

Wedge Group Galvanizing reaps sustainable benefits

NEED: Develop essential personal and occupational skills to enable effective management

SOLUTION: Metals Industry Managing for Success Programme

NEED: Wedge Group Galvanizing were looking for a programme to develop middle managers that combined theory with practical elements and fitted in with candidates' demanding jobs. Metals Industry's Managing for Success Programme, with its company-based project focus, proved a suitable choice.

AIMS: "We wanted to take people who had come up through the ranks and were working very hard and give them some understanding and in-depth knowledge of theories and behaviours," says Huw Jermine, Director of Resource Development. "We also wanted to see individuals stretched and developed so that they could apply the skills they had learnt in leading teams and tackling their jobs more professionally."

PROGRAMME: The programme consisted of workshops linked to on-the-job development and a business improvement project. Senior managers nominated to act as mentors attended an induction day to equip them for their role, providing an additional development opportunity for the company. "As an organisation we've developed a better understanding of the process. Now we're on our fourth programme and we've got better at defining projects, mentoring, and supporting individuals," Huw comments.

PROJECT: A work-based project is key to both applying skills and knowledge and gathering evidence for the NVQ Level 4 in Management. Huw says: "The project is very meaningful. It's not only a development opportunity for the individual but a real benefit to the business. You can see how candidates have adopted the skills learnt and demonstrated them through the project, adapted them and put them into their everyday working practices."

CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE: Tony Wiles undertook the Managing for Success Programme when he was works foreman. Since completing it he has been promoted to production manager. "The course was good

and I would recommend it to others. The more modules you put behind you the easier it becomes to see how you can apply things," he says. "I look at things a lot differently now when it comes to managing people. When problems arise I'll stop to analyse things, put them in perspective then act, instead of judging straightaway. People higher up have said how they can see the difference in me so it's been a pat on the back."

Tony benefited from networking with candidates from other companies. "I worked with people from Corus, Metsec and Caparo doing similar jobs at a similar level. It was useful to share experiences and pick up a few things from people in different organisations." Tony's project was to re-organise the factory layout at the Hull site to improve throughput. To do so he had to put forward a plan, set up a team, allocate tasks and liaise with subcontractors. His project report, along with minutes of progress meetings and observations and questioning by external assessors played a major part in his assessment.

PROJECT OUTCOMES: "Throughput improved and the visibility of supervisors improved 100% as they can now see everything from a central viewpoint without having to walk around different areas," Tony comments. The new layout reduced the need to transfer work within the factory. "By cutting down from five cranes to three we've made big savings on energy and maintenance costs. Through this project we have seen a 5% improvement in efficiency."

COMPANY BENEFITS: "The Managing for Success Programme has proved its worth as a practical formal development programme for very busy managers," Huw says. "The projects have led to increased productivity, improved quality, reliability and customer service and delivered sustainable cost savings. Having seen the business benefits, other sites have been anxious to get involved."



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CASE STUDY

BUSINESS BENEFITS OF THE METALS INDUSTRY TEAMWORK PROGRAMME

- Enables managers to achieve measurable improvements in business performance
- Changes management behaviour, leading to effective management of people
- Enables managers to implement business improvements (through 'lean' practices).



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