Demonstrating how innovative and successful organisations bring the best out of their people to achieve significantly enhanced business performance.
The Government is committed to making Britain a prosperous and competitive nation. We can only begin to improve competitiveness in the UK if we work together to improve every aspect of our performance. Partnership is at the heart of what constitutes a responsible and successful organisation. It applies to Government and business. Within organisations, it is important to involve everyone - managers, employees and workplace representatives.

Since this report was first published, the Government has introduced new legislation to reinforce the principles of fairness in the workplace. We welcome the efforts made by our project partners to disseminate this report, and thank the organisations who have given up their time to take part in the study and are happy to share their experience to help others.

**Partnerships with People** illustrates the way in which successful management styles can be developed to ensure that everyone is able to contribute to the aims and objectives of their organisation. The findings of the original study have been reinforced, drawing on the combined experience of user companies, academics and the wide range of organisations with a professional role in providing advice - continuing the partnership approach embodied in the project.

Some of the findings may be common sense but many are not as common practice as they could or should be. The lesson from this study is that the most powerful resource for change, improved performance and competitive advantage is the people who already work in the organisation.

To take forward the principles put forward in the report, the Government is making up to £5m available under the Partnership Fund. This scheme is aimed at all organisations to help them foster partnerships at the individual workplace and to encourage the spread of best partnership practice. The Small Business Service and their partners e.g. the Business Links and their counterparts in Scotland and Wales, are there to provide specific support and advice. Our partners and others organisations are also able to support changes and improvement.

We commend this report to you. It supports the actions the Government is taking to modernise our working practices. Valuing the contribution of everyone in your organisation, and enabling them to add value through their own skills, is key to improving our competitiveness.

Rt Hon David Blunkett MP
Secretary of State for Education and Employment

One of the strengths of Partnerships with People is that, while it is led and co-ordinated by the DTI, it involves a large number of partners.
People. Are they our most important asset?

- What does a major producer of chemicals have in common with a small spring manufacturer?
- What does an advertising agency have in common with a medium sized electronics company?
- What does a police force have in common with a secondary school?
- What does a major retail company have in common with a small graphics company?

They all depend for their success on the success of their people bringing a continual flow of new ideas on how the organisation can operate for the better.

Whether an organisation employs ten or a thousand employees, it requires the potential of all those people to be unlocked if the organisation is to succeed.

The aim of this guide is to help your organisation manage the change to a style of working which involves and includes all of your people.

It is not designed as a recipe book to be slavishly followed, but as a menu of ideas that various organisations, both public and private, have used and found worked for them.

The Partnerships with People guide is based on interviews conducted not only with the senior managers of organisations, but also with groups of middle managers and their employees. The organisations which agreed to take part could and did share their financial performance data proving that they were successful enterprises.

This guide is based on their experience, providing an opportunity to learn from the experience of a range of successful organisations. The worksheets at the back providing a prompt for discussion to enable you to set your own priorities.

“There is no other source of competitive advantage! Others can copy our investment, technology and scale – but NOT the quality of our people.”
Managing Director of British Chrome and Chemicals - 400 employees.

“The boss has mellowed. He used to be stressed out, carrying everything. Now the responsibility is shared out.”
Team Leader, GSM Graphics - 100 employees.

“I love the changes because now you are involved from beginning to end.”
Team member, Appor Limited - 39 employees.

“Our operating costs are reducing year on year due to improved efficiencies. We have seen a 35% reduction in costs within two and a half years by improving quality. There are an average of 21 ideas per employee today compared to nil in 1990. Our people have accomplished this.”
Chief Executive of Leyland Trucks - 763 employees.
There certainly has been a marked change in management attitudes and practices from those of the 1980’s. This shift has come about from the understanding that it is the customer’s needs and aspirations around which the organisation must focus. Also the realisation that the attitudes and commitment of all the employees have to be engaged in order to most effectively meet those needs.

Thus the best organisations manage rather than are managed. There are, typically, less layers of management in today’s organisations but each one is entrusted with greater responsibilities for the running of the business.

These organisations will be team oriented; the old rigid boundaries between people are being replaced with internal networks which are totally focused on the organisation’s goals and improved performance.

These teams, whilst focussing on their own goals, will look to the organisation as being the main team. Employees will be taking more responsibility and will thus look to senior managers to provide strong leadership.

Management are also more relaxed about communicating performance information throughout the organisation. Indeed, many have found that when employees know exactly how the organisation is performing, they become stimulated to greater efforts.

Analysis of the interviews conducted as part of Partnerships with People bears out many of the perceptions that managers have concerning their future roles within today’s organisations:

90% of those interviewed said that management of people had become a higher priority in the past three years.

90% have a formal training policy and plan – derived from the business or work plan.

97% thought that training was important or critical to the success of the organisation.

100% of the organisations have a team structure.

60% of organisations with teams formally train their team leaders so that the team system becomes effective more quickly.

65% of organisations with teams formally train their employees to work in teams – it doesn’t just happen.
Results from the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey (WERS 98), the largest survey of its kind in the world, clearly shows that firms with modern employment practices perform better than those without them:

- workplaces with modern employment practices were associated with improved relative financial performance, fewer resignations, less dismissals, higher employee commitment and better management-employee relations;
- job satisfaction and employee commitment was higher when employees felt they had some influence over the work they do, when management treated them fairly, and when they felt their views were taken seriously by management; and,
- high employee commitment was also found to be associated with better management employee relations, which in turn was associated with less resignations and dismissals, less industrial action and better financial performances.

Despite the obvious benefits of adopting best management practices, the majority of workplaces do not have enough of these practices in place. This is illustrated by the fact that:

- only 14 per cent of workplaces had more than eight modern employment practices in place;
- while 70 per cent of managers said they consulted employees about changes, only 30 percent of employees said they did so; and,
- 77 per cent of employees said that they were not consulted frequently on important aspects of their workplace.

Partnerships with People and the Partnership Fund aim to provide an insight into how organisations adapt these modern employment practices to sustain their success by sharing their business goals and culture; continuous improvement through learning; sharing effort through teamwork; and using effective communication throughout the organisation.
Partnerships with my people! Can it work?

It can and it does.

The organisations that took part in this study believed that they had been transformed by the process of bringing their employees into closer working relationships with the senior management and directors of the business.

They became exciting places to work in.

They are organisations who enjoy the respect and dedication of their workforce.

They are organisations who enjoy the challenge of change.

They are organisations who train and educate all their employees – not just for today’s markets but for the future as well.

They are organisations who listen to all the stakeholders.

They are organisations who are so excited about what they have achieved that they want to share it with other organisations.

Any organisation can achieve similar, startling results.

It needn’t cost a lot of money to achieve – but it will take considerable commitment.

It may take some time – but it will be worth it.

It will mean sharing your dreams and visions with all your employees but you will be delighted by the way that trust is repaid.

It is a journey which begins NOW – and the destination is your FUTURE!

It sounds challenging. Is it?

Today’s business environment is extremely demanding. Organisations are faced with ever quickening rates of change in customer and market demands which must be met if the business is to achieve sustained success. Employees, too, want success – not just for themselves, in terms of better lifestyles and higher disposable incomes, but for the organisation they work for. They know the organisation will change as it adopts these new practices of working. They want to give. They want the partnership to work.

Many of the employees that were consulted summed up the atmospheres in their organisations in a single word. These are some of them:

- Fun
- Stretching
- Challenging
- Go-getting
- Tough
- Can-do
- Buzzy
- Exciting
- Friendly
There are five main themes, broad bands of management practices, which the organisations identified as producing a balanced environment in which employees thrived and sought success for themselves and their organisations.

We have called these the Five Paths to Sustained Success and they are:

**Shared Goals**
Understanding the business we are in.

**Shared Culture**
Agreed values binding us together.

**Shared Learning**
Continuously improving ourselves.

**Shared Effort**
One business driven by flexible teams.

**Shared Information**
Effective communication throughout the organisation.

The other important factor which emerged from the research is that there are levels or stages within each of these paths; stages at which certain elements of ‘good practice’ must be established before the organisation moves forward to break new ground.

Organisations stressed that time must be given for new practices, ways of working and attitudes to be established before developing further.

Any attempt to push forward to new ways before the people are ready to assimilate and believe in them could result in severe distortions to the organisation’s culture.

This time frame will, of course, vary from organisation to organisation.

These stages are not, of course, rigid boundaries but they are significant enough to warrant dividing the framework into three stages.

**Stage 1 - Starting out**
**Stage 2 - Moving forward**
**Stage 3 - New horizons**

“Confidence was created by taking a step-by-step approach, building on success, so that conversations changed from ‘You’re joking!’ to ‘O.K. let’s do it!’”
The depth of the questioning and the fact that the views from all parts of the business were recorded meant that organisations opened themselves in a way never before experienced.

Certainly, some organisations had been through very tough times to put these practices into place but they all, without exception, believed it to be the only way to manage their businesses.

What struck home was the number of interesting paradoxes which held true whether the enterprise was large or small, retailing, manufacturing, service or public sector.

Because companies are dynamic organisations, there is always an element of change in the air. Alongside the solidity of the established structure there is a fluidity of the new ideas and concepts being tried and tested.

As employees take on and enjoy more responsibilities they become accountable for their decisions. Understandably they will be nervous of making mistakes and the essence of good management is to provide support when errors occur, not apply blame.

Thus organisations will feel tough and fun at the same time and yet these two seeming opposites sit well together in any organisation that knows where it is going and carries all its people with it.

Indeed, from the interviews, several other interesting paradoxes were quoted by the employees.

Successful, well managed organisations are:

- **Demanding** yet **Giving**
- **Structured** yet **Fluid**
- **Disciplined** yet **Creative**
- **Confident** yet **Self-critical**
- **Supportive** yet **Stretching**
- **Accountable** yet **Blame free**
- **Entrusted** yet **Managed**

Now we will examine the paths in more detail.
Understanding the business we’re in.

Shared planning provides direction for the organisation.

The whole organisation needs to know where it is going – what its goals are. However, if the vision is the product of one person’s thinking, it will have a limited impact because employees will feel that it has been imposed on them and that they have not made a contribution to it.

When the imagination of all the people is captured, tremendous energy is created within the organisation.

How can all the people in the organisation believe in the vision?

How can they understand that the organisation’s path will lead to more secure employment prospects; steadily improving conditions and rewards; a challenging daily working environment?

The only sure way, our innovative and successful organisations assured us, was for all the employees to be involved in developing the vision.

Thus organisations increase commitment by gradually involving more and more of their employees in formulating the plans that shape the vision. As more people understand the business and where it is planning to go, they can contribute to the developing vision and take advantage of the opportunities they can see in the course of dealing with customers.

Having taken part in the planning, everyone will want to see those plans succeed and will be more determined in their approach to their daily performance.

Because everyone understands and is consulted, potential difficulties will be highlighted and acted upon before they become problems.

Problems become opportunities – not crises.

The improved, more focussed running of the enterprise leads to enhanced customer satisfaction and further successful business.

Shared Goals - key business benefits.

- Plans pull people together – providing a shared direction.
- Shared planning enables people to see how they fit into the organisation and the contribution they are making.
- Senior management receive ideas from those who really understand the problems – and the opportunities.

“Sixty people are involved in the Business Planning day. It is not the sole prerogative of senior managers to come up with the good ideas.”
Agreed values binding us together.

Shared and common values create the culture of the enterprise.

An organisation’s culture represents the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge of all the people within that organisation.

When all these beliefs and values are truly shared, the culture delivers energy to the organisation which will transmit and reinforce the values into a powerful force for success. The organisation becomes confident in its approach to the future.

Organisation after organisation acknowledged that a culture has to build up over time; it cannot be imposed by senior executives but must rather be developed in an atmosphere of fairness, trust and respect until it permeates every activity of the organisation.

Cultures can be shaped and, indeed, the most successful organisations have this as part of their strategy. Culture can and must be managed to ensure that everyone understands the organisation’s values with respect to its people, its customers, its suppliers and to the wider community in which it operates.

Cultures are, however, very fragile. Care must be taken as the business works through the stages of building the right culture which reflects the views of everyone in the organisation. Months and even years of trust and mutual respect can be destroyed overnight if a lack of respect and inequalities are perceived.

A sound culture brings harmony to an organisation. Challenges to the organisation will be met in an atmosphere of co-operation and conciliation, everyone seeking to add to the solutions of the problems. Understanding the goals helps a company to meet current problems, but understanding the principles or culture behind the goals drives the organisation to meet future challenges confidently.

Shared Culture - key business benefits.

- All employees feel respected and so give of their best.
- People are confident and optimistic – they feel that they are ‘winners’.
- The culture supports the organisation’s competitive strategy and provides the energy to sustain it, stretching and extending both the organisation and the individual.

“We never use the word empowerment! You can’t empower people – you can only create the climate and structure in which they will take responsibility.”
Continuously improving ourselves.

Winning organisations consider people to be their most valuable resource which needs to be continuously developed.

Having set its goals and plans, the organisation will need to assess the existing skills of all its employees to determine what additional learning and training will be required if the company is to realise its full potential.

As the workforce becomes more skilled, the visions of the organisation can become more ambitious because the full potential of the people is released into an environment of achievement.

There is the right level of stretch – not too much, which causes stress and not too little, which leads to boredom.

High expectations and attitudes are incorporated into the measurement system and are closely monitored.

Organisations report that training and learning steadily develop an atmosphere of problem solving and creativity. Whilst at first the emphasis may be on enhanced job competency, very soon the employees will enjoy and request further learning opportunities to develop themselves more fully.

These organisations are fully aware of the dire consequences of neglecting their employees because experience shows that an unable, unwilling, unresponsive or unskilled workforce can undermine and negate even the best strategies.

On the other hand, organisations which are managing the development of their people show enhanced performance because the employees are able, consistent, co-operative, responsible and solvers of problems. Structured approaches to people development, such as Investors in People have been shown to be of particular benefit.

Shared Learning - key business benefits.

- The organisation realises a high return from its commitment to its people.
- There is a constant stream of improvements within the organisation.
- The entire organisation becomes increasingly receptive to change.
- Individuals get increased job satisfaction from their new skills.
- Career and personal development plans increase loyalty.

“I feel that I need more training than anyone else! I want to encourage people to think ‘If the MD needs training – then so do I’”
One business driven by flexible teams.

Change has become such an important part of our daily lives that organisations have learnt that they cannot deal with it in an unstructured way.

The response to change cannot be purely reactive as business opportunities may be missed. They must be managed, driving the changes that will lead to enhanced and sustained success.

The organisations we spoke to demonstrated that teams are the building blocks of their businesses – but they cannot be formed in an unstructured manner. Considerable training of all team members in the many facets of team working is essential.

People become much more motivated when they join a team.

Teams integrate effort and solve problems.

Often, teams evolve out of the old functional departments or units within an organisation. As the organisation gains experience and the benefits which follow from team building, the teams become cross functional. They add team members who will contribute to a particular goal, people who would not usually work together, allowing senior managers the time to develop the strategic direction of the organisation.

Teams pass beyond a purely problem solving role into one which adds more customer focus, sharpening procedures and methods and making the organisation more adaptive.

Over a period of time, teams may lose their rigidity and the organisation adopts an approach which is better called ‘teaming’, which is a looser, more flexible approach to problem solving and added efficiency.

It has been shown that people enjoy this way of working. Team structures enable them to demonstrate their new skills and learning and the bonds of closeness with their colleagues increase the effectiveness of work.

Care must be taken, however, to ensure that the teams do not compete with each other in a counter-productive way. It is essential that the organisation develops an effective communication system to ensure that the flow of information from and to teams enhances their effectiveness.

Shared Effort - key business benefits.

- People work better when they feel they are part of a group.
- Teams can achieve more than a collection of individuals.
- Essential co-operation across the whole organisation is maintained.

“The best kind of teamwork is everyone doing things my way! If teamwork is working well, everyone can say that.”
Effective communication throughout the organisation.

Change is managed through the efficient exchange of information and ideas.

The effective transmission of information and knowledge down, up and across the organisation underpins the progress that will be made working through the stages in the other four paths that our organisations identified.

Most businesses work hard at downward communication, identifying the methods that seem to work best within their cultures. They feel, quite correctly, that it is vital that each employee has all the information necessary to help them do their job and identify with the organisation’s progress.

Many enterprises also recognise that there is a rich source of information which will move up through the organisation provided the systems are in place and the culture is mature enough. This information will enable senior managers to understand how their employees view the organisation and that this knowledge is able to generate improved competitiveness and understanding.

The most effective communication of all runs up, down and across the business in a mixture of formal systems and informal processes. This 3-way communication is seen particularly in those enterprises with flatter organisational structures and appears to be the model that other businesses could aspire to.

Many organisations which have unions have built successful relationships with them, developing key partnership roles in the effective dissemination of information, communicating and facilitating the need for change. Some organisations that do not recognise unions have found representative works councils useful in consulting employees and providing information.

Many organisations have discovered the value of an open approach telling the truth at all times without undue optimism or pessimism. Successful organisations are informal places with ideas, suggestions, information and knowledge flowing as required; neither too much nor too little with the minimum of bureaucracy or excessive meetings.

Shared information - key business benefits.

- People have the information needed to set objectives and priorities.
- Senior managers know what is actually going on.
- The organisation reacts rapidly to threats and opportunities.
- It reinforces trust and respect throughout the organisation.

“A range of communication methods is important. What does not work is sending a booklet with no follow up.”
We have examined the five paths in some detail and suggested that there is a time factor in implementing the various disciplines. We have also brought out the idea of stages of good practice within those paths. We have compressed the main points into a single framework and trust that you will find it a useful guide when assessing your organisation in the questionnaire that follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared Goals</th>
<th>Stage 1 - Starting Out</th>
<th>Stage 2 - Moving Forward</th>
<th>Stage 3 - New Horizons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the business we are in.</td>
<td>Plan developed from the MD’s vision</td>
<td>The vision developed by top team</td>
<td>Participative planning enabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The plan explained to all staff</td>
<td>The vision shared with all the people</td>
<td>Unit planning facilitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance against plan is shared</td>
<td>Jobs related to the longer term goals</td>
<td>Agile planning operated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Shared Culture | | Build collective confidence | Lessons are learned, blame is removed |
| Agreed values that bind us together. | Managers are fair and involved | Demonstrate you value everyone | Shape a competitive culture |
| | Commitment to your customers | Face problems – be tough | Change is embraced |
| | Start to tackle the fear of change | |

| Shared Learning | | People enrolled in their own development | Develop the person |
| Continuously improving ourselves. | Performance measures are defined | Managers are developed to achieve stretching targets | Train managers as coaches |
| | Employees are trained for job competence | High performance is expected | Build tomorrow’s capability |
| | Recruit and select with care | |

| Shared Effort | | Teams trained as effective working units | Inter-team working required |
| One business driven by flexible teams. | Managers developed as team leaders | Discretion given to teams | Ad hoc teams used |
| | Team performance measured | Teams made internal customers | Build the firm as ‘the team’ |
| | Team problem-solving encouraged | |

| Shared Information | | Be open, good and bad news is relayed | Information is available to allow decisions to be delegated |
| Effective communication throughout the enterprise. | Communications effectiveness is checked | Process in place to allow ideas to be taken into account | Everyone is responsible for seeking and passing information |
| | Process for reporting decisions is used | Information is shared between teams | |
Below you will find 15 statements, three for each of the five paths. Look at each statement and circle the most appropriate response in each case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent ...</th>
<th>Shared Goals</th>
<th>Shared Culture</th>
<th>Shared Learning</th>
<th>Shared Effort</th>
<th>Shared Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding the business we are in.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... is there a step-by-step plan to develop the business which all employees fully understand</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... do all staff contribute creative ideas about how objectives can be implemented</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... is the organisation’s strategy and business plan widely discussed before it is agreed</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>Total Score</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agreed values that bind us together.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... would all employees say “management are fair and respect every employee”</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... do both staff and managers expect that every employee will be dedicated and professional</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... does the culture of the organisation develop widespread confidence and a ‘can do’ attitude</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continuously improving ourselves.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... is everyone highly skilled to perform their tasks</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... does everyone feel that they are developing new knowledge and skills</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>... are people being deliberately developed to provide a competitive advantage for the organisation</td>
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<td>One business driven by flexible teams.</td>
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<td>... do staff at every level work in high performing teams</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>... are there efficient mechanisms to ensure that teams cooperate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... do teams form and re-form to solve problems quickly and efficiently</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Effective communication throughout the enterprise.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... is there a frequent and open cascade of communication down the organisation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>... is there continuous and open communication across the organisation</td>
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<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... is there comprehensive and open communication flowing up the organisation – so that top management really know what is going on</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
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</table>

Now enter the scores on the Self Assessment Mapping Grid on the next page.
## Self-assessment mapping grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Stage 1 - Starting Out</th>
<th>Stage 2 - Moving Forward</th>
<th>Stage 1 - New Horizons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Goals</strong></td>
<td>Understanding the business we are in.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Culture</strong></td>
<td>Agreed values that bind us together.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Learning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Effort</strong></td>
<td>One business driven by flexible teams.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Information</strong></td>
<td>Effective communication throughout the enterprise.</td>
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An interesting exercise is for the senior executive, management and their employees to answer these questions independently of each other. A number of organisations would see a very different set of answers from each group.

The map you have drawn represents the profile of the business in relation to the way that the organisation is perceived by its most valuable resource – the employees. If you have a score of less than 3 for any of the paths, that path needs to be worked on first to bring the organisation up to Stage 1 (Starting Out) status. After a suitable period of time, re-run the questionnaire to assess that there is company-wide agreement that this has been achieved.

As was mentioned earlier in this document, an organisation will not benefit from going along one path to the exclusion of others. A broad approach to all paths will balance the organisation and bring the greatest results and rewards.

There are many specific ways you can achieve a fulfilling partnership with all your people and the organisations that formed the basis of this study were only too pleased to share some of their successes and failures with you.

At the end of this workbook there are fold out worksheets, one for each path. They have been designed to be photo-copied and used as dynamic working documents to assist you in realising the full potential of your organisation.

All the suggestions and cautionary tales were taken from actual interview notes with the senior executives, managers and employees of the organisations we studied.

We trust that you will enjoy and succeed in the journey ahead of you. There may be times when you feel that you need help to overcome obstacles or it is not clear how best to proceed.

In the section ‘Next Steps’ we have listed organisations who will be able to provide that help.
The fact that well trained, motivated people are essential to the smooth running of the enterprise will not come as a surprise to any senior executive or employee. It is so obvious that it is a great mystery why more businesses do not see it as the most fundamental building block of their organisation or, if they do realise it, do not act on it.

But imposed values, culture, training and information will not release that immense store of creativity and innovation locked inside all of the people. They have to be given the opportunity and encouraged to give and to share and they will do this with an organisation that honestly sees them as partners in the enterprise – an enterprise that trusts them and gives them responsibility within a clearly defined framework.

Although the word ‘empowerment’ has lost some of its credibility because, in a sense it has been over used or inappropriately applied, the organisations we spoke to felt that the principles were still totally valid and this study – ‘Partnerships with People’ is proof of that.

The over-riding message which came out of the discussions with people at all levels in the organisations is that this movement to a greater involvement of everyone in the business is not a fad; not a new style created by a business ‘guru’; not this year’s fashionable piece of business jargon but a real change in the way organisations will run now and in the future.

As businesses and organisations feel the intense pressures from customers and from competitors operating in a global context, they will have to become more and more responsive to change to meet these new demands.

Time-to-market for new products and services is reducing markedly. Even in industries and businesses with quite mature technologies and materials, innovative thinking is finding new applications, methods and ways of marketing to bring new products and services to the discerning buyer.

There is no better group of people to apply that innovative thinking than those involved day-to-day with all the systems of the organisation, from accounts staff to those responsible for dispatching the goods; nobody understands the processes better than the operator making the product; no one knows the customer better than the person who spends a lot of the day talking to that customer. New ideas can be exploited anywhere within the organisation.

The organisations who have embraced this new way of working, building strong relationships with their employees, are committed to the ideals of their partnerships. They are at different stages of achievement; some have progressed quickly; others have encountered delays or setbacks, but they all agree that there is no other way forward.

“We are on a journey, but we do not know the end-point.”

It would seem that without such partnerships in place, an essential part of the organisation’s strategy is missing. Each organisation must assess its own individual culture and build on those shared values to set its goals. The closer that these goals represent the true aspirations of all the people in the organisation, the more likely it is that those goals will be achieved.
Of course, no one is pretending that all organisations will have a smooth passage through life. All organisations face shocks which may arise from internal situations or from an outside source but it is a measure of the combined resolve of all the people how those shocks are faced and overcome.

“We grabbed hold of our own destiny.”

Certainly the organisation will become a changed environment for all and for the better.

“Success breeds success; people like to be associated with successful companies.”

“Customers? Customers drive us but we also drive them!”

“If you think training is expensive, try ignorance!”

We wanted to summarise this study in a concise way. We couldn’t have chosen a better way than the manager of one of the companies that took part.

“People are proud to work here. Proud of colleagues, proud of the company and proud of themselves.”
If change is to take root in your organisation, it has to be actively managed from the top. Management teams have to be thoroughly convinced and educated about the impact the change will have on their working lives. A bottom up audit of the organisation and the way its people view it will start to identify issues. It is not something that you can pass over to others to achieve but the following initiatives and organisations can all help you in the process.

**Partnerships with People**

More information can be found on the Partnerships with People website: [www.innovation.gov.uk/pwp](http://www.innovation.gov.uk/pwp)

**The Partnership Fund**

The Partnership Fund has been set up to help develop partnerships at work, by supporting projects in the workplace and encouraging the spread of information about best partnership practice.

Many companies in the UK have realised the potential of the partnership approach to develop the productivity of the workforce. The fund aims to help the development of a skilled workforce within a flexible and motivated labour market and so to stimulate the competitiveness of the UK economy.

Companies, business intermediaries, including employer federations, trade unions and other employee representatives, trade associations, Business Links, public sector bodies and charities are all eligible to apply. Support is provided for up to 50% of eligible costs of individual projects up to a maximum of £50,000. The remainder of costs must be met from non-public sector sources.

**For further information contact** the Partnership Fund Help line on 020 7215 6252 or visit the website on: [www.dti.gov.uk/partnershipfund](http://www.dti.gov.uk/partnershipfund)

**Investors in People**

Investors in People is the National Standard which sets a level of good practice for improving an organisation’s performance through its people. The companies we spoke to in the study strongly endorsed the practical support that Investors in People can offer. This report is consistent with and supports the principles of Investors in People.

**For further information or details from local agency or organisation contact** 020 7467 1900 or visit the website on: [www.ipuk.co.uk](http://www.ipuk.co.uk)

**Fit for the Future**

The aim of the Fit for the Future campaign, led by the CBI with DTI support, is to achieve a massive increase in the number of companies engaged in the transfer of best practice through publicising success and by networking those with experience with those who want or need to learn.

The campaign’s strategy is not to duplicate their activity. Rather it is to create the big picture, to network activity across the country, raise the profile of best practice and create the momentum to inspire others, by example, to follow suit. The campaign will carry the brand ‘Fit for the Future’ - Business learning from Business and will provide an umbrella encompassing a very wide range of partner organisations and individuals.

**For further information contact** Fit for the Future Information Line: 0870 600 2513 or visit the website on: [www.fitforthefuture.org.uk](http://www.fitforthefuture.org.uk)

**The Institute of Personnel & Development**

The Institute researches and publishes widely on people management and development topics. This work is complementary to the findings set out in this report. The IPD recognises that many managers will only be persuaded of the benefits of training if they can see bottom-line benefits. For this reason IPD in association with Investors In People UK, with the support of DTI, produced a practical toolkit, ‘Making Training Pay’.

The toolkit relates vocational education and training investments to business benefits.

**For further information contact** IPD House, Camp Road, London, SW19 4UX. Tel: 020 8971 9000. Website: [www.ipd.co.uk](http://www.ipd.co.uk)

**Engineering Employers’ Federation**

EEF is accredited as an Investor in People organisation, and works closely with Investors In People UK in developing case studies based on the experiences of small and medium sized organisations that have used the standard to develop their businesses. Copies of these are available on request. The EEF has a nation-wide network of thirteen associations which provide advice on a wide range of training and development needs and has modern training facilities in a number of locations.

**For further information contact** Department of Education and Training Affairs, EEF, Broadway House, Tothill Street, London SW1H 9QN. Tel: 020 7222 7777. Fax: 020 7222 2782. Website: [www.eef.org.uk](http://www.eef.org.uk)
Confederation of British Industry

The CBI have a suite of benchmarking tools delivered under the family name of PROBE (PROmoting Business Excellence). Each tool allows you to benchmark against your sector and industry, and the world class criteria of each model. The tools originated with Manufacturing PROBE, developed in partnership with IBM Consulting Group and London Business School. The proven and popular methodology now extends across Service PROBE, CONTOUR for Environment Health & Safety, and HEADSTART for people performance management, which will be launched in March 2000.

For further information contact CBI, Centre Point 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU. www.cbi.org.uk or by contacting the benchmarking team. Tel: 020 7739 8184. email: benchmarking@cbi.org.uk

Centre for Research in Innovation Management

CENTRIM have drawn from the wealth of practical insight in the data-base and developed comprehensive audits, intensive mini-workshops, and structured training programmes which are available throughout the UK to organisations who wish to put the principles of this report into practice.

For further information contact Dave Francis, Senior Research Fellow, CENTRIM, University of Brighton, Falmer, East Sussex BN1 9PH. Tel: 01273 642195. Fax: 01273 685896. email: d.l.francis@brighton.ac.uk. Website: www.centrim.bus.brighton.ac.uk

Trades Union Congress

The Bargaining for Skills project is run to help trade unions negotiate for learning opportunities in the workplace. The projects:

• raise awareness among trade unions of the need for lifelong learning.
• provide trade unions with the skills to negotiate with their employers on education and training.
• assist trade unions and employers to introduce Investors In People, NVO’s, Modern Apprenticeships and learning centres.

For further information contact Liz Smith, National Officer, TUC Learning Services, TUC, The Cotton Exchange, Suite 506-510, Old Hall St, Liverpool L3 9LQ. Tel: 0151 298 1216. email: lsmith@tuc.org.uk. Website: www.tuc.org.uk

The Institute of Directors

The IoD’s Director Development offers an extensive range of short practical courses and development programmes for all directors and senior executives whatever their size or type of business or personal experience. Courses can be tailored to meet company’s needs and distance learning products are available for those who prefer to develop their skills in their own time. An executive coaching service is also available.

For further information view the IoD website on: www.iod.co.uk Tel: 020 7766 8800 or alternatively contact The IoD, Director Development, 116 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5ED.

Involvement and Participation Association

The IPA is a not-for-profit, independent organisation, promoting the benefits of partnership at work. Services available to members and non-members include:

• Training and consultancy: Partnership, Representation, Consultation
• Employee Involvement
• Communication
• A quarterly magazine.
• Regular case studies and topical reports.
• Seminars, conferences and company visits to promote best practice.

For further information contact Sarah Dawson, Events and Marketing Manager, IPA, 42 Colebrooke Row, London N1 8AF. Tel: 020 7354 8040. Fax: 020 7354 804. Website: ipa-involve.com

The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.

RSA seeks to enhance the competitiveness of UK industry and commerce by investigating factors critical for business success, change and improvement. Current projects in the RSA’s ‘Manufacturing, Wealth Creation and the Economy’ programme include ‘Business Partnerships: beyond the rhetoric’ and ‘Leading the Continuously Creative Enterprise.’

For further information contact Dr. Geoff Botting, Programme Director, RSA, 8 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6EZ. Tel: 020 7930 5115. Fax: 020 7839 5805. email: gpbotting@rsa-uk.demon.co.uk. Website: www.rsa.org.uk
Next Steps

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)
Improving the performance and effectiveness of organisations by promoting good practice and building harmonious relationships at work is an essential part of ACAS’s mission. Through its nationwide network of offices ACAS delivers practical help and support to organisations wishing to modernise their employment relations. In addition to collective and individual conciliation services the ACAS advisory service strives to bring managers, employees and their representatives together to find joint solutions to problems, and to put new systems in place. ACAS also runs workshops for small firms, and seminars and conferences. It organises local contact groups where personnel managers and trade union officials can meet to exchange good practice, discuss employment issues and listen to guest speakers. ACAS also publishes a range of advisory booklets and handbooks.

For further information contact your nearest ACAS office. Telephone numbers are listed in the telephone directory or can be found on the website: www.acas.org.uk

Institute of Management Consultancy
The IMC leads the profession of management consultancy by qualifying, supporting and regulating individual management consultants and provides a forum for all management consultancy stakeholders. It sets the professional and ethical standards for the profession and awards the international Certified Management Consultant competency-based qualification. IMC provides clients with the guidelines on choosing and using a consultant and also provides a free shortlisting service.

For further information contact IMC, Fifth Floor, 32-33 Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8DL. Freephone 0800 318030. Fax 020 7831 4597. email: consult@atlas.co.uk. Website: www.imc.co.uk

The Institute of Management
Europe’s largest institute for professional managers, IM can help business leaders at all levels in any industry to implement the recommendations in this report. IM provides Management Checklists, Publications and Short Courses on a wide range of management topics.

For more information contact IM, Management House, Cottingham Road, Corby, Northants NN17 1TT. Tel 01536 204222. Website: www.inst-mgt.org.uk

Economic and Social Research Council
The ESRC provides comprehensive research and training opportunities that address economic and social concerns. It has established a programme and a number of research centres dedicated to tackling the issues of effective innovation management. People and supportive organisational structures are critical and this report is complementary to both the on-going and future work.

For further information contact Dr Fiona Steele, ESRC, School of Industrial & Manufacturing Science, Cranfield University, Cranfield, Bedford MK43 0AL. Tel: 01234 754141. Fax: 01234 751346. email: f.steele@cranfield.ac.uk. Website: www.esrc.ac.uk

The Institute for Supervision and Management
ISM, the Institute for Supervision and Management, is collaborating with EMTA (The Engineering and Marine Training Authority), CENTRIM and Jasper Gilder Ltd, on a major Partnerships with People based project running until 2002. The project teams will work with partner employers, using a range of progressive and proven organisational development techniques, to install Partnerships with People structures in their organisations.

For further information contact George Edwards, Development Director, ISM, Stowe House, Netherstowe, Lichfield, Staffs WS13 6TJ. Tel: 01543 251346. Fax: 01543 415894. Website: www.ismstowe.demon.co.uk. email: gedwards@ismstowe-dev.demon.co.uk

The Industrial Society
The Industrial Society campaigns to improve life at work and is one of the country’s most respected training and advisory organisations. The Society has over 10,000 member organisations.

For further information contact The Industrial Society Tel: 020 7479 2000 or visit the website at: www.indsoc.co.uk

For further information including case studies and sources of help and advice on the whole range of people management and development initiatives, take a look at: www.greatplacetowork.gov.uk
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