

IIP Case study – Revelation Event Management

Revelation Event Management has gone through a mini-revelation over the last 12 months. Having always been committed to the development of its staff, it made the decision to acknowledge the hard work by gaining the Investors in People (IIP) accreditation.

The company, based in Bristol, was established in 1999 by Matt Sims and Catherine French and boasts an array of clients including the Daily Mail Group, the Grocer Magazine and the London Motor Show. It has an annual turnover of around £2m and has a 13-strong full-time work force as well as a large number of freelance & retained staff members.

Managing director, Matt Sims explained: “It’s the people who make our business – people are the key as events are all about face-to-face interaction and communication. Core to us is talent and channelling it along a positive career path.”

IIP is the latest employee focused development for the firm which sees its investment in its employees as essential to its business performance. The Revelation management style allows staff to suggest ideas and feel that they have a real influence on the business. Alongside this the company employs a lifestyle and business coach to work with the directors in a personal and professional capacity as well as with key members of the team, analysing their values and how they can be applied to the business.

“The business coach also has a regular day with all the staff which is quite inspirational to the team and we have had extremely positive feedback from it,” said Matt. “We also have weekly departmental meetings, regular one-on-one meetings and monthly formal team meetings. Everyone attends and they are free to come up with new ideas, suggest new suppliers and discuss the company’s accomplishments in the month. We then discuss sales figures and business performance, making everyone aware of how we as a team are performing. We are also constantly reviewing our induction process - having the right people on board is key and inducting them in the right way is crucial.”

Matt added: “IIP will help us to acknowledge and recognise all the hard work we have invested into employee development within the business. In fact it is also synonymous with the core values of the business: increase business performance through staff development.”

To gain advice and support throughout the accreditation process Revelation Event Management worked with Business West’s Lance Cross, now an employee at Premier Employer Solutions (PES).

Matt said: “I would recommend that companies looking to gain IIP accreditation seek informed advice from an experienced IIP expert. Lance encouraged us to understand why we wanted to gain IIP status, ensuring it was part of our overall business plan and not just a ‘tick box’ exercise.” Business West analysed and evaluated Revelation Event Management’s current situation in an initial assessment and were able to recommend improvements. These recommendations established what needed to be done to meet the standard and included the company being more demonstrative of the good things they did. For example, showing they have training plans in place for all employees which are constantly updated and developed.

Another area which Lance highlighted during the initial assessment was for an individual budget to be set for each staff member with regards to training. This did throw up a bit of a challenge for the company, as Matt explained: “We didn’t want to cap the training budget but it was useful to set a figure to work with. We eventually arrived at a nominal figure of £1,000 a year to meet the requirements, but we regularly

exceed this with some of our staff having attended training courses for £3,500 a head. A business case for the training is imperative - this is far more important than just the cost.

“According to the standard we wouldn’t need to spend any more money on training for another three years but we continue our training above and beyond even this mark as it is a very important part of our employee development policy. Training represents a business need and is an investment for the company.”

An area of improvement which resulted from Business West’s initial assessment was to move the employee appraisals to coincide with the company’s financial year so that all personal goals are synchronised with the business plan and allowing them to change as the business plan changes year to year.

Reflecting on the experience of gaining IIP status, Matt said: “IIP is important to the company not purely because of the brand, but for what the brand reflects. We want to recruit talented people and help them develop those talents. It’s a mindset and if you invest in your people you will have a stronger business and it will earn you loyalty from your employees. “For our business, IIP is not just about being ‘IIP accredited’, but demonstrating the award day to day and celebrating the fact we invest in our people. I challenge every business to refocus themselves to investing in their people.”