**BOOST Movement Meeting Summary**

**Monday 25th November 2024**

Location: *Great Places, 2A Derwent Avenue, East Didsbury, Manchester M21 7QS*

Time: *9:00 – 16:30 (Peer Learning 9-12:00, Movement Meeting 12:00-16:30)*

**Dare to Be Powerful – Inspiration from the She Leads for Legacy Conference**

In the morning, our mentees came together to discuss last month’s She Leads for Legacy conference – ‘Dare to Be Powerful’. This conference, aimed at empowering Black women in the workplace, takes place every year and is held by Sharon Amesu, an ally of BOOST who has spoken at a number of previous BOOST events.

We are delighted many of our BOOST participants attended, including a number of our mentees, Mentors and three CEO’s. During the morning session, mentees were able to share how they found the conference and key take-aways from the day. Many of the mentees spoke about the powerful messages that came out of the conference – particularly in relation to supporting others and allyship. Some felt it gave them the confidence to have challenging conversations and a sense of shared experience with others in the room. Others felt it opened their eyes and gave them a different perspective on their experiences, both in their careers and personal lives. The group also raised the question of who should be attending this conference and the importance of allies in leadership positions attending.

The mentees also discussed having a way of connecting with one another outside of meetings. It was agreed a mentee would volunteer to set up a Mentee whatsapp group for those who wish to join (*this has already been done – please check your emails for the link to join*).

**Peer Learning**

The mentors then joined for a session on Peer Learning and its role in BOOST, in preparation for their peer learning break-outs. Julia covered the benefits of peer learning and the importance of maintaining confidentiality in the process.

The break out sessions for mentors and mentees centred on the GROW model – BOOST’s model for coaching between mentors and mentees. In small groups, mentors and mentees discussed each aspect of the model (Goal, Reality, Options and Will) in terms of their mentoring journeys, and were encouraged to ask one another thought-provoking questions. Everyone then had time for silent reflection to identify and note the new practices they would experiment with.

**Preparing Organisations for their Cultural Change Projects**

While mentors and mentees were doing this, the Change Champions had their own session where they explored some project management tools to support them in their role leading the organisational change projects. The Transformation team from Great Places shared some detailed methodology to help identify the cultural change required, roles and responsibilities, creating engagement, planning actions to be taken, managing risks and evaluation.

In considering roles and responsibilities, discussion occurred around CEO’s as Project Sponsors, Change Champions as Project Managers and the Organisational Change Group (made up of Mentees, Mentors, HR Leads, CEO’s and others) as the ‘steering group’.

Last year, most of the organisational change projects centred around recruitment, while this year progression is the focus. Discussion occurred about developing cultural intelligence in existing managers through education and training. Work is commencing on developing the BOOST training in January/February with sessions being available from April. It was felt that organisational change projects could be around how this training is delivered and embedded.

**Movement Meeting**

Lunch kicked off the start of the Movement Meeting! After lunch, John introduced the meeting and gave an update on GMHP’s response to the race riots, sharing that this continues to be a priority and collective comms around this is being developed.

A reminder was also given for Change Champions to ensure the return of their organisation’s Statement of Commitment and to begin developing their BOOST strategies as part of their Change Projects. Roslyn will be in touch next month to arrange meetings with Change Champions for next year to see how you’re all getting on!

**BOOST Evaluation**

Julia then introduced the research and evaluation side of BOOST – welcoming Ruth Browning and Dr Katie Green from MMU, Professor Lilian Otaye-Ebede from Liverpool University and Professor Dulini Fernando from Aston University who will be supporting with the evaluation. Ruth recently sent some information inviting everyone to take part in the evaluation – please respond, letting her know either way!

Its important we get your consent to take part in the research and evaluation – this is completely voluntary. We also need your consent to Southway Housing holding data on you as participants of BOOST. Roslyn will be sending out consent forms – please sign and return these as soon as possible.

**BOOSTing Progression: Feedback from the She Leads for Legacy Conference**

Building on this morning’s session with mentees, the wider movement came together to discuss what the She Leads for Legacy Conference can add to our BOOST movement:

* **For Mentees?**
* The importance of allyship and having people you can trust
* Increasing your network and knowing people who can give you that ‘tap on the shoulder’
* Confidence building
* Networking and a sense of community when you can often feel isolated.
* Allyship to Black women for male and non-Black mentees
* **For Mentors?**
* The importance of being an ally and what this really means (this year’s conference included speaker Suzy Levy, author of ‘Mind the Inclusion Gap’, who did a powerful talk on allyship and her journey as someone aiming to practice allyship).
* A better understanding of some of the experiences colleagues who are ethnically diverse can have at work, and the barriers put in front of them in their careers.
* **For our organisations?**
* Commitment to change
* Learning more about institutional and organisational barriers to progression
* How we can support Black women and other ethnically diverse talent in work
* **For the sector?**
* The impact we can have by committing to change as a whole sector, rather than individual organisations.
* GMHP has committed to letting all members know of this conference in future years.
* One suggestion that came from this session was that each organisation purchases copies of Suzy Levy’s book ‘Mind the Inclusion Gap’ for their Organisational Change Group to work through it as a ‘book club’ identifying learning, education and actions.

**Guest Speaker: Kal Kay – Career Journey and Overcoming Barriers**

Our first guest speaker of this year’s cohort, Chief Financial Officer of Your Housing, Kal Kay, delivered an inspiring talk on her career journey, some of the barriers she faced and what helped her overcome them.

Kal gave an open and honest account of her journey to becoming a CFO, sharing the impact her upbringing and educational experiences had. One of the key messages she shared was the importance of being able to adapt to your work environment while remaining authentic and true to yourself.

We were thrilled to have Kal as our first guest speaker, and will be welcoming more guest speakers to share their career journeys at each event.

**Barriers to Progression**

To round off the afternoon, we continued to look at the theme of progression and explore the barriers – both for individuals and organisations, and where these overlap. In groups we discussed:

* Individual:
* Not having allies in work
* Line managers hindering progress
* Past experiences which can affect trust or self esteem – not feeling safe
* Emphasis on qualifications over other skills – not always the balance employers are looking for
* Lack of confidence/self-belief
* Imposter syndrome
* Messaging of/feeling like “you have to work 10 times harder”
* Fear of rejection
* Cultural differences in social interaction – e.g. “being loud”
* Not being given honest feedback
* Being given false hope

Lack of sense of belonging, not “fitting in”

* Organisational:
* Lack of progression strategy
* The importance of who you know and how that can be biased
* Lack of clarity over training and development opportunities
* Lack of shadowing opportunities
* Lack of openness/understanding to other cultures
* Recruitment processes
* Pay scales
* Exclusionary social events
* Not sharing success stories
* Lack of support for internal candidates
* Lack of data
* Organisational culture – not embedding ‘feeling safe’ into culture
* Lack of boldness – not committing to big change, doing what’s easy and routine in recruitment processes
* Not admitting when things go wrong
* Both:
* World issues relating to our colleagues – are we checking in on our colleagues who may be impacted? We don’t do this equally for all communities e.g. lots of support for Ukraine, no acknowledgement of Palestine, Yemen, Congo, Sudan and other global issues.
* Networking opportunities
* Needing permission to try – should emphasise learning experience
* Offering feedback, rather than individuals needing to ask

**What’s Next?**

* Next BOOST event details:

Date: Thursday 6th March 2025

Location: *Great Places, 2A Derwent Avenue, East Didsbury, Manchester M21 7QS*

* The next event will follow the same format, with peer learning and change champions sessions before lunch, and the Movement Meeting in the afternoon.

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| BOOST: Monday 25th November 2024 – Full Day Agenda | | |
| Timing | Agenda Item | Lead |
|  | **Mentee Session** |  |
| 9:00 – 9:15 | *Arrival and refreshments* |  |
| 9:15 – 10:15 | Dare to Be Powerful: Inspiration from the She Leads for Legacy Conference | Julia Rouse |
| 10:15 – 10:30 | *Coffee Break + Mentors Arrival* |  |
| 10:30 – 10:50 | BOOST’s Peer Learning Process | Julia Rouse |
| 10:50 – 11:00 | *Comfort Break + Change Champions Arrival* |  |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Break Out: Peer Learning Sessions – The GROW Model | Sarah Henderson  Julia Rouse  Elaine Johnson |
|  | **Movement Meeting** |  |
| 12:00 – 13:00 | *Networking Lunch* |  |
| 13:00 – 13:15 | Movement Meeting - Start and Introduction | John Bowker |
| 13:15 – 13:35 | Your Role in the BOOST Evaluation | Julia Rouse |
| 13:35 – 14:05 | BOOSTing Progression: Feedback from the She Leads for Legacy Conference | Elaine Johnson |
| 14:05 -14:30 | Career Journeys – Guest Speaker Kal Kay + Q&A | Kal Kay |
| 14:30 – 14:45 | *Comfort Break* |  |
| 14:45 – 16:30 | Workshop: Barriers to Progression | Elaine Johnson |
| 16:30 | Close |  |