

A great place to grow, learn and develop

Hello and welcome to the Britannia Management Academy.

Much thought and discussion has gone into it - and as you're about to read, much of our work involved taking a long, hard look at ourselves in the mirror and asking the question: What will it really take to deliver our given of "A great place to work, grow and develop"?

This handbook gives you a detailed insight into the academy, the learning modules available and what they can do for you and your team. Just as importantly, it tells you why we've taken the major decision to create a centre of leadership learning for 1,000 Britannia managers. And of course we'll also address why this initiative is different to those that have gone.

As you'll see, the academy isn't just about Leek (it also extends to Bristol and London). And it isn't just about 'hard' skills. It's also about equipping you with new behaviours and other intangibles like improved self-awareness and emotional intelligence, all of which will help you grow as people, not just managers and leaders.

We've gone to great lengths to ensure that everything you learn from now on won't be lost in a puff of smoke the second you step outside of the classroom. Instead, learning will be ingrained and developed. For instance, you'll be able to see clearly whether you and your team have received return on investment through the academy. What's more the quality of what you're learning will be assured through external accreditation that adds value to both organisation and learner.

"Empowerment" is an over-used term in business, but it's entirely what our academy is about. Ultimately, as managers and leaders we cannot do our team's work for them. But what we can do is help them to be the best they can be. Every day.

I wish you good luck.

Karen Moir

Karen Moir
Director of Organisational Development



Why an academy and why now?

Britannia has much to be proud of in recent years. We've punched above our weight, using innovations like the internet to grow our business to the point where now, despite tough competition, we are poised for yet another two years of growth, expansion, and - we hope - prosperity.

Last year we began looking closely at Britannia's ability to support this growth. and enable our long-term business strategy to actually happen. After all, strategies and objectives are no more than words on a piece of paper or computer screen without talented, motivated and energised people to actually make them happen.

So we spoke to hundreds of people within Britannia. We asked them what they wanted and need both personally and professionally in order to deliver the results expected of them.

What we found was an organisation that, largely through circumstance and time, had some serious skill gaps across its management ranks.

- Managers said they felt overwhelmed and found it difficult to prioritise work. Nearly one in three managers we spoke to didn't have the confidence in their own abilities to deliver against their personal plans. Just five per cent felt that Britannia delivered against their own development needs. Put bluntly, as an organisation we needed to move away from micro-management and 'supervision' to a more creative, inclusive, and ultimately higher performing management culture.
- Learning and development in our organisation has been far too fragmented and polarised, with up to 30 different outside vendors being used to train staff, each with their own ethos and methods of evaluation. From a management perspective this was akin to a premiership football team putting out 11 players, all separately coached in isolation...
- Allied to this was the simple fact that with growth comes growing pains! Our acquisition of Bristol and West alone has meant that two in every three of our managers in network sales have now been with the company less than two years.
- There was often a negative connotation to 'training', largely because of the sheer volume of learning required simply to keep pace with ever-changing financial services legislation...hardly the most inspiring subject matter in the world...

Why an academy and why now?

- And of course all these factors have ultimately been driven by the most important fact of all in our business...the customer. Customers not only have more choice, but every day they are becoming more aware of that choice and the power it gives them. The upside is our sector is booming. The downside is that everyone from supermarkets to traditional high street retailers are now our competitors - and there are simply not enough talented staff to go round...

The solution...

It didn't take long for us to see what was glaringly obvious.

We are one company.

We have a single business strategy and one set of givens and values.

Now is the time to craft a single, joined-up learning and development approach that gives managers everything they need to lead and succeed - not just today or next year, but for the all future generations of Britannia leaders.

First and foremost a 'joined-up' business is one that acts as a single (albeit gigantic) team - and our academy is going to bond our managers together in a way that has never happened before. Eventually, you will all have a far greater knowledge, understanding and empathy for what your colleagues do in other parts of the business.

You'll have the support network to provide a consistent quality of leadership, through a standard set of definitions, common models, language, training process and evaluations that can be regularly applied across all business units.

Yet at the same time you'll be using entirely new ways of learning to be more creative, dynamic, innovative and inspiring.

From now on, Britannia's management development capability lies purely in our own hands. Like our business, it may change, but always with this sole purpose in mind:

To give our managers and their teams the belief, skills and energy to enjoy work, perform better and deliver our company strategy.

A new way of learning

As anyone with a misspent childhood will tell you, the real key to learning (and developing) is that you have to want to do it.

Bottom line, the Britannia Academy is about giving our managers all the tools and skills they need to lead and succeed. And that starts with belief.

We don't just need a 'can do' attitude but a 'want to do' attitude - and that means shaking things up and changing our way of thinking...

- The days of "talk and chalk" style classroom-based training where everyone sits quietly, makes a few notes in their pads and then returns to the 'real world' (only to forget virtually everything they learned) are now well and truly over.
- The days of not knowing whether training was making a difference to performance and results or indeed whether you were getting a decent return on your investment are also gone.
- The days of being 'told' how to learn, performing the tasks required of you, and having limited input into the bigger business issues are...over.

Instead, leadership and the way we teach it, is about to become far more collaborative, fun, interactive and dynamic. Of course, it will also be very personal: a journey of self-discovery that starts with everyone in the organisation scratching beneath the veneer to see the person, not just the job title.

Be Do Win

The philosophy that underpins all of this can be summarised in three simple words:

- **Be:** Changing a company starts with changing people's deep-seated beliefs and attitudes.
- **Do:** Only then can you influence the way individuals think and feel about their ability to do the job and 'make a difference'.
- **Win:** Get it right and you will get improved performance, better results and happier staff.

In the past, Britannia has focused heavily on the **Do** and the **Win**, but very little on the **Be**. Yet, it's our belief system that actually governs whether we'll achieve something or not.

A new way of learning

As individuals we often erect barriers that don't really even exist and tell ourselves "We can't do it," "What's the point?" or "I'm not good enough." These self-limiting beliefs provide a comfort blanket, a safety net whose sole purpose is to avoid making positive change.

The Be Do Win philosophy is all about helping you and your team to recognise when this is happening, see the cause and effect of your behaviour in relation to customers, colleagues and anyone else - and make that positive change.

As Henry Ford once said: "Whether you believe you will or believe you won't... you're probably right."

Quality

The quality of what you'll be learning is without question.

Many of the modules we offer have been accredited as university standard, which provides you with new, valuable, tangible and transferable skills.

Everything we teach through the academy will be ingrained into your everyday working (and you may well find, personal) life on a practical level. For example, many of the modules involve pre-course work so that when you come along to learn, you hit the ground running. And many of the modules include work-based assignments so that skills and behaviours that you've learned are actually put into practice in a real-life situation.

Everyone who takes part will be asked to complete evaluation forms detailing quite simply, 'What's changed?' This includes evaluations at one, three and six month intervals based not just on the 'hard' skills you learn, but also the behaviours. For some modules we'll actually require candidates to undergo a physical assessment day where you literally get accredited...or you don't!

And of course all of this means that the academy will provide a real return on investment, enabling you to see precisely whether you and the team are practicing new skills - and ultimately whether the money and time spent was worth it.

The basic facts

Here are some important facts.

Where is the academy? The academy operates out of three locations nationwide:

- Leek
- London Docklands
- Bristol

Who's eligible? All Britannia managers are eligible - a total of 1,000-plus people. You can decide what modules are best suited to your needs as part of your monthly desk reviews or twice-a-year appraisals with your line manager.

What will be delivered initially? We asked the business what skills and behaviours were needed most, and then created our first group of nine modules accordingly. We plan to roll out a further 99 next year with the goal of eventually having 50-plus modules. The initial nine are:

- Making meetings work.
- Harnessing emotion to build better teams.
- Bringing people policies to life.
- Making a difference: Making it happen.
- Leading teams through change.
- People and process: getting the balance right.
- The inspiring interviewer.
- How to win hearts and influence people.
- Time to lead.

Who will deliver learning? All the learning is being delivered jointly between Britannia and our partners Minerva - who through their Be Do Win model and down-to-earth approach have a fantastic record of helping companies like ours. Each module will be delivered in partnership with a Britannia co-facilitator - a seasoned and respected manager from the business with no pre-conceptions of people in the room, no baggage and very-much focused on the 'real world'. These people will be your first point of contact for any follow-up.

When? Throughout 2007 (see calendar on opposite page)

What does it cost? All training is budgeted centrally. The only time it will come out of individual budgets is if you cancel with less than 14 days' notice.

Duration: Most of the modules are one or two days, with some pre-course work and post-learning evaluation.

Proficiency: There are two levels of proficiency: Practitioner and entry level, although not all modules offer both.

Any other questions? Please contact Claire Payton on 01538 393102 or Andy Woodcock on 01538 391667.

Module one

Harnessing emotion to build better teams

"This is your chance to understand how to build a high performing team. To support you in this, we'll encourage you to develop your coaching and your team leadership skills using Emotional Intelligence (EI). If you haven't heard too much about EI in the past, don't worry as this module explains everything. You'll be able to assess your current level of EI - and what that means to those around you, and then build your skills in this area. A really important part of this module is allowing time for real thinking and reflection - giving you some space to really explore your team leadership style and learn from others on the course. You'll return to work with plenty of food for thought, and inspired to make changes both on a personal front and for the benefit of your team."

Lois Buxton
Britannia Co-facilitator

Why is this important?

How do you manage, coach and inspire teams in a relentlessly tough business environment? This is the challenge faced by every manager in our organisation.

What is your leadership style? Have you thought much about it? Bearing in mind the influence it has on everyone around you, it's an area you probably need to improve. This module gives you the space to think about your leadership style, as well as introducing fascinating new techniques like Emotional Intelligence (EI). What is EI exactly? Don't worry, if you attend this module you'll find out.

What will it achieve?

You'll have a far better understanding of human emotions, what drives them and how they can be harnessed for the good of everyone in the team. Ultimately, that means a culture of happy, high-performing people working together.

Ultimately, teamwork is about collaboration, co-operation and empathy - and that's exactly what we'll help you achieve by gaining the skills and confidence to make this happen.

How will it be measured?

We ask all delegates to evaluate the difference this course has made to their lives at 1,3 and 6 month intervals after the event.

Fact box

Where: Bristol, Leek, London.

Cost: £350 per person.

Level: Entry.

Duration: Two days.

When: See page 17.

What does it cover?

- What makes a high performing team?
- Why Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the key to great teams.
- Measuring your own EI. How's it looking?
- How can you make your team members more emotionally intelligent?

Book it!

Call Claire Payton on 01538 393102 or Andy Woodcock on 01538 391667.

Module two

Bringing people policies to life

“As a people manager, do you want to be both a model of compliance and someone who creates a great place for your team to work, grow and develop? Do you have a broad knowledge of Britannia's people policies but sometimes feel unsure about how to apply them? If this sounds familiar, this module is for you. We'll explain key policies, share best practice amongst the group, and then use case studies and role plays to try out these skills; such as giving difficult feedback in a desk review, exercising judgment when managing poor performance, or effectively managing absence. After you've returned to work we then ask you back for a final day where you and your fellow participants will share your experiences and show us what you've learned.”

Claire Payton
Britannia Co-facilitator

Why is this important?

Let's be honest. People policies have always been considered as being a little dry... This module is all about helping you learn the true value of our policies and the difference they can make. For example, how do you tell someone they aren't performing well enough?

As a company, we have a set of values and a way of behaving that defines us and makes us different. But of course those values are no use unless they are truly lived and upheld by our people. This is why executing our people policies to a high standard is so important to the ongoing success of the company. Increasingly, we're evolving an establishing method of managing people at Britannia - and this module will show you how.

What will it achieve?

'A Great place to work, grow and develop'

At the end of this module you'll understand why and how our people policies are critical not just in terms of statutory compliance, but in making key elements of company strategy a reality. Just as importantly, you'll have the confidence and skills to make the correct people-based decisions for the right circumstances and communicate more effectively with your team. What's more, you will be able to pass on much of the knowledge and insight you learn from this module to your own people - involving them, and helping them to see that they really are part of the solution.

How will it be measured?

We ask all delegates to evaluate the difference this course has made to their lives at 1,3 and 6 month intervals after the event.

Fact box

Where: Bristol, Leek, London.

Cost: £600 per person.

Level: Entry.

Duration: Three days.

When: See page 17.

What does it cover?

- The essence of our people policies (equal opportunities, diversity and mutual respect policies, disciplinary, grievance and dispute, sickness, absence and mutual preferences).
- The importance of communication.
- How to be more creative with these policies.
- Better recruitment and selection.
- Performance improvement.

Book it!

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