



# Call of the Wild

**DEVELOPING INDIVIDUALS  
AND ORGANISATIONS**

[www.callofthewild.co.uk](http://www.callofthewild.co.uk)

**Sytner**  
Case study

## **THE NATURAL CHOICE** FOR CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

### A Proven Return on Investment from Management Development Courses.

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#### **Introduction**

There has been an ongoing debate as to whether it is possible to measure the quantitative effect of management development courses. The existing evidence is somewhat contradictory and therefore Call of the Wild, as with all our courses, sought to find out if such a measure can be made in order to provide reassurance for the client that they would get a real rather than perceived return on investment.

#### **Background**

The purpose of this study was to investigate changes in work performance after completion of a typical three day outdoor management development (OMD) session organised by "Call of the Wild". This session involved participants working as members of a team in a variety of outdoor challenges, in order to develop skills that would prove valuable if they could be transferred back to the workplace environment.

The effectiveness of this session was measured using a specially adapted version of the Life-Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ) developed by Neill, Marsh & Richards, (2003), which measures a person's life effectiveness, that is, how competent a person perceives himself or herself to be in a variety of areas necessary for success in working life, including communication and team-work.

Comparisons were made between participants' life effectiveness in terms of various aspects of work performance prior to the three-day OMD session and one month after this OMD session. In addition

to this, six telephone interviews were conducted with participants of this session, to supplement the information provided by the questionnaire data. The participants in this study were eighty-five employees of BMW/MINI, who were participating in the three-day OMD session organised by Call of the Wild Ltd.

There were seventy-four males and eleven females, with an average age of thirty-seven years. This session proved to be effective, as participants' life effectiveness skills as measured by the LEQ were significantly greater one month after completion of this session than prior to this OMD session. The implications of these findings are discussed, and specific areas of future research are recommended, in order that more information can be obtained concerning the effectiveness of OMD and other outdoor learning sessions.

#### **Participants**

Eighty-five (85) employees of BMW/MINI participated the OMD session conducted by "Call of the Wild". There were 74 males and 11 females, and the average of the participants was 37 years. The details of all of the participants remained confidential, and their participation was entirely voluntary. The participants were split into teams of between five and nine members, depending on the part of the country they were from. There were a total of eleven teams from the different divisions of BMW/MINI. These were: High Wycombe, Harold Wood, Nottingham, Coventry, Solihull, Chigwell, Leicester, Sunningdale, City, Sheffield and Divisional.

#### **Results**

One month after completion of the OMD session, six non-rigorous telephone interviews were conducted with the participants of this session, in order to support and extend the information provided by the LEQ. The results of these interviews suggest that the OMD session had a positive effect upon those taking part, in terms of enhanced levels of trust and co-operation between team members. It was also suggested that many of the effects of this session were enduring, and that these skills successfully transferred back to the workplace environment, resulting in an enhanced level of individual and team performance within the organisational setting.

*"Call of the Wild designed, developed and delivered a superb team building event for the Sytner BMW/MINI Division in May 2006. We were delighted with their speed and professionalism in working up a programme for the 85 managers concerned. The three day event, held at their Brecon Beacons base, addressed all of our aims and objectives. These centred on building a 'One Team' business ethos and developing our management team working. We wanted to achieve this in an environment that took individuals out of their normal comfort zone into a stretching but non-threatening and fun environment. Feedback from the Manager delegates and our Senior Management sponsors was fantastic, with requests for repeat events on a regular basis. We were very impressed with Call of the Wild's project management, their design team and excellent facilitation of the whole event."*  
Sue Sansome, Group Training & Development Manager, Sytner Group Ltd.



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