



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
Scotland

Name: Jacobs Engineering Group Inc.
Profile: Professional Technical Services provider
Size: 40000 employees worldwide
Location: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness. There are 50 office sites across the UK and Ireland
Website: www.jacobs.com

Background

Jacobs is one of the world's largest and most diverse providers of professional technical services. The company operates across transport and development, environment and utilities, property, defence and energy and outsourcings markets to provide high-level technical and management consultancy support both in the UK and worldwide. In 2004, Jacobs completed its acquisition of the Babtie Group, raising the number of major offices to 60 in 15 countries worldwide.

The organisation aims to meet client needs by arranging their business around the strengths of their people.

Sally Fern-Deans, Organisational Development Manager, tells us about the company's recent reassessment in December 2006.



Why Investors in People ?

We saw assessment against the Standard as:

- A crucial part of the approach to total quality management
- Evidence for clients that employees are valued
- External verification of existing good practice
- A way of answering questions about training that might be part of tenders and bids for work
- Verification of positive impact of culture change
- Reinforcing a positive message to staff about their worth and contribution

In addition, many current and future clients are impressed that consultants are recognised with Investors in People.

Benefits

“Due to its unobtrusive nature, the assessment process is able to assess employees' true feelings of the organisation. The company's only input in terms of preparation for the assessment was arranging the interview schedule and related communications, therefore the organisation was able to fully benefit from feedback.”

“We didn't select 'feel good' people, so we got honest feedback. We didn't have to do anything new for Investors in People – there was no wet paint in terms of building towards assessment”.

Orchard Brae House, 30 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 2HS
Tel: 0131 625 0155 ~ Fax: 0131 625 0144 ~ Web: www.iipscotland.co.uk

In general, Sally felt that the experience had been very positive for the directors because of the level of creative and positive feedback received through staff interviews. Other benefits cited through the Assessor reports included consistency of practice, enhanced teamwork, useful identification of development areas, reducing staff turnover, recognition of individual contributions to organisation success, recognition of good practice and aiding recruitment in a skills-scare market.

Sally Fern-Deans also represents Jacobs on the steering group of Investors in People Scotland's Large Organisations Network Group (LONG). Involvement in the group has been very useful for the company which has submitted materials for and hosted presentations at LONG meetings.

Areas of Good Practice

As a long term Investor in People, Jacobs looks at continuous improvement and has a number of particularly strong areas of good practice.

The company emphasises the building of long term relationships with clients, and part of this strategy is attracting and retaining the industry's top talent.

Jacobs has an extremely strong and successful Graduate Development Programme, supporting technical growth through assessing against twelve business competency indicators; twelve key skills considered common to all graduates regardless of discipline. Thus graduates are developed as managers as well as technical experts. Each graduate is assessed over a three-year period by an individual mentor against the various indicators. These results are tied into Group Key Performance Indicators. At present 440 graduates are on the 3 year programme in UK and Ireland, supported by Investors in People recognition.

As well as the Graduate Development Programme, the company also operates a highly effective Management Development Programme based in the Aston business school. This is now in its 4th year of intake. The "future leaders" programme has been championed by Jacobs directors who have attended and inputted into the course, which ensures that the course ties in with business objectives. Assessors were able to spend time at the school as part of the recent assessment.

Jacobs College is an internal organisation, offering a range of management and director programmes worldwide. The sessions are developed and delivered by senior VPs and directors within the organisation, guaranteeing that the content and philosophy of the programmes are conveyed accurately.

Jacobs also has a women's collaborative steering committee to encourage women into engineering and technical roles. The group hold a global conference at least once a year focusing on the inclusion of women in engineering and science.

The future with Investors in People

The board at Jacobs were aware of the pending reassessment and in turn it was discussed at the recent annual business meeting. Investors in People accreditation has already been a very useful part of Jacobs' attraction strategy for new staff in the UK and Eire. The success Investors in People has contributed to current accredited locations, has suggested the possibility of further expansion within offices globally.