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| Approach: **Communicating direction in ways people can believe in** |
| Name: **Iain Garner**  Role: **Head of Department, D&S** |
| Our internal structures didn’t make sense from an external perspective so we had to change roles. No-one was at risk but it meant changes to working practices. I needed to have honest conversations with everyone so they could share how they saw things and I also did open surgeries - although hardly anyone came. When I put the proposal together and presented it back to the team everyone seemed fine with it. No-one objected. When it came to the actually implementing the plan, however, that’s when then shit hit the fan! This was a key learning point:  ***lack of obvious dis-engagement isn't the same as engagement*.** Just because they didn’t go mad at my presentation doesn’t mean they had bought in.  I realised what was needed was to get everyone in a room so they could open up and let it out. There are always risks with this approach, you can create a situation where, for different reasons you get a kicking from everyone at once so up you need to be robust emotionally. Finding a way to get them to agree with the problem is key and from there we got shared engagement in the solution.  It's so important to share information, be transparent with problems and then trust them to help deal with it. Then it was about giving people space to consider and come back with suggestions. Its crucial to have them feel involved, you don’t always have to agree with their interpretation straight away, you just need to trust those who have the right expertise. If you get this right you get better relationships, commitment to the mission and people have a good time - which is important. It's important to have modesty in leadership. Go with others ideas. If it works great, if not they at least have more empathy with the challenges you face as leader. |