



A+E
NETWORKS
UK

NAMED BEST PLACE TO WORK
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Broadcast



Case study

A+E Networks:

Connecting people to create a coaching culture





Lucy King
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"The more we work on our company goals the more I see Open Blend as being a big part of our success. It gives us a brilliant foundation to do great stuff."

The Challenge

We had an appraisal system that allowed us to set objectives and rate people on a scoring system. It was not particularly popular and therefore not widely used. It seemed it was only used when managers wanted to highlight under performance or as an annual feedback session. Nobody liked the scoring system, it just served to make people feel demotivated and eventually it fizzled out.

In 2016 we decided it was time to act, we needed a reliable way to ensure conversations with managers were happening and we wanted to replace our appraisal system with something that felt inspiring and robust. Most solutions we found were difficult and complex to use, and the technology seemed to reduce the need to talk, which was counterintuitive for what we were trying to achieve. We knew we wanted to do something really innovative around appraisals, and that's when we found Open Blend.

What did we want to achieve?

Our main aim was to build and support relationships between line managers and their direct reports. We needed a mechanism to enable consistent, effective, coaching conversations.

We had strong managers, but were really keen to drive more of a performance culture by developing our managers to become coaches for their teams. In addition, we had encountered quite a few people with high stress levels and wanted to find effective ways to support them..

We are serious in being a great place to work, and wanted to raise engagement levels across the business, so we needed a user friendly, high impact tool that would address our objectives and encourage 1:1s to take place regularly. Open Blend was the perfect solution.

Outcomes and Impact

Open Blend has been really well received – the onboarding process delivered by a group of internal champions, trained by the Open Blend team, meant it was embraced at launch, and it has actually been one of the most successful HR initiatives I've ever been a part of. Culturally it fits really well – it's not overly corporate, and time intensive - its fluid and fits with who we are as a business.

I hear all the time that things have come to light or been raised as a result of a Blend session. It has definitely triggered more meaty 1:1 conversations. Our managers have much more of an insight into their talent.

I think people do feel as if they have the opportunity to raise things that might have been previously avoided.

It really does encourage you to talk about the things you might normally brush under the carpet. Things that would typically feel awkward are now being addressed and discussed. Open Blend encourages and gives permission for those chats that might not normally have happened. Importantly it's not just personal stuff that is being aired – people feel more ready to talk about pay; their job; their motivation; how they are "feeling" about their work, or the business.

"The ROI for us is clear, , we are definitely seeing results with Open Blend"

"The tool is easy to use, and for us it aligned perfectly with our values. "

Open Blend

Open Blend is the only people platform specifically for people managers. Facilitating coaching-led one-to-ones that support all aspects of an individual's development journey, and enable managers to accelerate the performance of their teams. Reconnecting the workplace and supporting everyone to thrive.

