



case study

SICL Limited

"Investors in People helped us introduce clear systems and processes to guide our expansion. There is now structure and control but it has also encouraged ownership and empowerment with our people because we now know who we are and where we are going"

Cliff Fox – Managing Director

The Organisation

SICL Ltd is an IT company specialising in network solutions and service provision. Based in Leeds, the company was established in 1995 and has grown from one member of staff to thirty, enjoying steady growth and year-on-year profitability.

SICL now manage complex IT infrastructures for organisations of varying size through leading edge network technologies. By delivering cost and efficiency benefits through a consultative approach, SICL is constantly striving to design functional, secure, resilient and scalable networks for the benefit of clients.

Why Investors in People?

The company was established in 1995 by the founder and was initially run from his home. Following early success and rapid growth, the company needed to have a more focused approach to expansion that would allow the founder to spend more time on research and development rather than the day-to-day operations.

Whilst there was always a vision for the business, it wasn't always organised into a clear plan or strategy that was shared with the staff. However, with the appointment of Cliff Fox as Managing Director and the development of the Board of Directors, a clear vision and a very detailed strategic plan was drawn up.

Following the development of the strategy, SICL needed to ensure that everyone was taking it seriously. Having come from an organisation that was involved with Investors

in People, Cliff decided to use the Standard to guide and structure his approach to change. "I wanted everyone involved" says Cliff. "Our people's professionalism is our point of differentiation. They help us develop a common attitude, culture and partnership approach across the company".

SICL also recognised that it was experiencing an ongoing shortage of high calibre talent and needed to retain their technicians. Although they pay above the market rate with the average age of technicians being under 30, other ways of engaging, rewarding and recognising people was critical.

The benefits achieved by working with Investors in People

The most notable area of strength and good practice development is their ability to embrace change. There has been an

enormous amount of change and real progress towards a more structured approach to expansion and better customer service.

The implementation of an appraisal and review process has enabled managers to evaluate progress towards key business objectives and ensure that staff development is relevant, planned and executed. The role of the manager has been much more clearly defined with up to date job specifications published for all to access through their intranet. Job specifications are reviewed as part of the appraisal which ensures that they are relevant and appropriate as the business needs change.

The training and development of staff has been focussed on progressing the company towards clear goals and this been constantly reviewed and evaluated with some good evidence of success.

There has been a good level of input from all employees in the growth and development of SICL and all staff are encouraged to put forward their ideas using a defined 'Business Case' process.

"Staff paw prints are all over our business plan due to the fact that they are encouraged to have an input" says Cliff Fox – Managing Director.

With a driving on quality, SICL have already secured the CISCO Silver Partner Status in March 2008 and plan to shortly be the smallest UK based CISCO gold partner. In addition, their financial year closed in June 2008 at £4.1m from £2.6m in 2007 and £1.8m in 2006.

Case study last updated September 2008

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