

## Actions speak louder than words (and why behaviours matter more than values)

**Values Mapping, sometimes called Behaviours Mapping**, is an activity that engages staff from across your organisation to place an aligned interpretation of the organisations corporate values and translate them into expected day-to-day behaviours. The outputs from a Values Mapping exercise is a set of behaviours that can be incorporated into recruitment person specifications, interview questions, 1:1s, appraisals and generally guide all staff behaviours when working day-to-day. **It's how you develop a values-based culture.**

Often displayed as one-word statements, corporate Values can often be detached from the day-to-day reality in organisations.

### How often have you seen a set of value statements printed on the wall of a business that you consider to be false, vague or misleading?

Poplar HARCA recognised that behaviours, the way we enact our values, are of a greater importance than the values themselves. So, cutting the corporate red tape they created the two things their organisation needed to thrive and stay focused, a purpose statement (what they are here to achieve) and five top-level behaviours. Their next task was to ensure that the interpretation of their top-level corporate behaviours were consistently understood and therefore represented, lived, and role modelled day-in-day out by every member of staff.

“ We really wanted to find a way for our staff to live and breathe our corporate behaviours. We also wanted to better incorporate assessments of behavioural fit into our recruitment and probationary review processes. We felt that a behavioural mapping exercise, which involved a broad spectrum of staff from across the business in defining what our corporate behaviours meant to them, was the best way of achieving this. Of making the process meaningful. ”

Ellis Goodall, Assistant Director  
of People & Learning

### Poplar HARCA's challenge

Poplar HARCA's purpose is to "Create Opportunities Together that realise community potential through

exceptional homes in thriving places with social justice at our core." Over the years this statement has evolved into what it is today, and they have worked hard to align their corporate plans and priorities to this statement. Read how they have done this in our article about Poplar HARCAs lockdown activities.

This year Poplar HARCA revisited their top-level corporate behaviours and revamped them. The result was five corporate behaviours that everyone is expected to demonstrate day-in-day-out. These are:

1. Inspirational: Motivate to achieve our purpose.
2. Collaborative: Working with others to deliver our purpose.
3. Considered: Balanced in the pursuit of our purpose.
4. Agile: Evolve and adapt to attain our purpose.
5. Equitable: Everyone benefits from our purpose.

Recognising that these behaviours are high-level statements, Poplar HARCA approached Ad Esse about running a detailed behaviour mapping exercise, the results of which would be incorporated into key processes and documentation like recruitment and job descriptions, appraisals and 1:1s.

### Why work with Ad Esse?

“ We have worked on several Lean and other process improvement projects with Ad Esse over the past few years. Ad Esse are very relatable. They are so passionate about what they do and always find innovative and engaging ways of involving our staff in these projects. ”

Ellis Goodall, Assistant Director  
of People & Learning

## The Project

We started the project by running an introduction to behaviours mapping webinar for the whole project team, this project team comprised 24 representatives from all functions and management levels across the organisation. The introduction webinar allowed us to introduce the team to the concept of behaviours mapping, Poplar HARCA's drivers for running such an exercise, provide an opportunity for the project team to ask questions and explain the practicalities of how the mapping exercise would happen.

The project team was then split into smaller groups of 8 people, and mapping workshops were facilitated for each group. The group was split to ensure everyone had an equal opportunity to input into the exercise - having groups that are too large would mean that some people would be heard more than others.

Each mapping exercise had three stages:

1. Placing interpretation on the top-level behaviour (or value) - what does it mean?
2. Identifying how that interpretation could be implemented and demonstrated in your organisation - what does that day-to-day interpretation of that behaviour/value look like?
3. Which level of hierarchy (from executive team down to front-line staff) do you expect to demonstrate that detailed behaviour?

### Example

How can a behaviour like We are Agile be made to drive action and performance?

Interpretation: o-rd

- We are able to evolve and adapt our services quickly to meet the priorities of the business, our partners, our residents or community
- We are quick to exploit opportunities
- We are comfortable with failure as a point of learning
- We have resilient and robust services and staff that can cope with rapid improvement and change

How our executive team can demonstrate this:

- Creates an environment that builds digital capability and talent
- Anticipates future strategic needs and makes sure strategies respond to them
- Promotes an innovation/test and learn culture, actively seeks the learning from all experiences
- Takes accountability for service delivery, sponsors and promote service improvement work
- Creates an environment (and the resources needed) to develop, and nurture service improvement efforts across the organisation

[Watch our 3-minute video](#) of how to complete your own Values and Behaviours Mapping exercise or contact us if you would like to have this externally facilitated.

A shared interpretation, enlightened staff, happy client  
The outputs from this project were threefold:

1. A suite of interpretations for the five top-level behaviours
2. What each management level would be expected to do to demonstrate that behaviour day-to-day.
3. A list of areas for development. This list was compiled by the project team as the groups completed the exercise, they are behaviours that are either completely absent at the moment or ones that require development in order to be considered 'in place'.

“ This exercise went so well. The idea that I had in my head as an end goal was fully realised and, as always, the feedback we received from colleagues was very positive. Even though the project was facilitated entirely remotely (over Zoom) Ad Esse found a way to keep everyone engaged - with software which was simple to use but which really captured people's thoughts and ideas. We now have a working document which we can use to adapt person specifications and to formulate behavioural recruitment training for managers. I would highly recommend that you work with Ad Esse on such projects. ”

Ellis Goodall, Assistant Director  
of People & Learning