Interviewer: You are the Group Commercial Director of RTÉ and you’ve had a partnership with The Open University for 2 years now. Can you give us some background in how this partnership came about?

Willie O'Reilly: RTÉ is Ireland’s Public Service Media Company. We went through a severe recession from 2008 and we were looking for a way to partner with people to supply education and training for our staff and we delighted to hook up with The Open University who had flexible arrangements are who were interested in building a relationship with the media company.

Interviewer: What made you choose The Open University as a partner?

Willie O'Reilly: The Open University is well known in Ireland. It’s been on screen here since back in the 70s when it was on BBC in the early morning. It’s a trusted brand, many people in Ireland have used its services over the years so we were very happy to partnership for those reasons.

Interviewer: How are you finding the partnership so far?

Willie O'Reilly: Excellent. We get great feedback from the staff and that’s the most important thing. We initially thought we might have about 55 people on the courses and now that’s grown to 70. What we really like about it is it fits around their working lives. They are able to do it in their down time and able to complete the course at a speed that suits their own lifestyle.

Interviewer: What feedback are you getting from the staff about their experience studying with The Open University?

Willie O'Reilly: The feedback is very positive whether they are at initially stages or later stages. We have 5 people who are studying MBAs and this is an opportunity they would never have had probably in their professional career but through our association with The Open University we’ve been able to offer it to them.

Interviewer: How do you think the partnership will develop going forward?

Willie O'Reilly: I think after two years we’ve realised with something that’s very successful and both of us have invested in it and built up with relationships with The Open University team. What we are now setting out to do is see if we can deepen this relationship. There will be opportunity around the type of learning we will do and the categories of staff we’ve included in the process. There may also be further opportunity in part of the creative cycling and the material we use after all we are a television network and so we are looking for any opportunity to work with a clever, flexible and intelligent education provider because that’s what The Open University is for us.