



**Regional Network Meeting: Quarter Two Midlands**

**Host:** John Lewis Partnership, Magna Park, Milton Keynes

**Date:** 19 June 2018

**Facilitator:** Philippa Meaden

Following the initial networking that happened over a morning coffee and general introductions the session began with an insight into the world of distribution from Terry Murphy, Director of National Distribution Centres John Lewis.

Set over 3 large sites, John Lewis runs its semi-automated centres as a 24/7 operation, ensuring that customer needs and expectations are continuously met. With the changing face of consumer habits, the on-line business has grown significantly since buy.com was purchased in 2001 and now, in 2018 44% of JL Trade is done through the on-line channel. Customer expectations of when they want their purchase has also increased, with many demanding next day delivery adding further challenges for the teams in distribution.

Terry is convinced that the demands they face are met due to the Partners having a passion for the service they deliver as all are either owners within the business or want to be if they are agency staff. They are agile in their response to challenges, resourceful and at all times hold the management to account, questioning, challenging and working together for the continued success of the organisation.

Without the extra commitment that being an employee owner drives, Terry is convinced that the service levels and buy-in would be very different and would not make the distinction between them and their competitors within the distribution world.

Terry and his team are very proud of what they are able to achieve and this was demonstrated in a short film that we watched of the distribution partners celebrating their success, being proud of their business.

The Q & A session covered many points such as:

- how does being a leader of owners change the way you manage and lead
- best practices in communication,
- the effectiveness of the appraisal system,
- extra responsibility owners take

- the drive that is required to keep ownership thriving in a large commercial business.

Following a short break Mark Murauskas, Manager of Partner Insight for John Lewis shared with us his experiences of how understanding and interpreting survey answers can be very valuable to leaders in organisations but specifically EO businesses.

He shared with us the type of questions the business uses. As well as the standard questions many organisations might use, he shared with us some that are more specific to the partnership as a result of the governance of the business as laid out in its constitution.

(The constitution of the partnership is the document that was written and formed by the founder of the Partnership, setting out the guiding principles of the business) This document if available to download should you want it if you go to the corporate website of the John Lewis partnership.

Lunch was followed with a quick EOA update from Oliver Smith, who kicked off by asking all to discuss what they would be doing to celebrate EO day which takes place this year on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

With a clear reminder that there are packs available to download to aid business celebrations to mark the occasion, we were informed of other elements that the EOA team have been working on or involved with, over the past 3 months since the last network meeting.

From the Inquiry into ownership, the council and the EO Hub, the Summer Dinner etc, there has been a significant happening that supports and highlights employee ownership in the UK.

The afternoon session was a workshop inspired by -  
“do organisations use EO to promote their businesses, if so how, focussing on the external and internal stakeholders”.

The group split into two...

Externally the conversations centred around:

- Recruitment
- Customers
- External stakeholders i.e. suppliers

And internally the conversations centred around

- Induction
- Roles and expectation
- Identity

Following the workshop the meeting was brought to a close with a request for possible hosts for future meetings and for all to join the EO Hub.

Once the summary had concluded the tour of the Distribution Centre took place.

We would like to thank all who took part and supported the meeting to make it productive, topical and informative. Please keep a look out for future meeting dates on the EOA website.

Philippa Meaden  
Facilitator of the EOA Midlands network.

Notes below are as a result of the workshop.

Using EO externally:

G1

Customer;

- They want message of no change
- Introduce idea gradually
- Positive news story
- Message around sustainability that EO promotes continuity etc.

Recruitment;

- Promote values
- Seek alignment from candidates to values (you have buy-in to the brand)

Brand;

Link it in an ad to their customers i.e. Waitrose

- Lush – values and input of employees i.e. big changes require input

Stakeholders;

- Think about how you source goods in line with the values that ownership drives i.e. Lush already source ethically.
- An expectation of your workforce to behave ethically
- EO fits and helps promote Social enterprise element when going through the tender process.

G2

Recruitment;

- Develop people
- Decision making
- Purchasing shares
- Candidate interest increased
- Advertised, an attraction, word of mouth, employee partner expectations.

Customers

- Educating using EO
- Transition of the business could add reassurance
- Re branding
- Association of trust
- Leverage the culture of EO

### Suppliers

- Trust
- Perception of working harder
- Knock on effect of the business
- Influences other to behave in a certain way emulating the values and behaviour that EO drives
- Stronger and deeper relationships with fellow EO businesses.

### Using EO internally

#### G1

#### Induction

- Importance of reviewing/refreshing as your business, ownership journey matures
- Set out clear expectations
- Induction for existing employees as you transference to EO – “what’s different, what more do I get”?

#### Role and expectations

- Leaders stepping back, handing over control
- Levels of influence of owner’s day to day
- Clarity of structure and accountability
- Owners need info and knowledge
- History of organisation(stories)
- Business performance
- Build adult to adult relationships – challenge conformity

#### Identity

- About a time-line
- Also maintain what was important before

#### G2

- Induction streamlined
- Colleague assessment, input not just management
- Celebrated
- Having a voice to the leadership
- Key is involvement of front line
- Recruit from within where possible and appropriate
- 360 appraisals – how you act not just the end product.



Please write meeting notes here, Calibri point size 12