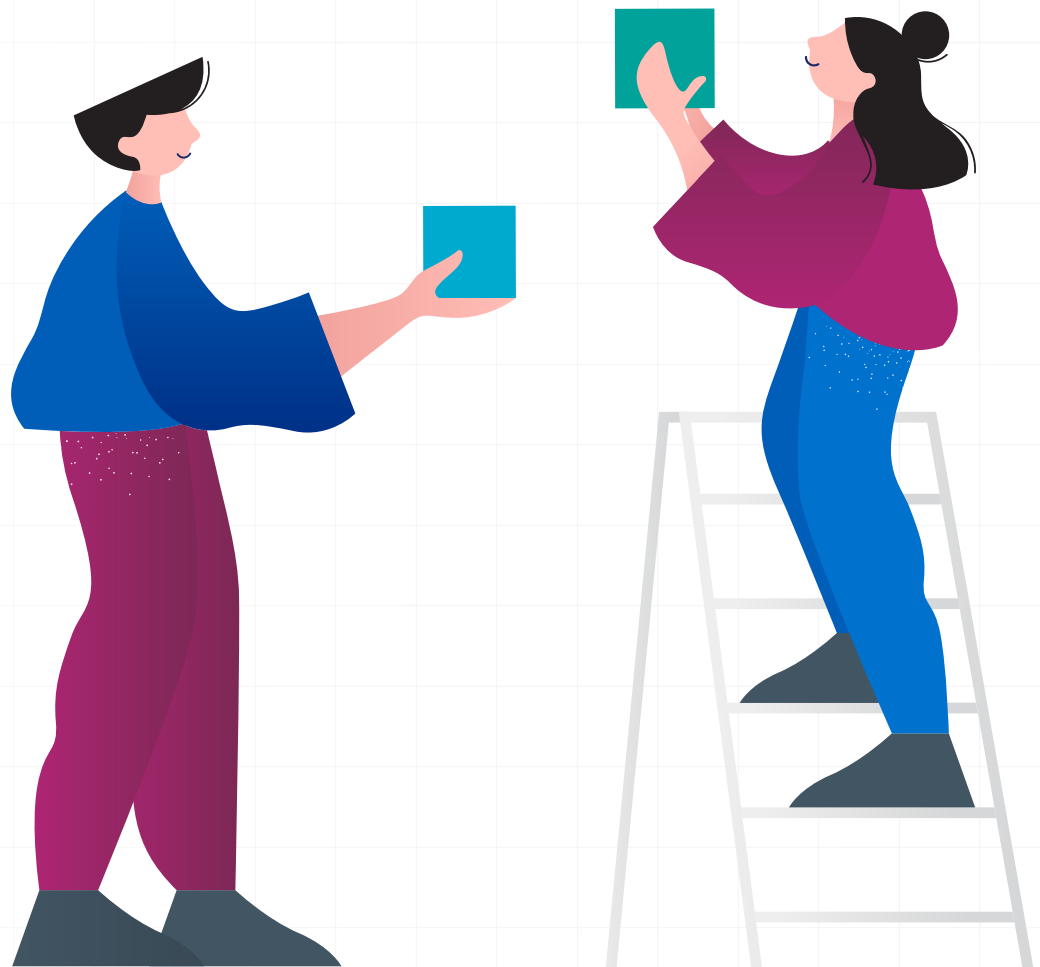


From Journalism to the NHS

Supporting Workbook



Building healthier teams

“I never thought I’d work for the NHS. I never realised there would be a range of careers that would be suitable to my skill set.”

– Fiona Alexander, Director of Communications and Engagement

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 them to your team



Watch the Episode Again

“As a journalist you’re taught to challenge, to question, to probe... and health is so full of complexity, jargon and medical language that can tie people up in knots.”

About this quote

Fiona was a journalist for 20 years before joining the Trust 15 years ago. After being thrown in at the deep-end on a work experience placement, she found herself in a variety of situations with the daily pressure of finding a story. Fiona described the ‘inverted triangle’, which means making sure the key facts of a story are in the first few paragraphs. She follows the same approach today when communicating key messages to her team and across the Trust more broadly.

Key actions to take / reflect on

- When communicating with your team, ask yourself the following questions:
 - What’s the nub or the heart of the situation I’m dealing with?
 - What’s the key message I want to get across or want people to remember?
- Practice the inverted triangle with your team - try to cut through the complexity and make things as simple as possible

“In journalism, when you’re dealing with challenging, fast-moving situations and unpredictability, one of the key strengths is being calm - trying to diffuse the situation and not become over-dramatic. People will look to you for leadership in those moments and how you react and behave will have a knock-on effect for the rest of the team”

About this quote

Remaining calm in challenging situations on is an important skill to develop as a manager in the NHS. Fiona focuses as a leader on establishing the facts to cut out all the surrounding noise and also gives attention to her tone, body language and the words she uses to create the best environment for her team when the pressure’s on.

Key actions to take / reflect on

- When you find yourself in a pressured or fast-moving situation, ask yourself the following questions:
 - What are the **facts**? What do we **know**?
- How do the facts help me/us make the best decisions and ignore all the surrounding noise?
- Important:** the way you speak makes a difference in the key moments. Focus on your language, tone and body language and use it positively to bring your team together
- Finally, check out Cheryl Smith’s tips for staying Calm and Approachable:
[🔗 https://buildinghealthier.co.uk/episode/calm-approachable/](https://buildinghealthier.co.uk/episode/calm-approachable/)

“It’s really important to get underneath the surface with the people you work with - we spend so much time at work and if you can’t develop those personal relationships, it just makes it really difficult”

About this quote

It’s more important than ever to build relationships with the people you work with. The pandemic has affected people’s personal lives in so many different ways and every individual has their own story. Make sure you understand how your team have been affected, what’s going on with them and what personal challenges are they facing.

Key actions to take / reflect on

- Check out some advice on leading your team as we come out of Covid:
<https://buildinghealthier.co.uk/episode/leading-through-covid/>
- Think about the conversations you have with your team - are they as effective as they could be...have you built strong enough Bridges?
<https://buildinghealthier.co.uk/episode/effective-conversations/>

“There is no doubt that I’ll continue to learn and continue to have new challenges set in front of me... and that’s why working in this sort of job in the health sector works for me.”

– Fiona Alexander, Director of Communications and Engagement



