date
IT Security issues and forms need simplified
All forms should be online
Decision making deferred by Managers is problematic
Culture is resistant to change
PMDS is broken and does not address under performance
Induction is also the responsibility of Managers
Just in time learning is needed
Induction should be done within fist 2 week or month
Recent recruitment embargo has caused problem
There is a lack of communication and support for new staff
Department too far spread all over the Country