

Case Study

Brief

A mid-sized biopharma company had concerns over the quality of work being delivered by one of its analytical development groups, involved in supporting high priority late phase drug candidates. An internal audit raised a number of major issues, which needed further investigation. VPA were tasked to undertake this.

Challenge

The group was one of two within the company, working in different EU countries. Our review needed to understand the complexities facing both locations, taking into account both organisational and human aspects, before attempting to make recommendations to address the problems being experienced. However, there were many underlying causes for the failings in the group, and the challenge of bringing the team to a state of high effectiveness would have been difficult and costly. We recommended that the company re-examine the need for having two separate facilities.

Solution

The client elected to consolidate the two groups, a high-risk decision given the critical nature of work being undertaken. Securing business continuity was vital. We devised, in collaboration with the client, a comprehensive transfer plan, identifying which tasks were to be relocated and which to be completed on the closing site. A people-centric approach made certain that the outgoing team understood and were able to deliver what was needed before shut-down, while the expanded team understood what changes were needed for them to deliver under the new paradigm. VPA consultants worked with internal teams provide ongoing risk assessment and mitigation, while a program of monitoring and control both at high and individual level ensured continued engagement for the duration of the project.

The consolidation was completed on time, with one site closing and the remaining one taking on all the necessary roles and responsibilities for seamless business continuity. Despite the obvious disruption to their lives, personnel at the closing site remained highly motivated to do the best job possible, meeting significant regulatory demands and deadlines. Where lessons were learned in terms of cross-function working, these were analysed as the project was brought to a close and the results shared across the organisation. Most importantly, for the client, there were no serious hold-ups in the analytical development of some of their major assets. As a result, a potential launch delay, along with the resultant loss of millions in revenue, was avoided.

