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Euton Daley MBE
Chief Executive
Pegasus Theatre



Talent Innovations sets the stage for theatrical success

When Euton Daley was offered the position of chief executive of Pegasus Theatre, he was initially daunted by the prospect. However, after receiving coaching from Talent Innovations, he rose to the challenge and developed effective new approaches to management, delegation and communication. Under his clear leadership, the theatre has now achieved its fundraising goals and started to embrace an exciting future.

Challenge

Pegasus Theatre had previously been under the control of Oxfordshire County Council, but it had recently acquired independent charitable status and was now controlled by a board of trustees. After 16 years as artistic director, Euton Daley needed to take on responsibility for running the theatre, reporting directly to the board's chairman and vice chairman. “Aspects such as HR and governance used to be dealt with by the county council,” he says. “Now we had to govern ourselves, and I needed to know how I could best be accountable to the trustees.”

To add to the challenges that Daley faced, the theatre also needed to raise £6.3 million to refurbish the dilapidated theatre building and create new facilities, including a rehearsal and dance studio and a new workshop for technical training.

Solution

With the board's agreement, Daley decided to seek expert support to help him rise to the challenges of his new role. At the recommendation of ABL, a consultancy specialising in the arts and cultural sector, he turned to Talent Innovations.

In his initial meeting with a coach from Talent Innovations, Daley was immediately struck by the company's holistic approach. “Talent Innovations very quickly grasped the situation and understood my

Based in Oxford, the Pegasus Theatre company believes that all young people, no matter what their circumstances, have the right to take part in the arts. It stages a wide variety of shows and youth events throughout the year and gives young people opportunities to develop acting, dancing and production skills.

dilemmas and concerns, whilst making connections that I was too close to see for myself. On top of that, the coach let me talk and voice my opinions rather than telling me what I should or shouldn't do. I decided straight away that I wanted to work with Talent Innovations," he says.

Daley participated in four two-hour, one-to-one sessions with Talent Innovations. The professional coach worked with Daley to agree what results he wanted to achieve in his new role and identify specific objectives for the coaching. "The coach had a very conversational style and made me relaxed enough to talk," he says. "She helped me clear my mindset about who I am, what I have achieved and what I want to do."

At the same time, Talent Innovations also created and conducted a 360° feedback appraisal for Daley. In this assessment, the theatre's senior management team and a number of trustees were invited to comment on and rate Daley's skills and attributes. Talent Innovations analysed the results of this assessment and discussed them with Daley in the one-to-one sessions. Daley explains: "The analysis showed that what I imagined people thought of me wasn't necessarily right. It also highlighted my own perceptions of myself, providing a very useful perspective for the coaching sessions."

Benefits

Through his work with Talent Innovations, Daley soon started to feel more comfortable in his management role and develop an effective management style. He discovered that while his mindset was often black and white, right and wrong, there were other ways of looking at things. He explains: "My coach helped me to understand that things move and change, which enabled me to improve my ability to delegate, a critical factor in my new role, and to set strategies for understanding and managing people."

An unexpected benefit for Daley was an improved work/life balance. "I began to question whether it is always necessary to work so hard or spend so long at work," he says. "By identifying priorities and communicating these effectively, my delegation skills improved."

The coaching and guidance from Talent Innovations helped Daley to create and communicate a clear vision for the future of the theatre. By clarifying his ideas,

Daley was able to communicate the theatre's long term goals more effectively to both the staff and potential donors. "I had to unpack what's clear in my head and make it digestible for other people," Daley says. "I also needed to commit my thoughts to paper. It doesn't mean they will never change. For me it's more about getting down what I want to do despite not being a great writer, about finding a way to transfer my oral passions to paper."

Perhaps the most positive proof of Daley's new leadership skills is provided by the theatre's colossal fund-raising achievement. Within just three years, he and the team raised £5.5m of the £6.3 fund-raising target, allowing them to schedule building work to start in 2009 and extend the reach of the theatre's work even further into the local community. "The fact that my trustees were in a position to provide me with the opportunity to work with Talent Innovations is something I'm very grateful for," Daley says. "The benefits are already apparent and are having positive effects on the theatre's big plans."

He concludes: "The results have gone way beyond my expectations. The process has left me more at ease with my new role and really excited by the opportunity to make a difference. Even better than that, I can now communicate this excitement effectively, to help build an even brighter future for the theatre and plot a way forward for myself."

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **A more effective management style and an improved ability to delegate**
- **Clearer communication with employees, trustees and donors**
- **Stronger leadership which helped the theatre to raise £5.5 million in three years**
- **A better work/life balance**

Contact us to discuss how we can add value for your organisation



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