

NVQs put the fizz into employee development

Cantrell & Cochrane Limited



The Business Benefits

Cantrell & Cochrane link NVQs to their business objectives "to improve efficiency throughout the organisation" and "to improve profitability" ensuring that employees' occupational competence contributes to the following operational improvements:

Reduction in unit costs

Increase in complete order ratios

Reduced overhead expenditure

Increase in stock accuracy to 99.5%

Provides employees with a recognised qualification

Provides a route for progression

Links into the company's quality awards

ISO9001 and ISO14001

Contributes to achieving Investors in People

The full story inside



Colin Gordon

“NVQs have enabled a significant number of our employees to obtain further qualifications while carrying out their everyday work.”

Cantrell & Cochrane Ireland Ltd

The company was set up in 1852 by Dr Thomas Cantrell who was an apothecary and surgeon. Dr Cantrell, who originally came from America, combined the duties of apothecary with the manufacture of aerated waters and sweet beverages. In 1869 he established a factory in Dublin with his partner Alderman Cochrane, thus Cantrell & Cochrane (C&C) came into being and grew into a thriving industry with a worldwide reputation. The outbreak of the First World War caused a decline in the export market and it was decided to concentrate on the home market.

In 1954 the organisation acquired land to build a modern factory embracing the most up to date methods of manufacturing. The new factory was opened at Castlereagh in 1956 and the company continued to expand and prosper. In 1986 the company took over Ross Cochrane Limited and in 1987 Hollywood & Donnelly Limited, a sister company

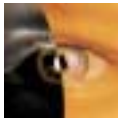
within the C&C group merged with C&C Belfast. In 1994, two wholesale companies, Quinns of Cookstown and Reihill McKeown were acquired.

Today the company is a subsidiary company within the Cantrell & Cochrane Group which has a number of other trading companies. In addition to being one of the most diverse in the drinks market, the C&C group is also a major employer with some 1800 employees in Ireland and Italy. The Group is owned by BC Partners.

As well as the products which are manufactured and bottled in the Belfast plant, the company sells and distributes a wide range of fine wines, spirits and liqueurs. From Belfast and Omagh a fleet of trucks delivers around 100 million bottles of soft drinks, wines and spirits per year to shops, supermarkets, public houses, hotels, schools and hospitals.

The NVQ Programme

employer case studies



The company training policy states that “it is the responsibility of each manager to ensure that all employees for whom they are responsible are given necessary training and are fully developed to their individual potential.”

Therefore, when C&C committed themselves to the NVQ programme they ensured that all managers from the Managing Director down showed their visible support to the programme.



Information workshops are run by the Training & Development Manager for line managers who cascade this information to their own staff. This ensures that everyone is aware of the process and the aims and objectives of the programme. The line managers are also aware of the training needs and skills gaps within their own team members and use this process to address these areas. In 1995, eight managers and supervisors completed NVQ level 3 in Supervisory Management and

one completed NVQ level 5 Management. Since then 22 have achieved NVQ level 2 Food & Drink Manufacturing and there are currently 40 people working towards various NVQs.

Nine managers/supervisors have achieved D32/33 assessors award and one manager has D34 internal verifier award.



C&C has used different routes of implementation depending on the qualification and expertise within their organisation. NVQs offered include level 2 Food and Drink Manufacturing and level 2 Distribution and Warehousing which are assessed on the job with line managers acting as assessors and C&C carrying out internal verification. NVQ level 5 Operations Management, level 4 Management, level 4 Training and Development and level 3 Administration are offered through training providers. Both routes work well for the company due to effective partnerships with the Food & Drink Training Council and any training providers they work through,

with C&C taking full ownership of the process whichever route is chosen.



The NVQ programme includes a team building event such as outdoor activities at the Lakeland Canoe Centre or kart racing at Kart Valley. This not only helps the teams develop their interpersonal skills but it shows employees that the company is fully committed to the NVQ process. This is backed up by the direct linkage of NVQs into the company's business objectives to improve efficiency and profitability. Success and progression stories are published in the monthly Training News newsletter which is posted on noticeboards and circulated by e-mail to those who have this facility. The company holds an annual award ceremony in a hotel where the certificates are presented. The Managing Director and the senior management team attend this event.



The company recognises that the primary focus of employee development is to enable individuals to fulfil their potential and therefore the investment in training and development contributes to the growth, development and profitability of the organisation.

“NVQs are relevant at every level in the organisation – we have been impressed by the motivation and commitment of those involved in gaining their award and the resulting pride in achievement.”

Employee Benefits

Employees feel valued due to company investment in their development

Gives them a recognised qualification

Opens up a route for progression within the organisation

Introduced employees on the factory floor to computer skills

Motivation and commitment to the organisation has increased

The Future

C&C is committed to training and developing all levels of staff in line with organisational objectives in order to focus their activities on investing in people. The company is committed to the achievement of the Investors in People standard.

The company is taking their training one step further by introducing training CD ROMs and providing a resource office for all staff engaged in training at all levels. The visible demonstration of support by senior management for the NVQ process is backed up by their own management development programme now being linked to the management standards.

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

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