



[case study: world café] sand box



Client:

Preston College (650 delegates)

Objective:

To create an event that would kick-start a development week and be a catalyst for cultural change within the organisation.

Process:

Following initial meetings with Sandbox and Senior Managers at the College, Sandbox proposed a café-style event to start the College's week long development programme.

Plans for relocation and redundancies had left the College workforce feeling anxious and disengaged. The college management team wanted to open the communication lines again and really hear what people across the organisation were thinking and feeling. Part of a longer term change programme designed to revitalise the college during a time of intense transformation, this event was an important part of the strategy.

Sandbox formed a steering group with 20 members of cross-organisational College staff. Over a period of 2 months, the steering group, through Sandbox-led facilitation, surfaced the major areas of concern and opportunity for the College. Three core, powerful questions were developed from these areas and presented at the main event — a 2 hour workshop for 650 people at the Guild Hall in Preston. The hall was laid out in a café style with 100 small tables, paper, pens and post-its. Coffee was available and music played quietly in the background. Each table (of randomly allocated staff) worked together and focussed on the questions. After each round of questions, people changed tables and looked at the next question. Each new group built on previous conversations and networked with new people. By the end of the third round, the whole group had produced an enormous amount of creative output primarily in the form of a 'wall of post-it ideas'.

The Sandbox technical team made sure that the whole event and all output was digitally recorded for the client. The post-it notes were clustered into areas for action following the event and displayed back at the College, where the senior management team are now committed to taking the major ideas forward.