

**Summary: Values research reveals who produces innovation and also why blocks to putting ideas into action occur in an organization.**

### Starting State

EDF had embarked on a substantial physical infrastructure construction program as a part of securing potentially lucrative utility distribution contracts.

The program called for speed, innovation and resourcefulness to meet performance metrics. Unfortunately, the organization was facing internal tensions exacerbated with tensions between EDF management and the sub-contractors hired for the construction projects.

At this point, we were brought in to understand the human dynamic at play.

### Research & Analysis

The data gathered was broken out by a wide range of job descriptions, levels of responsibility and most importantly through forms of employment, i.e. being directly employed full time, on short term contracts by EDF or being sub-contracted via another supplier.

Our Values Modes research revealed that senior management was very open to innovation, as were sub-contractors (on short term direct contracts; or longer term third party employees of other suppliers like employment agencies or specialist contractors) but full time directly employed employees below management level, i.e. middle management, were averse to innovation.

The client was able to understand the causes of deep tension in the system at a values level. They could then see the extent to which their own system was inhibiting innovation (primarily generated outside their direct employees) and where the obstacles to implementation existed (their directly employed staff).

### Recommendations and Actions

We designed and delivered an outline strategy for development of the middle management. This included new recruitment policies and measures to more accurately reflect their values and attitudes to innovation, the installation of corporate values during induction and review of weekly targets, new human resources policies encouraging more direct values based contacts between management and sub-contractors (less 'fixed' management by objectives, and more evidence based outcomes based on more realistic input from sub-contractors) and finally new and different career paths based on the alignment of personal and corporate values.

### Outcomes

The most significant result was the increased effectiveness of communications up and down the line between senior management, middle management and sub-contractors. Shared values and values-driven behaviours created a very different dynamic for the sharing of objectives.

This resulted in a different profile of specialist suppliers and a changed behaviours in middle management.

The senior management team was able to experience this new dynamic through an increased performance across a range of contracts. They saw an increased, and easier, innovative approach through evidence-based experimentation – another way of saying innovation-stimulated by new recruitment, training, and reward systems generated through the alignment of personal and corporate values between EDF middle management and sub-contractors.

