

Team CuChulainn B&Qs it, but Platinum loses shine

APPRENTICE *round-up*

This week we entered the stressful world of project management. This required the teams to renovate two neglected properties using B&Q products and services, focusing on team management and motivation as well as project management.

Bill Cullen owns a property development and management company, and there is every chance the winning apprentice will have to perform a similar role at some stage of their contract. So the candidates were keenly scrutinised on this task.

On the other side of the judges were taskmasters B&Q who were keen to see how the candidates interacted with their expert staff and then made use of the extras on offer in the store.

CuChulainn won the task by getting the greater increase in rental value for their property. Geraldine ably led this team and, from the start, her sunny yet no-nonsense leadership skills galvanised the team into performing miracles for her.

Judge Jackie Lavin was very impressed by her can-do attitude and ability to make everyone in the team feel valued and included. Time management and budget management were excellent, and there was never any evidence of mutiny within the team, as Geraldine led with energy, great motivation skills and good direction.

However, Team Platinum were a disaster and from a very early stage the signs were more than obvious that there was no way this team could win. From the start, certain team members sat back and hid from responsibility. Jennifer, who was dying to impress, was allowed to go forward as leader and ultimately become the fall-girl.

From the start, the project manager never had the assertiveness to control her team and command their respect – and, as a result they all pulled away from each other into different directions with a good deal of resentment onboard. This was never dealt with or even recognised.

Even during the extensive shopping trips to B&Q, Jennifer received no help or encouragement from her teammate, Ruth, and they never even thought of getting a store map to help them through the store in Liffey Valley, which is bigger than Croke Park (I had blisters to prove it!).

A good project manager doesn't have to be a superhero,



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but common sense is often the most important aspect they can bring to a team, as well as

an all-seeing eye that has an awareness of what is going around them and is able to adapt quickly.

Of course, being able to adapt is only ever possible when there is a structured plan in place.

Next week, we have another brilliant task that has its challenges and causes great friction, as CuChulainn and Platinum attempt to make a TV advert for a new product.

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