

Once upon a time...



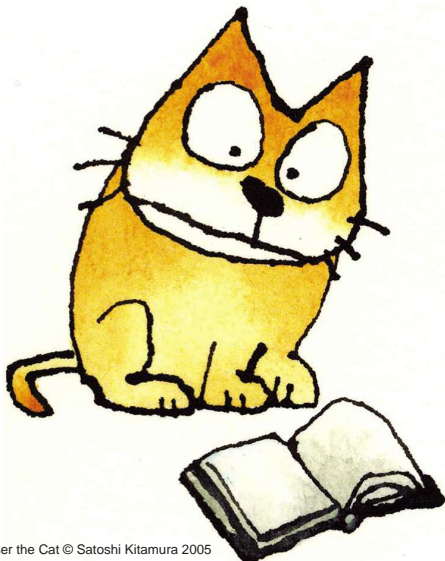
sevenstories

the centre for children's books

www.sevenstories.org.uk

'Integration International worked with us at a point of major change helping us focus on the issues we faced moving from a research and development organisation to an operational cultural visitor attraction. The training has contributed to the success of Seven Stories.'

Mary Briggs · Chief Executive
Seven Stories



Browser the Cat © Satoshi Kitamura 2005

an idea was born on the banks of the Tyne to develop a national home for children's literature in an old converted mill which became Seven Stories, the Centre for Children's Books. This is a story about...

- how Seven Stories, a customer-facing visitor attraction came to fulfil its destiny as an exciting, respected place for children and adults, involving a major move and new ways of working for staff.
- business growth with new staff from different backgrounds working together to ensure that a £6.5m investment with £1.3m per annum running costs succeeded by investing in strategic leadership and management skills.

➤ Co Authored

Integration International worked as partners with Seven Stories and identified three key issues to focus on: **Managing Change**, **Customer Service**, **Leadership & Teamwork**. An integrated learning programme was designed to develop the skills and culture required to meet the challenges ahead.

The programme started with a workshop on **Managing Change** for senior management to help them clarify their strategy and core strengths, to implement changes and respond to staff concerns. This provided the foundations for a whole system event for all staff to prepare for the transition to their new workplace and ways of working. During this participative, fun event everyone developed a shared vision and plans for action.

The next key step was a workshop to address **Customer Service** strategy, values and standards. By working on a range of issues from market positioning to complaint handling, the participants identified priorities for when the Centre opened. Staff enhanced their customer service skills and diversity awareness in follow on workshops.

With new teams, new staff and a need for flexibility between roles, investment in **Teamwork & Leadership** development was essential. In a workshop, team leaders developed personal insights and skills through activities, questionnaires, application of ideas and shared experiences to create effective teams. A session with the senior management team helped them enhance team effectiveness and plan improvements in decision making and communications within Seven Stories.

➤ They all lived happily ever after...

Seven Stories opened its doors on 19th August 2005 with over 1,000 visitors, followed since by a steady stream of families, schools and adults. Visitor numbers are 15% over target and customer research shows very high visitor satisfaction with 90% eager to revisit. Staff have responded well to a variety of issues associated with large groups of active visitors and the challenges of 7 day opening. Retention and morale have been high for both staff and volunteers.



Integration International is pleased to have assisted Seven Stories transform their organisation and make a successful transition to their new Centre. We are proud to have helped realise its educational and recreational vision.