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| Approach: **Building Capability** |
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| Because I had the relationships, staff started to come to me and felt comfortable doing so. For example a senior lecturer came to see me. He had just finished a secondment and wasn’t sure what to do next, he wasn’t sure what he wanted from the conversation at first. We talked about what he was bringing back to the department and what he had learnt and agreed a plan of how to embed this. ***It is important that we move away from the notion that the Head of Department has all the ideas***, I want to create space to allow others to take on the responsibility but have the support from me to know they are empowered.To help to bring in new energy into the department we have developed a new recruitment strategy. We have operated a "try before you buy" approach where we bring in practitioners in from industry to try out a career in higher education. We do this by offering a fixed term secondment as an SL. For many this means a drop in salary but for those who want a new career path it offers that opportunity. We also wanted to give people the opportunity to develop their potential in new more senior roles. Some say "they aren't ready" and I know they may not be but we make sure they are supported and nurtured and allowed to make their mistakes so they can learn. It's created a whole new energy in the department.We are building a critical mass of people who are behind the vision. It's not about the individual, it's about the shared vision. You follow the vision not the person. It is no good getting egotistical thinking you are all powerful.We wanted to re-energise the department and bring in a sense of belonging. We ran 3 away days and invited guest speakers, practitioners and students. We also invited 10 academics from a different department and faculty who had very different outlooks to us. By the end of the day they fed back how dedicated and supportive we were in our teaching. This is something not everyone recognised about ourselves. These external perspectives helped us form our own identity, made us feel proud and helped nurture this sense of belonging. From that we have been able to celebrate each other's success and help people feel this is a great place to work. |