



**My business challenge was...**

“How can we use data to better inform our priorities and decision making to ultimately improve our operational resilience.”

Having reflected on this a few times throughout the programme, it has pretty much remained the same. But I’ve also thought a lot about how we, in my immediate team and the teams I interact with, can use data better, more generally. I want to challenge our data; who is asking for it, why do they need it, what’s the point of it, can we combine datasets for efficiency, or are their gaps where we are not collating more informative, top-quality data? This ties in nicely with the Civil Service ‘One Big Thing’ initiative of 2023-24 which was all about data and improving data skills for staff.

**I have implemented key insights from the IFLP sessions and conversations by...**

- Taking the time to reflect on all the amazing content that was shared once the workshops were over.
- Sharing super useful elements of the programme such as videos, images, articles, links, etc with my colleagues.
- Setting boundaries – reflected in my work diary (Sarah Winckless), and by managing my energy (Ash Wallace).
- Embracing a strong frame, the power of visualisation, breathing/meditation, and being grateful (Phillip Bond).

**The commercial and personal benefits are...**

Commercial benefits	Personal benefits
Challenging existing data to promote better quality	Feeling inspired and empowered
Getting back to basics to re-verify baseline data	Improved confidence
Share high quality datasets around the business	Self-reflection and recovery time/making head space
Truly learn from lessons, don’t just identify them	Feeling energised for the future
Improving operational resilience	Listen to understand (not to respond)
Investing in (personal) resilience of staff	Getting comfortable with feedback (Campfire session)

**Future plans for this business challenge are...**

To build on the benefits outlined above. Rubbish data in equals rubbish data out so I want to disrupt the mundane cycles where data may not be fit for purpose, but conversely share the good stuff that might help others across the piste. Also, to always continually improve but through expansive thinking (Kirk Vallis) to innovative not just tweak to update here and there. Defra staff must carry out the due diligence to routinely critique the quality of our data and ensure it’s meeting the required outputs.

**Driving innovation within Defra...**

I now recognise that innovation is not just about bringing in new IT kit, it’s a mindset, it’s a forward-thinking approach to how you can attack your day job (or anything for that matter) now and in the future. I am fortunate that innovation is a hot topic within Defra and there is guidance on how to put forward our ideas across the Civil Service. The ‘One Big Thing’ initiative for 2024-25 is “One Small Change”. For me, that’s looking at things like terminology to ensure that we are speaking the same language across our health and safety teams and can communicate effectively through dashboards, reports, standards, and processes etc. Through this improvement, reflected in the data, we will be in a much better position to inform our priorities and make conscious decisions.

IFLP has allowed me the time and space away from my day job and my personal life to really reflect on myself as a leader. It has equipped me with the tools and resources to ensure I am showing up as the best version of myself.