

CASE STUDY:

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION PROGRAMME



INTRODUCTION

Aviva is the UK's largest insurance company, with over 15 million customers and 15,000 staff in the UK. Aviva recognises looking after its people means they in turn will look after customers. This sentiment is central to the ethos at The TCM Group, meaning that a collaborative partnership between Aviva and TCM to implement more people-centred structures was a no-brainer.

Working with The TCM Group, Aviva introduced a resolution programme in July 2018 supporting its commitment to employee engagement and wellbeing.

15
MILLION
customers



15,000
staff in
the UK



Through its revolutionary framework, TCM offers a collaborative and structured system for resolving complaints and grievances, an alternative to formal procedures, that centres on party empowerment and accountability within a facilitated environment. The programme therefore mirrors Aviva's commitment to employee engagement by supporting colleagues to find a way to resolve their workplace issues in a way that feels right for them. The programme has proved successful since 2018, resulting in a more collaborative and constructive approach to workplace conflict amongst employees, managers, and trade unions.

TARGETING ISSUES

Prior to the introduction of the resolution programme, the business recognised that the way it was currently dealing with workplace conflict was at odds with its wellbeing culture. Issues rumbled under the surface until they reached a point where the only solution was a standard grievance procedure.

A new way of resolving disputes was needed to help managers nip issues in the bud, encourage healthy dialogue in teams and ensure staff were able to concentrate on their best work to support customers. With the help of the TCM Group, Aviva implemented a Total Conflict Management System™, which allowed it to move away from standard grievance procedures towards an approach that is centred around resolution and mediation.



MAKING RESOLUTIONS

Stakeholder engagement:

Aviva recognised that getting buy-in from key stakeholders right from the start would be integral to the success of the programme.

The first step was a detailed assessment of the causes and cost of conflict within the business. This was followed by a stakeholders meeting, which brought together colleagues from all areas of the business so they could contribute and help shape the initiative.

The vision for a new emphasis on resolution was shared across the company through a series of presentations, round table discussions and webinars where employees could learn about tools to resolve issues in the workplace, ask questions and raise concerns.

These events were reinforced by an internal marketing campaign, which included roadshows at key sites in the lead up to the July 2018 launch date.

The business also recognised that support from the union would be critical. Representatives were involved in discussions from the outset and the team worked hard to overcome some initial concerns about the union's role in supporting its members and how formal action, when needed, would sit within the policy.



Training and implementation:

The Total Conflict Management System™ is a framework that guides the way Aviva deals with workplace conflict.

Key elements of the approach include:

Resolution Triage Assessments



Conflict/conversation individual coaching



Facilitated conversations by a line manager, ER, HR or union official



Structured mediation using the FAIR Mediation Model™



A small team of advisers supported implementation of the new system, handling the initial triage and facilitated conversations about the process. These advisers are the first port of call for employees, who are encouraged to raise issues via a new dedicated mailbox.

Cases are triaged by the team, who work with the employee to establish agreement around the best approach for them to resolve their issues - if necessary, referring to the team of accredited in-house mediators, all of whom have received advanced level training.

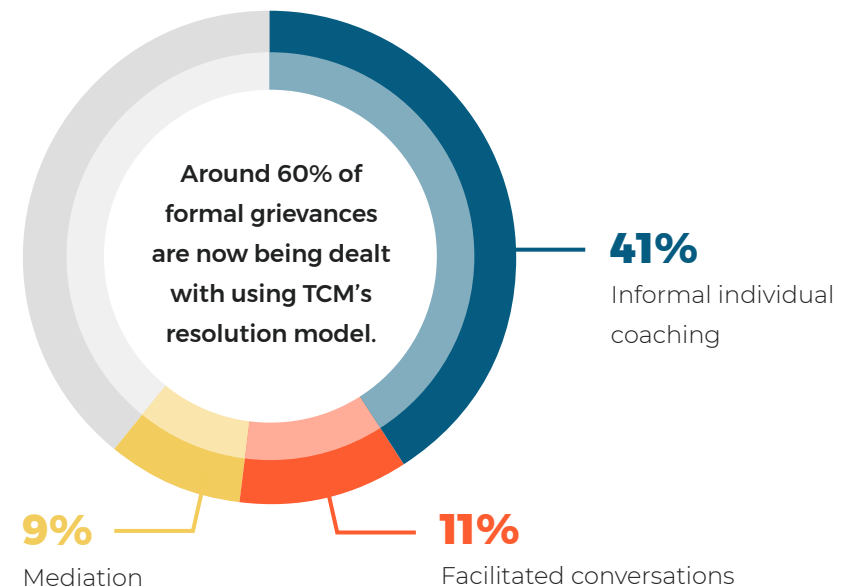
The mediators are drawn from all parts of the business and from a variety of backgrounds and seniority. This helps to build trust with all employees, from entry roles to senior management.

IMPACTING CULTURE

The scheme has now been in place for almost three years and is embedded within the culture of Aviva, supporting the transparent, open, and respectful practice the business is looking to achieve.

Aviva continues to learn and amend its approach based on feedback from employees, leaders, facilitators, and mediators. Employees have been highly positive about the resolution process, saying they feel listened to, supported, and would recommend the process to others.

In the two years since its instigation, the resolution team has dealt with circa 250 individual requests for resolution. Although these numbers are similar to the number of formal grievances raised in the preceding two years, the key change is the way these cases are dealt with. The company has moved from a costly, lengthy, complex traditional grievance process involving multiple stakeholders to now dealing with circa 60% of cases through TCM's resolution model:



Delivering an exemplary operational risk and control environment is a priority for Aviva, ensuring it continues to protect its customers and business, and also meets the expectations of regulators. The resolution process is recognised as a key control in this environment, as the process is enabling employees to raise any issues in relation to the workplace in a safe environment without the fear of retribution.

LOOKING FORWARD

Since its introduction, the resolution process within Aviva has continued to evolve as the business and those involved in the process continue to learn. The team has responded quickly to the home working challenges posed by COVID-19 and is now able to carry out all required processes virtually.

Going forward, further consideration will be given to how resolution can be “woven” through Aviva’s key policies, e.g., SMART working, to enable individuals and leaders to seek support from the resolution team to support them in resolving any workplace issues. By integrating policies to support and empower the individual, with the help and guidance of TCM, Aviva continues to work towards being a collaborative and people-centred organisation.

“The introduction of the policy changed the whole concept and dynamic of managing conflict within the workplace. Culturally, the change in language and emphasis have been so important. We aren’t focusing on being aggrieved, we are focusing on resolution and that is a fundamental difference.”

“We have seen that the vast majority of cases are settled either at triage or through a facilitated conversation. This means that for the cases where a formal meeting or a mediation is required, we have more time to dedicate to that. If colleagues can feel that the outcome was swift, easily managed and resolved it allows everyone to focus on their job and increases morale and motivation which is good for personal wellbeing; it’s good for the business and it’s good for the customer too.”

ANTHONY FITZPATRICK,
HEAD OF COLLEAGUE EXPERIENCE & EMPLOYMENT POLICY.

If you would like more information on how your organisation can benefit from The Resolution Framework™, please contact us today to speak to a member of the team.

The
Resolution
Framework

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