



Be Yourself

Supporting Workbook



Building healthier teams

**“No matter what role you’re in,
I think you don’t come to work thinking I’m
just going to go and do an alright job today,
I think you come to work to do the best job
that you can.”**

– Portland Johnson, Private and Overseas Team Leader

Getting the most out of this workbook

- Print out this workbook to aid in your reflections
- Take a few minutes to watch the episode
- Review the actions to take throughout the workbook
- Reflect on the key phrases that stand out to you
- Think about how you can apply that to your team



Watch the Episode Again

“Went to my desk, didn’t know anybody, sat there, looked around and the manager at the time come in, gave me a book and said there you go learn from the book and do what you can... but I thought what am I doing? How can I change things here? What can I do?”

About this quote

Portland started a new role that had not been scoped previously. She knew she had to do more than simply digest the book. Portland challenged herself to look to see what she could do and change. She reached out to another hospital to learn how they managed the role and she contacted UK Borders for help. These relationships are still in place today.

Key actions to take / reflect on

- Identify the people or organisations outside your department who can share best practice and make contact
- Create a network that you can call on for support when you need it
- Embrace something new by asking yourself:
What can I do? How can I change?

“You’ve got to listen to what people are saying don’t talk over them, let them let them tell you their story.”

About this quote

Portland was talking about managing conversations with overseas patients. But listening is such a key skill for leaders. Really listening, to understand people. It’s an old saying, but you have two ears and one mouth for a reason and it’s best to use them in that proportion. Portland also describes how she used to “jump in with both feet”, but these days she stands back and listens to what everybody else has to say then decides.

Key actions to take / reflect on

- Next time you have a 1:1 conversation with one of your team, think about how much you listen compared to how much you talk. What’s the ratio?
- How well do you know your teams’ stories? Ask them what’s happening in their world, and listen to understand
- Next time you have a tricky decision to make, stand back and listen before deciding

“If you’re coming in new to managing people, just be yourself. Once you become that manager, don’t change, don’t let the power go to your head, even if you’re looking after one or two people don’t be bossy.”

About this quote

Portland’s advice for new managers is to be yourself, and don’t have a change of personality. She also advocates being a great “supporter” - someone who lets people get on with the job and doesn’t interfere but is there when they need help.

Key actions to take / reflect on

- Reflect on the Trust behaviours from Kevin Bolger’s recent episode:
<https://buildinghealthier.co.uk/episode/how-we-work-around-here/>
- Think about your leadership style - is it outdated and in need of an update? Watch this good practice episode for a refresh:
<https://buildinghealthier.co.uk/episode/updates-are-available/>

“Working in a big organisation like the NHS, it’s about people. It’s about the relationships that you build with each other, it’s the trust you have with each other. It’s the way you converse with each other. It’s like an NHS family. I love working for the NHS.”

– Portland Johnson, Private and Overseas Team Leader



