

# People power drives success



At Deutsche Bank the disciplines associated with gaining the Investors in People accreditation have helped to neutralise some of the distortions of the Jersey labour market.

For Deutsche Bank Offshore in Jersey, achieving Investors in People (IiP) accreditation involved a complete transformation of its business planning and people planning processes.

Susan Manti, head of human resources for Deutsche Bank Offshore explained, "Formal accreditation took us over two years to achieve. From the outset we wanted to do more than just what was required. We saw IiP as an opportunity to develop a more focussed approach to training and development and to help us drive through improvements in the way we managed and developed our staff."

The Jersey office's managing director, John Boothman, prompted the local office to commit to work towards attaining IiP accreditation after attending a presentation by the IiP board and the Training and Employment Partnership. He was attracted by the Standard's philosophy, which states quite simply that an organisation's performance is improved through its people, in other words, by 'Investing in People'.

The Investors in People Standard is a framework that organisations of all types and sizes can employ to help them improve performance. It provides a vehicle for integrating people strategy with business strategy and encourages excellence in the field of developing people. The tightening of the labour market has meant that attracting and retaining skilled staff is seen as one of the major challenges facing Jersey businesses today. However, companies that work towards IiP accreditation are less likely to be concerned with staff retention, as their workforce will be more motivated and will be more capable within their job roles, due to an increased focus on training and development. "Since embarking on the road to IiP accreditation, staff turnover within Deutsche Bank Offshore in Jersey has decreased dramatically," added Mrs Manti.

To begin with, Deutsche Bank Offshore in Jersey had to establish where it stood against the Standard. This involved a thorough review of existing practices and

procedures and, most importantly, getting feedback from staff and managers by means of interviews and surveys. This enabled the company to determine what improvements and changes would be necessary in order to gain accreditation. In fact, the diagnosis revealed that a considerable amount of change was required.

The issues raised by this diagnosis formed the basis of an Action Plan, which set out the key actions and improvements required to a number of management and people processes. The first area to be tackled was the Bank's business planning process. Although the Jersey office had a business plan, which was written by the managing director and updated annually, there was little input to the plan from other members of the management team and the plan was not communicated to either managers or staff.

So the entire business planning process was restructured to include both a strategic high-level view together with individual business plans for each business division. The management teams of each division were involved in the preparation of their plans and the plans were communicated to all members of staff. Crucially, the staff were made aware of how their own performance and individual objectives related to the Bank's overall aims.

Another key process, which was reviewed and revised, was the performance management process. The existing programme was not delivering; it relied heavily on a ratings system and its main focus was on past achievements with insufficient attention paid to future development. A completely new process was introduced, with no ratings, and with a shift in emphasis from the past to the future.

The introduction of these new processes for business planning and performance management meant that it became possible to clearly link training and development needs and objectives to business objectives. Today, the Jersey office has a formal training and development plan which is updated annually and which is driven by a combination of

the Bank's Strategic Plan, Divisional Business Plans and individual performance appraisals.

Effective evaluation of all training undertaken was an essential component and also a key IiP requirement. "The evaluation system has been one of the hardest changes to implement," explained Susan Manti, "But we knew it was absolutely essential to have such a system in place to ensure that training objectives were being met and the Bank was getting a return on its investment. Being an Investor in People does not necessarily mean that you have to spend more on training but it does mean that your approach to training must be focussed, must be driven by your business goals, and must be properly evaluated."

To support the IiP process, Deutsche Bank Offshore in Jersey also decided to raise the skills base at all levels of the management team by means of a comprehensive Management Development Programme. In modular form and involving a total of eight training days per person, the programme acted as a vehicle to both introduce the new processes which had been developed, and to extend management skills in the areas of leadership, team building, delegation and coaching. The programme was so well received that the Bank decided to run an abbreviated version for all supervisory staff.

Alongside business planning, performance management and training and development, Deutsche Bank Offshore in Jersey also reviewed the way in which staff were inducted into the organisation, as a result of which all new staff now attend a formal half day induction programme. The programme includes a general overview of the Bank's structure and business activities together with information on the training and development opportunities available to employees. All staff in the Bank also have access to an electronic training brochure, which gives details on a wide range of training programmes.

"Working towards achieving the Standard has not been easy, but has been extremely worthwhile," explained Susan Manti. "Our management style had been very task focussed; IiP demanded a real culture change with far greater priority now given to the development of people."

"Deutsche Bank realises that its ability to deliver a top quality service to its clients depends on the talents and skills of all its employees. Although it's something of a cliché, for us it really is true that our people are our greatest asset," added the head of human resources.

Investors in People is a continuous improvement standard; once accredited, organisations are regularly reassessed and have to keep on raising their level of play to maintain their accreditation. So Deutsche Bank Offshore in Jersey conducts staff surveys every six months to check that they remain on track and ensure that any slippage against the Standard is picked up and corrected.

The fundamental benefits associated with the IiP Standard are worth noting. The management of Deutsche Bank Offshore in Jersey believe they are now far better at planning the strategic direction of the business and that the strides taken with training and development have resulted in not just better skilled staff, but more motivated staff as well. The Bank's communications, both vertical and horizontal, have greatly improved helping its goals to be clearly understood by everyone. The new performance management system helps to ensure the effective development of all staff, benefiting both the individual and the organisation.

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Businesses aiming for IiP accreditation do not necessarily need a series of formal programmes (assessment focuses on outcomes not inputs). However, they must communicate clearly and effectively their strategic aims and objectives and ensure that their people understand how their job role and performance support the company's vision. Although IiP can't guarantee business success, it is self evident that staff who are better managed, trained and developed, can only help to make an organisation more profitable.

*Organisations that meet the Investors in People Standard will have demonstrated that they are fully committed to developing their people, will have clear goals that are communicated clearly to everyone to ensure effective comprehension, will show that their investment in people directly helps them to meet their goals and finally that they understand the impact that their investment has on their overall performance. The future of an organisation lies with people who possess the most skills and who are committed to adapting to work in new ways. □*