

**Client:**

Royal Mail
(in my role as Group Property Director)

Project:

Coaching the Development Manager of
a major construction programme

Location:

Central London

Background:

In 2017, the property division at Royal Mail, which I led as Group Property Director, embarked upon a major construction programme in Central London.

The extensive programme of work required the separation of operational facilities from new residential properties and the provision of a new state-of-the-art underground logistics hub.

Whilst there was a large construction team working to a best-in-class construction manager, the overall programme was run by one experienced and highly competent Development Manager, who reported to me as the Corporate Real Estate leader directly.

Objectives:

To provide coaching to the Development Manager to help successfully deliver this major construction programme.

Challenges for the Development Manager:

This was a long and highly complex project, in which the Development Manager had to manage the interests and demands of multiple stakeholders and critically, successfully deliver the programme of works, within a live logistics operational and unionised environment.

Additionally, the Development Manager had to contend with the following challenges:

- Lack of broader organisational understanding of this non-core activity
- An element of loneliness being in a pivotal leadership role and carrying a high level of responsibility

- A large measure of the unexpected in the form of Covid
- A major on-site construction team working alongside operational colleagues

My Role and Approach:

Within the scope of my role, I met with the Development Manager weekly and assumed a coaching mindset throughout. We met as equals disregarding the contract between us. I provided organisational insights, enabling us to understand the systems context in which the programme was being delivered, and practical support with stakeholders. However, most of my time was being attentive and listening.

My approach was to ask insightful questions and encourage the Development Manager to arrive at solutions to problems, which he was best placed to think through.

Throughout, we shared a commitment to performance and delivery. We further shared a commitment to thinking beyond task and considering the people in the team and the wider organisation, engaged with the programme.

Outcome:

The programme was successfully completed to time, ahead of budget and critically, with no significant health and safety incidents.

The success of the project is an outstanding achievement and a career highlight for the Development Manager.