

An Organisational Development Approach

The Crown Prosecution Service is the national criminal prosecution authority for England and Wales, employing in excess of 8,000 people. The CPS IT is provided through an outsourced PFI contract worth in excess of £400M over 10 years. CPS telephony is also outsourced through a contract worth around £4M p.a. The CPS Business Information Systems (BIS) Directorate acts as an intermediary, Intelligent Customer, between the IT and telephony service providers and the rest of the CPS.

Corporate Change

Traditionally the CPS has respected long established professions – the Law and Accountancy – with little recognition being given to other younger developing professions like HR and IT.

The approach to IT development and training used to be ad-hoc. There were un-quantifiable skills deficits across the organisation.

In recent years, IT has become more recognised as a profession in general and more specifically within the CPS itself. The BIS Directorate senior management ensure that:-

- people are managed, developed and rewarded more effectively;
- accurate analysis and effective development of skills are facilitated;
- organisational and personal development is focussed on strategically relevant skills;
- the professionalism of the Directorate's people, and the recognition of that professionalism across the organisation, is increased.

BIS management focus on the people in the organisation, ensuring commitment to performance management and appraisal as a part of the personal development process. Great emphasis is placed on enabling people to relate their personal objectives to the organisation's strategic plan resulting in an understanding of their contribution to the success of the organisation. Key to achieving this is the relationship between the manager and member of staff. If this individual relationship is not valued then it is very difficult to raise the level of professionalism in the organisation.

As part of this process, CPS BIS Directorate works closely with other government organisations, implementing similar approaches whilst ensuring realistic and achievable objectives. One primary driver for this was the implementation of Professional Skills for Government by the Cabinet Office and the development of the Government IT Profession which provided even greater focus for the work that the BIS Directorate are doing.

The CPS BIS Directorate has worked closely with the Cabinet Office IT professionalism team, and continues to work closely with the CPS HR Directorate to integrate the development of IT Professionalism with the CPS approach to implementing Professional Skills for Government. BIS have incorporated the Government IT Professional competencies framework into the CPS approach to performance management. Frameworks provide a transparent description of progression through the organisation that people can use to plan their own development. These frameworks are now being used throughout the CPS to help inform recruitment processes and, once employed, to help people plan their own development.

IT Professionals

In 2004, the BIS Directorate was restructured, and one of the aims was to increase the capability, capacity and professionalism of the organisation. In April 2005, following advice from the BIS Organisational and Personal Development Manager, the SFIA Framework was approved as a means of identifying and developing the skills and professionalism of the people working within BIS. In July 2005, a pilot was conducted to map people's skills to the needs of the organisation and to take these into account when planning strategies and individual

development processes. It focused specifically on the 100 plus IT Professionals in the organisation.

SFIA

The decision to base the framework on SFIA meant that an accepted standard is being used which is compatible with that increasingly in use among suppliers to Government. The pilot contributed valuable information to the SFIA update exercise. The results of this have now been incorporated into SFIA Version 3.

This also maintained the compatibility between SFIA and the Government IT Profession framework which is now used as a basis for role construction, skills assessment and development in the CPS BIS Directorate.

Government IT Profession

The Government IT Profession team in the Cabinet Office was established in February 2005 with the aim of recognising a Government-wide IT Profession up to and including board level and to provide IT Professionals with the opportunity to reach the highest levels of Public Service. As one of their first tasks the Government IT Profession team developed a skills framework that was based on SFIA which incorporated additional skills to establish a

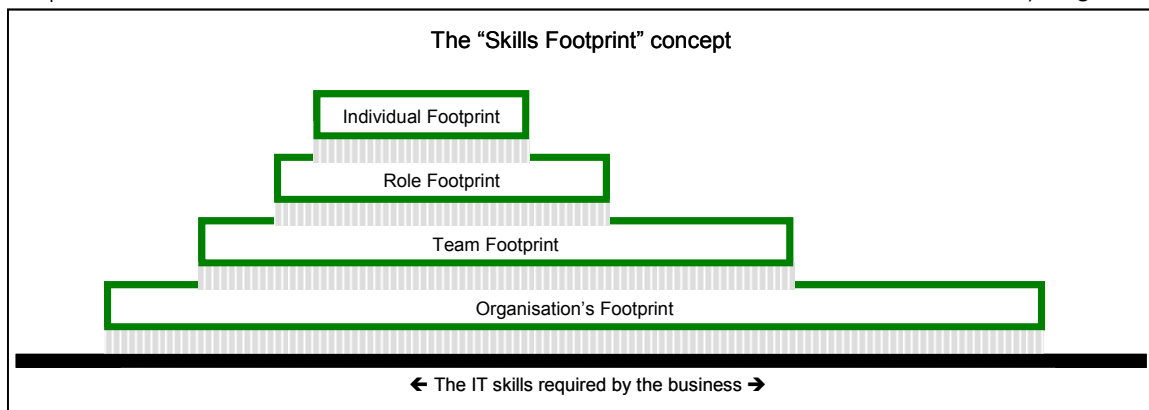
the skills frameworks. The Directorate Organisational and Personal Development Team identified that if a gap analysis was to be carried out successfully it was necessary to generate and record a job description and a set of skills footprints for each role within the Directorate. Having done this the gap analysis can be done simply by metaphorically placing one footprint on top of another to enable the difference between footprints to be seen easily as shown in the diagram above.

If the process depicted was going to work there was a need to develop Job Descriptions and individual, role and organisational skills footprints for all Directorate Roles.

Traditionally roles had evolved without necessarily being described on paper. To produce effective gap analysis, formal skills assessments were made against specific role footprints. This also applies to individuals looking to develop their career by assessing their skill set against those of a role they wish to grow into.

Persuading people, with or without managerial responsibility, that it was worth putting considerable effort into producing job descriptions and skills footprints was a challenge.

However, the CPS had already agreed to



better fit with the requirements of Government IT Professionals.

The CPS are championing the use of skills frameworks both in the CPS and, through the Government IT Team across Government. The Directorate are contributing to the development of Professionalism in the private sector through their involvement in the ProfIT initiative.

Gap analysis

This is the process which enables specific developmental needs to be established using

participate in the Cabinet Office Professional Skills for Government (PSG) initiative which represents a different and more structured way of thinking about Civil Service jobs and careers. PSG is a major, long-term programme designed to ensure that no matter where people work, they have the right mix of skills and expertise to enable their department or agency to deliver effective services.

The CPS HR Directorate developed the "Invest" initiative, part of which entailed reducing the number of job titles in the service to about 200, and creating career families of which

Information Technology and Information Management are two. Within each family job titles and descriptions have been produced and each role has a footprint based on those frameworks. People within the CPS BIS Directorate continue to work with these frameworks to allow them to measure their skills against those required for their role and enable them to focus their development on clearly identified needs.

Achievements

Skills Footprints

The BIS Directorate has now developed a range of footprints based on a series of skills described in PSG, SFIA and Government IT Profession policies.

This process has allowed the CPS BIS Directorate to develop a shared understanding of the organisation's overall skill requirements, level of competence, and development needs and opportunities. It has provided an excellent springboard for pro-active organisational and personal management and development.

Integration with CPS response to PSG

The SFIA 3 based Government IT Framework has been integrated into the CPS "Invest" Skills Frameworks. People now use one framework for the identification of skills and levels. This has eliminated the confusion that was caused when they were working with their own internal framework and either the SFIA 3 or Government IT Profession framework.

A database has been developed which contains the framework and an assessment tool that allows managers and individuals to develop and assess skill against requirements, and to produce individual skills footprints. The database also supplies the management information to improve the effectiveness of individual and organisational management and development.

Staff within the CPS BIS Directorate are now working towards footprints based on the PSA/SFIA/Government IT Profession. They have engaged with them and understand them.

Outcomes of the implementation of the use of the combined PSG/SFIA/Government IT Profession frameworks are:

- strategic skills planning is increasingly based on rational, reliable information;
- the organisation has articulated its business strategy in such a way that the IT staff can see the relevance of their skill footprints;
- people can clearly see what skills development opportunities are relevant and available; this stimulates and motivates staff to complete appropriate development activity;
- demand for appropriate development has helped CPS develop a learning culture;
- people increasingly see the combined skills frameworks as career enabling; they have recognised that focused parallel, mutually beneficial development has enabled them to develop their careers in a more measurable and therefore satisfying way;
- greater visibility, clarity and objectivity around the skills that people possess and need to develop has enabled the Directorate to increase the measurable effectiveness in terms of output of developmental activity such as coaching, mentoring and networking.

As a result, the CPS BIS Directorate sees the combined PSG/SFIA/Government IT Profession framework as a powerful tool for the whole skills management cycle of recruitment, deployment, assessment and development.

The reasons for the success have been shown to be that it was led from the top; there was already a mature performance review process; PSG/SFIA/Government IT Professionalism is integrated into that process; personal development plans are a partnership agreement; and learning is encouraged rewarded and is seen as a shared experience."
