

# CASE STUDY

Since working with Cranfield Trust, the Centre for Sustainable Energy have completely over hauled their performance appraisal process; transforming their approach to staff development and line management.

## CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY



### BACKGROUND

The vision of the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) is a world where sustainability is second nature, carbon emissions have been cut to safe levels and fuel poverty has been replaced by energy justice. They deliver this by giving advice, managing innovative energy projects, training and supporting others to act, and undertaking research and policy analysis. CSE has a particular focus on supporting vulnerable households who struggle to keep healthily warm in winter.

[www.cse.org.uk](http://www.cse.org.uk)



### ISSUE

CSE wanted to overhaul their performance appraisal process. Their previous process worked well but was rather out of date with current thinking and, given it was nearly 20 years old, was missing some qualities they now wished to encourage.

In addition, the close tie in the existing process between the performance appraisal and remuneration led to a focus on staff grading, rather than staff development. CSE knew it was time to take a fresh approach and develop an appraisal system and remuneration process which better served their needs.

### SOLUTION

Cranfield Trust Volunteer Management Consultant, Sue Hobson, was matched with CSE. With 20 years HR experience, in a variety of organisations across all sectors, Sue had the skills and expertise to make a positive impact.

Sue challenged CSE to consider issues with their current appraisal and outlined possible approaches to redesigning the performance appraisal system. Sue managed the project to ensure CSE remained on track with the redesign, so that appraisals could be carried out under the new system.





It was agreed that the CSE would consult with staff at each stage of the process, which led to good 'buy in' from staff and managers. This buy in was essential in ensuring the process was implemented effectively in the future.

Sarah Frankish, CSE's Head of Finance and Human Resources, said:

**“Sue really helped us cut through the complexity of replacing an approach we’d got so used to. She focused us on what CSE needs from its staff and what our staff need from an appraisal process. It’s been a lot of work but we’re ending up with something we think will be really powerful.”**

**IMPACT**

The new appraisal process will transform how CSE's staff engage with and reflect on their performance and create a much stronger focus on staff development. It will help line managers to focus on the qualities and issues that underpin the organisation's continuing success and impact - and to do this throughout the year rather than just at annual appraisals.

Simon Roberts OBE, CSE's Chief Executive, said:

**“Cranfield Trust’s support has really helped us to transform our approach to appraisals and to staff development and line management more generally. Sue’s knowledge and experience was vital to help us focus on what mattered and steer away from the many potential pitfalls. We’re ending up with a great new approach which is exciting our staff. And having that external support made all the difference in terms of making sure we kept at it and saw it through.”**



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