

Pressing forward to even greater success with NVQs

Graham & Heslip



The Business Benefits

Graham & Heslip are committed to training and development to national standards for all staff, with many employees who began their working life at 16 now being highly skilled and operating some of the most sophisticated printing equipment in Northern Ireland.

Some of the benefits include:

NVQ integrated alongside existing ISO procedures

Spoilage reduced by 60%

Non-conformance reduced by 33%

Improved scheduling and delivery of jobs on time increased to 98%

Environmental issues addressed through reduced spoilage and reduced waste disposal

Better working practices introduced

Aided IIP re-assessment

The full story inside



Ken Cleland

Graham & Heslip

Graham & Heslip was founded in 1903. The success of the company is mainly due to its founders Will Graham and Tom Heslip's original commitment to quality standards and long term development. Graham & Heslip has expanded from a company of 8 employees to over 100 employees and has significantly increased its turnover from £118,000 to in excess of £5million over the last 18 years. It has invested in new purpose built premises and equipment, including 3 new presses costing over £5million. The company is today regarded as one of the most innovative and progressive printing companies in Northern Ireland.

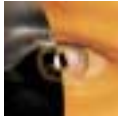
To respond to the demands of the advertising industry, Graham & Heslip introduced the first 24 hour, 6 days a week commercial shift pattern in Northern Ireland. This shift system allowed them to provide work overnight and offer their clients a competitive advantage in the race to meet deadlines.

Since 1982, the company has valued the benefits of training and development at each stage to ensure its growth and progression as a major European print supplier. This commitment to training has helped to establish enthusiasm and dedication amongst its staff. Every employee is trained and re-trained to ensure that they are familiar with the very latest equipment and can deliver the best possible work at all times.

Graham & Heslip is a very visionary organisation introducing many innovative working practices such as 'improvement through innovation' to address the issues such as the increasingly competitive markets and higher customer expectations. The organisation fully believes that the enterprise, which is operating in an innovative and competitive environment, can survive only if its people are properly equipped, informed, motivated and communicate as a team to achieve results.

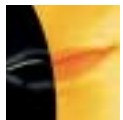
“If you are investing millions of pounds in new technology, you need to spend a significant amount on your people. You have to match one resource with the other.”

The NVQ Programme



Graham & Heslip have been rewarded for their efforts,

winning several major awards. In 1993 they were a regional winner in the National Training Awards, in 1994 they were the first print company to receive Investors in People recognition in Northern Ireland and were also recognised as an ISO 9002 company in the same year. In 1995 they became a national winner in the National Training Awards. In 1996 they were the winner of the BPIF National Training & Development Award competition.



Graham & Heslip first looked at implementing NVQs

in 1995 and they gained approval for the Company Development Programme in 1996 based around the achievement of NVQs at level 2 for 70% of their employees. A training needs analysis was carried out resulting in a training plan linking business objectives with identified training needs. The plan concentrated on addressing organisational development issues and linking all training to quantifiable business objectives.



Given the number of employees the company wanted to

put through the NVQ process it was decided that it would be more cost effective to become an approved centre in their own right. Graham & Heslip has centre approval through City & Guilds for 4 qualifications, Administration, Origination, Machine Printing and Print Finishing. In order to support centre approval it was necessary to generate the training programmes, procedures and systems to satisfy the awarding body that they had the resources, skills and knowledge to carry out the training associated with these awards and assess to national standards. A firm partnership was established with the awarding body's external verifier who was able to confirm the appropriateness of the company's training programmes.



Four senior team leaders took on the role of assessors

which, although initially time consuming, gave them more confidence and raised their profile with staff. A consultant, working very closely with the organisation

employer case studies

was then appointed as internal verifier for the organisation. All assessments are carried out in-house as an integral part of the job, with the candidates having access to their assessor as and when they require.



Achievements are displayed on the staff notice boards and there is a presentation of framed certificates to all successful candidates.

Graham & Heslip fully recognise the benefits to staff, with fully competent and trained employees being enthusiastic and dedicated to their job. The organisation benefits from competent employees ensuring that processes and procedures are being followed and improved, saving money which goes straight to the bottom line of the company.

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Employee Benefits

Recognition for their competence

More confident staff

Ability to review their own job

Better motivated staff

Preparation for move to their new factory and new working procedures

The Future

Graham & Heslip will continue to address the challenges and opportunities, taking into account external factors through customer surveys, market demands and technological changes. This will ensure the company will be better placed to identify and develop new opportunities, implement more effective management actions and take advantage of better strategic planning.

The company has identified that one of the ways in which they will achieve business excellence is by aligning and integrating people and their behaviours, the right business process, and the appropriate tools and technology. Graham & Heslip foresee that the NVQ process will be an integral part of achieving their business excellence through the Modern Apprenticeship programme.

At the start of a new millennium it is apparent that innovation, alignment and better working practices are crucial to the future of Graham & Heslip and the business in Northern Ireland. Being more efficient by improving processes and procedures saves money that goes straight to the bottom line.

For further information on NVQ implementation and general NVQ information please contact:

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