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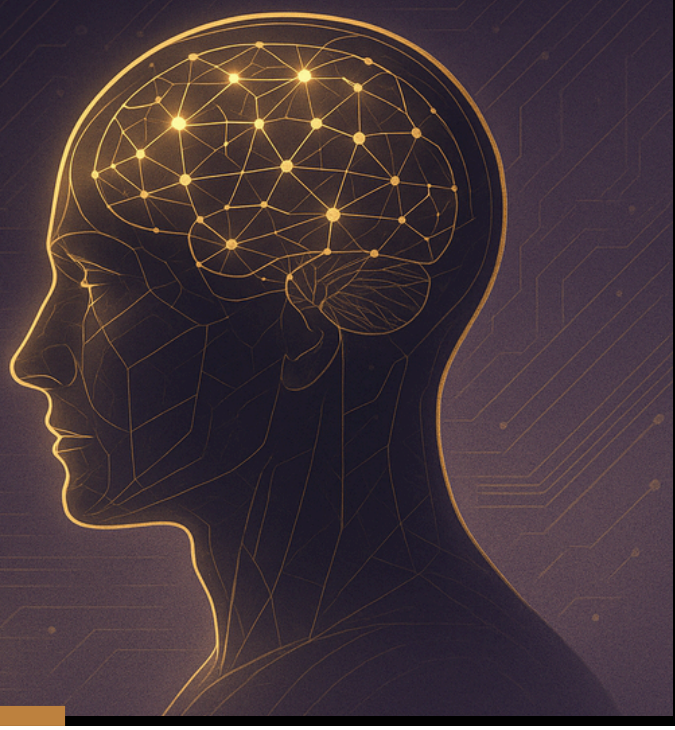
Leading the way
An update from Management

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Brains Over Broadband

The Power of Mindset In Fibre's Future

Why the future of full fibre in the UK depends on more than just skill — *it depends on smarts*.



We often view **fibre installation** as a **technical craft—precise**, **repeatable**, and **grounded in rules and measurements**. While this is undoubtedly true, anyone who has spent a week with an installation crew will tell you that no two jobs are the same. One day, you might encounter a blocked duct; the next, an un-expected tree branch or a last-minute diversion from the council. **Challenges arise quickly** and **unexpectedly**, which is why **ADAPTABILITY** is not just functional—it is **essential**. In today's world, it's not just the job description that defines the role; it's **how you respond** when things don't go as planned.

At Nano Fibre UK, adaptability is not just a buzzword for us; it is a **core value** that influences everything from our hiring process to our daily site briefings.

We have built **our culture around the belief that the future of fibre belongs to those who can learn quickly, pivot efficiently, and maintain quality** at the forefront of their work. Technology may change every 12 months in our industry, but people, processes, and projects evolve daily. Our most **trusted team member**s are **skilled** and c**ompetent**, **resourceful**, and **ready to adjus**t to changing conditions when necessary.

Building a nation's digital backbone requires more than just infrastructure; it demands the **right mindset from those who create i**t.

Kind Regards

Wilhelm & Dirk

While you can teach someone to use a fusion splicer and guide them through GIS maps, it's crucial to remember that adaptability is not a tool you can pack into a toolbox, nor is it something you can scan a barcode for. It's a skill that's as essential as any other in our rapidly evolving industry.

In the UK's rapidly expanding fibre industry, we often focus on technology, equipment, kilobits, and kilovolts. However, we don't discuss the character and mindset of the professionals nearly enough. Consider the engineer who doesn't just complete a job but thinks ahead, asks questions, and finds ways to improve for next time. We've all encountered that person: on a rainy Tuesday in Tamworth, they may be reconfiguring a drop route while still managing to joke about their muddy boots. They quietly resolve site access issues without burdening others. This is the competent engineer, and in an industry where the pace is constantly increasing, this is the professional we need now more than ever.

We've worked alongside fibre teams in locations that might come up in a pub quiz—Catterick Garrison, Llanidloes, Littlehampton. The terrain varied, and the weather certainly changed. However, one thing remained constant: determination, evident in every successful crew member. It wasn't about perfection or expensive equipment but about being present, maintaining composure, and having a mindset geared for action.

The UK government's Project Gigabit aims to provide gigabit-capable broadband to 85% of homes by 2025. However, it's not enough to upgrade the ducts and cables; we also need to enhance our entire approach to resilience and agility in implementation. This improvement begins with our mindset.

So, what does it mean to have the mindset of a competent engineer?

Understanding the specifications is essential, as is knowing your site. It involves approaching every job with a mindset that values learning, especially if you've been working in the field longer than the local substation has been wired. This is the distinction between someone who merely shows up to check off a task and someone who asks, "How can we make this process easier next time?"

At Nano Fibre UK, team members with a strong mindset emerge naturally. They may not be the loudest voices in the room, but they often find solutions when the footway box is mislabeled. These individuals are the first to volunteer for mentoring, not because it is required, but because they genuinely want to help the next person get a better start than they did.

Mindset, much like fibre, is a long-term investment.

You can't always see or measure it like a line loss or signal-to-noise ratio. However, its impact is palpable. You can sense it in team morale, in fewer callbacks, and in emails from residents who express gratitude, like the one from someone who "wasn't expecting the team to go out of their way to help me move a garden pot." These experiences may not appear on a dashboard, but they truly contribute to building a strong brand.



Powered by Coffee Driven by Purpose Connected by Fibre

Every morning starts with a brew, but what drives our teams is far more than caffeine. It’s the mindset to adapt, the pride to do it right, and the purpose to connect communities across the UK—one install at a time.

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For those who appreciate science, our brains have an incredible capacity to adapt. This concept, known as neuroplasticity, refers to the ability of neural networks to grow and reorganise. Engineers who cultivate a 'growth mindset'—a term coined by psychologist Carol Dweck—are more likely to learn from their mistakes, embrace change, and overcome frustration when faced with new processes. This mindset empowers us to not just adapt to change, but to thrive in it.

Does this sound familiar? It should be because a new app, a compliance requirement, or a community access gate code is added monthly. Competent engineers don't resist change; they adapt to it. Now, let's get practical. In the context of the UK's Project Gigabit, a growth mindset can help us adapt to these changes and innovate and improve our approach, ultimately contributing to the project's success.

What does this look like in a typical installation in the UK?

Leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a growth mindset. The team lead may take the time to sit down with a junior employee after a challenging pull, guiding them through what could have gone smoother, not to reprimand, but to coach. The site technician might identify a redundant loop not marked on the drawing and bring it to the survey team's attention. Or it could be the office-based planner who calls the installation lead to say, "I saw the weather forecast. Would you like to delay that pole pull until tomorrow morning?" These aren't monumental changes but small, mindset-driven actions that can make a significant difference.

> **Adaptability** is about the powerful difference between adapting to **cope** and adapting to **win**.
> — Max McKeown



Let's pause here. You might think: This sounds nice, but we have deadlines, key performance indicators (KPIS), and crews to manage. We understand. The industry is challenging. Budgets are tight, and schedules are even tighter. However, let me offer this: investing in mindset doesn't cost you more; it earns you more. It's a worthwhile investment that can lead to greater trust within the community, enhanced internal cohesion, fewer burned-out teams, and less rework. This can even result in stronger social engagement when your teams share authentic stories from the field. (Don't believe me? Look at your company's last post featuring a human face. I'll wait.)

Here's a quick story: One of our crews recently faced a two-hour delay. While half of the team sorted through supplies, the other half took the opportunity to guide a new apprentice through a section of the build they hadn't seen before. There was no complaining, no wasted time—just value derived from an unexpected situation. That's what I call a mindset moment.

So, how do we build this into our culture?

Here are several ideas that have been tested, experienced, and can be adjusted as needed:

1. **Start with a story :** Begin team meetings with a quick success story or a lesson learned from the field. Celebrate the process, not just the outcomes.
2. **Rotate roles briefly :** Allow an engineer to guide the pre-install checklist alongside the planner, and let the planner participate in post-job reviews.
3. **Use real voices :** include short quotes from your crews in internal newsletters or external communications. This helps to humanise the work.
4. **Encourage daily reflection :** Take just 60 seconds at the end of each shift to reflect on what went well and what could be improved.
5. **Ask for ideas, then action them :** Show that thinking critically is not only welcome but also expected and rewarded.
6. **Normalise "I don't know yet" :** Recognising uncertainty is not a weakness; it opens the door to learning.
7. **Build faith into the narrative :** Whether through spiritual beliefs or values, reinforcing the importance of purpose, people, and progress can transform challenging days into shared journeys.

These actions may not seem extreme, but they create significant effects.

Some of you might still be sceptical. What if this is merely superficial? We need tangible results. Fair enough. However, the data supports our stance. According to Gallup, companies that invest in employee engagement, particularly in operational sectors like ours, experience up to 21% higher profitability. Employee engagement goes beyond surveys and casual office perks; it's about ensuring people feel their contributions are valuable.

The skilled engineer understands this; they don't need to be reminded. What they truly need is recognition.

They require leadership that looks beyond resumes to assess how someone responds when the van breaks down. They need a company that values initiative as much as efficiency and recognises that heart isn't just a metric; it's a multiplier.

Now and then, they also need someone to acknowledge, "Hey, the way you handled that situation? That was impressive."

As we move toward a future filled with smart cities, smart meters, and innovative infrastructure, it's essential to ask: Are we discerning about those we are building all this with?

Because while fibre optics may be about the cables, their true power lies in the mindset of the people who connect us.