

Supplier Development – Building and Demonstrating Alliancing Capability

Need to select the supplier who will be best at building a strong alliance

The situation:

The MOD had launched a major procurement project to replace and upgrade Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships. With an excellent track record for quality in major procurements but a poor record on delivery to time and cost, the MOD decided to seek a new collaborative approach, using alliancing to build a single cohesive team made up of the best service partners. They shortlisted three companies as potential alliancing experts and integrators for the project. One of these was AMEC, and I was asked to lead their support team through a formal six month assessment.

Work with AMEC to develop and demonstrate their alliancing capabilities

My work:

I set up and ran an initial structured assessment against the MOD required framework, reported the findings back to AMEC and developed the programme of actions to be implemented. This included:

- carrying out detailed reviews of team health;
- working with them to develop their project team, tease out and resolve issues, and maximise team performance;
- developing communications and stakeholder management plans;
- developing improvement plans capitalising on their strengths;
- helping them to prepare for external scrutiny;
- briefing people who would be involved in the final assessment.

The aim was for AMEC to demonstrate to the fullest their strength as an organisation, and in particular their alliancing capabilities.

AMEC won against their competition

The outcome:

In the final assessments, AMEC came out head and shoulders above their competition. They demonstrated conclusively that alliancing is deeply embedded in their culture. They demonstrated that they had understood the MOD's needs and ambitions and had grown and developed during the six months of assessment. Had the project continued as planned, AMEC would certainly have been selected to lead it. However following a reorganisation at the MOD, plans to make this an alliance-based project were shelved, and a supplier outside this competition was selected.

Focus on the exam question

The Goldsmith factor:

The value I added was to recognise this as essentially a marketing challenge, highlighting the need to read between the lines to understand what the various scrutineers were really looking for, then taking a thoroughly pragmatic approach to deliver it in spades. The breadth of my skill set enabled me to address all the project needs, from individual and team coaching through to driving organisational change.