



ROFFEY PARK
INSTITUTE

HARSCO
ENVIRONMENTAL



Harsco Environmental

Global Business Transformation through Connection and Collaboration

Background

Harsco Environmental is a global supplier of environmental services and products to the steel and metal industries. In the early 2000's when our partnership first started, Harsco were looking for a provider who would work with them to design and develop a training programme for Site Managers around the world in support of their organisational expansion and transformation. First delivered in Pittsburgh in 2008, the programme soon came into Roffey Park's Sussex venue and was an entirely new approach to learning and development for Harsco. For the first time, the focus was to be on building the human interactions between some 9,500 employees worldwide.

HE Connect

Fast forward to 2023 and a brand-new programme, **HE Connect**. Building on our now long-standing partnership and a wealth of knowledge from the early programmes, Harsco and Roffey Park have worked closely together to design, develop and deliver a ground-breaking learning experience aimed at leaders and those identified as high potentials across the worldwide population of Harsco. The overarching aim of the programme is to engage with the entire business, drawing managers into the transformation process.

Other key aims are to expand business knowledge across the world, translating key messages to all employees and to develop future-fit leaders who can also build and maintain successful relationships within the organisation and with customers.

The programme takes place over two weeks at Roffey Park. In the first week, the focus is on personal development and the second centres on working together effectively as a team. A six-week break separates the two, to process, digest and apply the learnings in the workplace after which learners return with success stories and individual development plans to share.

A Seat at the Table

The programme brings together staff from across the entire business in a cross-functional, cross regional and multi-level endeavour. Andrew Needham, Global Director of Organisational Capability & Leadership Development believes this ethos to be critical to its success,



So, we have people from production, engineering, asset management, IT, HR, the corporate office as well...all functions, and at different levels of seniority. We have VP's and we have admin people, all doing the same exercises.

We have a saying - Leave your job title at the door.

Each group also includes non-leaders who bring the advantage of their frontline knowledge and experiences, which they can share directly with senior leaders. One unexpected result was how quickly and naturally collaboration happened between employees, simply because they unexpectedly had so much in common. Andrew adds,



People think they are the only one going through something. Then you bring others from around the world, and they may be all experiencing the same thing, within their own context.

And some of the ideas generated have been taken into the long-range plan for the business. So, when we say, 'you've got a seat at the table', they really have.

An environment conducive to deep learning

In order to achieve successful and sustainable outcomes for all, it's essential to create an environment where all participants feel valued, respected and supported. The facilitation team expertly co-create and hold that space, to ensure that individuals feel comfortable to express their opinions, bring their authentic selves, and perhaps take some risks. In addition to group work, every individual is also part of a trio who work closely together, and these trios frequently extend beyond the life of the programme.

In one example, a manager based in Spain who was facing what felt like an insurmountable challenge was able to draw upon the experience of his trio colleague based in a different Harsco region, thereby finding a solution. An operational problem resolved.

Informal connections matter

One of the important elements of learning at Roffey Park are the more informal opportunities for collaboration. The Harsco team had realised from the earliest stages that time outside of the classroom setting was highly conducive to building collaborative relationships. For some this was due to the comfort of being in smaller groups, perhaps at lunch, or walking in the grounds.

These opportunities are threaded through each iteration of HE Connect, to ensure that everyone can speak openly and share challenges in a confidential setting, as well as sharing knowledge and best practice. The physical environment at Roffey Park is felt by Andrew to be absolutely fundamental to setting the scene for transformation, *"..to me, it's immeasurable. It's a vitally important part of that programme, and it takes people away from their comfort zone as well"*

Impacts and outcomes

There are numerous stories of the impacts and some wholly unexpected outcomes as a result of HE Connect. One such example is of the Indian Operations team who were able to problem-solve an installation issue with the American team, purely because of their connection from the programme. This was something that had never happened before.

One of the strengths of the design of the programme is **its inbuilt scope to flex to the changing needs of participants**. As the cohorts have progressed through the programme, Roffey Park and Harsco have collaboratively shifted the focus to a more Human Systems Dynamics approach which better suits the needs of learners, equipping them with the tools and processes needed to help them navigate the complexity of relationships at Harsco and with customers alike. This approach was a first, and its net result has been a change in the way members of the cohort are now organising and planning tasks collaboratively, pausing where needed to engage with others first.

The **close involvement of the Corporate Communications Team** and their own experiences of taking part in the programme has been instrumental to the impact of communications globally. Communications are all now closely evaluated, and translated into a total of 16 languages, ensuring that key messages are reaching each and every employee. This has been felt internally as a 'game-changer'.

A founding value for Roffey Park is building in the **time and space for reflection** to any learning programme. Andrew tells the story of a Safety Manager who came to Roffey Park having experienced a particularly difficult week. As part of the programme, participants were invited to take a short walk outside in our beautiful grounds just to think, something that puzzled the cohort at first. Afterwards, the manager said that was in fact the most important 20 minutes in the last 10 years of his career. So powerful was this for him that every morning he now leaves his phone, walks around the outside of his own office building and back in again.

Perhaps the overarching outcome is the powerful combination of the **transformation of not just the business, but of Harsco's people**. The levels of collaboration and efficiency achieved through the programme are felt not just at work, but in participants' personal lives where they describe being more measured and reflective. At work, the level of collaboration that has been achieved among colleagues transcends geography, seniority or business area. Andrew describes this as the most transformational and personally satisfying impact of the programme,



We weren't expecting the collaboration so quickly among employees, but that's because they all had something in common.

The ROI is seeing people building connections across the world

HE Activate

A sister programme, **HE Activate** is newly designed specifically for site managers with the aim of delivering the same skills, tools and experiences to the level of managers below. This includes Supervisors, Site Managers and Functional Leads. The focus is about improving operational performance by enhancing both management skills and personal development to lead with confidence in a complex environment.

As the Harsco Environmental team had found in HE Connect, bringing people together to learn through dialogue and activity-based experiences has been far more powerful than they had ever anticipated. Again, participants are drawn from a multitude of nationalities and cultures, each working within different global contexts and the programme is developed to flex 'in the room' and adapt to suit the needs of every manager.

Delivery takes place in each of the countries, using local facilitators from Roffey Park's network, who in many cases are native speakers of the language. This means that delivery is highly attuned and adaptable not only to the native culture, but also to Harsco's own working context within that country.

An additional feature is that more senior participants from HE Connect are involved in co-delivery of some elements, bringing their own experiences and helping to create a lasting legacy. At this early stage, there are already **100+ business improvement projects** actively improving service levels for customers and for employees on site and the programme will continue to develop and be rolled out over the next 4 years.



We don't just lift and drop content. There are no slides.. the style is very experiential, and our facilitators are incredibly agile in their delivery, responding to individual needs and the business context.

Andrew Needham

