



Respect for People

Case Studies

Trials of the Respect for People Toolkits:

Equality and Diversity in the Workplace

Health and Safety

Working Environment

Work in Occupied Premises

Workforce Satisfaction

***and the Respect for People
Performance Indicators***





Introduction

Since we launched the Respect for People toolkits in October 2002, I have been really encouraged to see their enthusiastic take up by many organisations. The stated reason is that they want to radically improve how they respect their workforce in order to recruit and retain the best talent. Talent that will enable them to continuously improve their business performance, change the industry for the better and delight their customers. Performance cannot improve significantly unless organisations attend to the needs and aspirations of the people who conceive, design, construct and use buildings and civil engineering projects.

Demonstrating the case for change is crucial and is at the heart of the Movement seeking to apply Rethinking Construction's principles. I am glad to report that this Movement is having ever greater impact on the way the construction industry goes about its day to day business.

This compilation of case studies is drawn from the extensive two-year trials of the toolkits and people performance indicators. Organisations in these studies – private and public clients, designers, and contractors large and small – together provide evidence of the tangible benefits of using the toolkits and performance indicators.

The strength of the case studies is that they express the views of those who have trodden the path and benefited. Their experience can be used to inform and accelerate change. Let their experiences guide yours.



Alan Crane
Board Member
Constructing Excellence



The case studies

Company/Project	Page	Equality and Diversity Toolkit	Health and Safety Toolkit	Working Environment Toolkit	Work in Occupied Premises Toolkit	Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit	Respect for People Performance Indicators
Airport Construction Training Alliance	2			■		■	
Arup	3			■			
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	4		■	■		■	■
Cambridge City Council	5		■				■
Derg Water Treatment Works	6		■	■			
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	7			■			
Emanuel Whittaker	8	■			■		
GCP Chartered Architects	9					■	
Hyde Construction	10		■	■		■	
Llewellyn	11						■
Mowlem Aquamen	12					■	
Pearce Retail	13		■	■	■		■
South Staffordshire Housing Association	14					■	■
The Pavement Team	15			■			
Transport & General Workers Union	16		■	■		■	

Getting involved

To find out more about the Respect for People agenda and to use the toolkits, contact:

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Satisfaction and working environment linked to performance



Merle Bacon, BAA

The Respect for People Programme is just one part of the improvement plan at BAA. ACTA uses Respect for People workshops as places to assist in the development of the project environment. The toolkits have been used to survey, benchmark and identify areas for improvement.

Behaviour is often the underlying cause of many of the accidents occurring in the industry, so understanding the reasons for a particular behaviour and culture is important. Merle Bacon explains why ACTA use the *Working Environment* and *Workforce Satisfaction* Toolkits.

Why did ACTA need these toolkits?

"We wanted something that was going to be quick and easy to understand and that would encourage improvement through a benchmarking system. The toolkits complemented our existing approaches and provided a ready-made answer. The questions and structure in the checklists were perfect."

How did you use the toolkits?

"Each month 15 workers are introduced to the toolkits at a Respect for People meeting run by the client. The questions in the toolkits encourage workers to respond openly and comment about the working environment."

"The results from the toolkits and topics of discussion are reported anonymously in the meeting notes that are circulated around the entire airport team. A summary and actions for improvement are placed on a notice board in the canteen. Workers recognise success when they see the improvements on site."

What changes did you make as a result?

"The Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) had captured the industry's attention at management level but it was taking longer in the workplace. Managers understood its purpose but it was unclear to workers. The toolkits identified this as a problem and ACTA produced a training course to explain the relevance of CSCS and how workers can use it to their advantage."

"During the summer months the hot weather became unbearable. The introduction of portable air-conditioned units in the cabins and more cooled drinking water points soon helped everyone through the working day without having to go looking for a drink. The canteen now accommodates night personnel requirements and we have more food available. The welfare facilities are always a problem to keep in a reasonable condition 24 hours a day. The workers asked for the toilets to have a regular deep clean to ensure conditions remain adequate and this is working."

"Each month we have a set of responses generated from the workers to work on. The scoring system instantly highlights areas for improvement. The Respect for People meetings then communicate the results and support improvement on site. We have constantly seen improvements in our KPIs. Our 18-month commitment to the Respect for People programme along with supporting initiatives produced (in August 2002) an Accident Frequency Rate for construction projects of 0.28, against an industry average of 1.3. That's 80% fewer reportable accidents than the industry as a whole."

What happens next?

"As we achieve our targets we won't stop. Improvements have translated into enhanced headline KPIs. Respect for People will remain an important theme in the ACTA business - safety, training, respect for people and passport database."

Toolkits

Workforce Satisfaction

Working Environment

Key benefits

- The toolkits reveal aspects of behaviour that can be modified to further reduce an already low accident frequency rate.
- The toolkits identified the need for specific improvements to project accommodation and resources
- The toolkits reinforce ACTA's framework for training the workforce and supporting competency cards.

ACTA profile

The Airport Construction Training Alliance (ACTA) was developed as an alliance of BAA and all its construction suppliers working at the airport to create an environment where people work safely. It covers some 5000 construction workers with passports to work on BAA sites.

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Re-engineering the induction



Viv Porter
Arup, Leeds

Arup had always believed they had a 'good' working environment in their Leeds office. But after a period of rapid growth managers noticed that standards were being questioned. They looked to the Respect for People toolkit to see where improvements were needed.

Viv Porter, Senior Business Administrator, recommends involving the workforce to achieve change. Managers' perceptions are never enough.

Why did Arup need this toolkit?

"We wanted to understand what employees felt about the conditions of the office. Are basic requirements met, are conditions adequate, and if not, why not? Are our employees happy and motivated or disenchanted? How well do we communicate? The toolkit would provide the answers to these questions. We also knew the toolkit would be invaluable in our progress towards becoming an Investor in People."

How did you use the toolkit?

"From the start, we had quite strong support of senior managers and directors to explore Respect for People issues in the Leeds office. We thought the *Working Environment* toolkit was easy to complete so we introduced it throughout the office with minimal explanation about the Respect for People programme. We asked all 180 staff to complete the checklist and we got almost universal response. So we knew the views of everyone in the office, from directors down, the whole age range, experience and time worked for the company.

"Once collated and analysed, the information was presented at a Group Meeting, which includes the whole office team and is led by a senior manager. We used the radar charts to illustrate the scores and asked staff for suggestions on how we could make improvements."

What changes did you make as a result?

"We learned that some of our procedures and processes were not as effective as we had hoped. Current employees felt the induction process was not thorough enough; as a result we reviewed our office induction from top to bottom.

"We began by expanding the induction pack to contain more information to help new employees integrate more quickly into the company. This included things like the office set up and departments, who's who, accommodation in the locality and the most convenient routes to get to work. The health and safety induction needed some improvements such as a floor plan showing the fire exits, and we put up a list in the kitchen showing who are the health and safety representatives, with their photos. We repeat the emergency evacuation procedure in the general induction to ensure this important information has been received and understood. We've also decided to do separate IT inductions, geared to the needs of each individual.

"A mentor is now assigned to joiners for the first few months to help them learn and settle into the new job."

What happens next?

"We intend to use the *Working Environment Toolkit* again when we have an influx of new employees to question about the induction process. We will also be able to compare the results from the trial to confirm that the changes we made have been effective."

Toolkits

Working Environment

Key benefits

- *The toolkit results showed Arup, Leeds that their local induction process was insufficient and showed (with subsequent dialogue) where improvements were needed*
- *The process was simple to operate and the improvements were not financially onerous.*

Ove Arup profile

Arup design incorporates everything from automobiles to infrastructure, structural engineering to communications consultancy, financial, and socially led engineering, in 160 offices around the world.

The Leeds practice covers planning, transport, civil engineering, water, fire, environmental and ground engineering.

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ARUP

Respect for People record can signal best value tenders



Keith Hilton,
Barnsley
Metropolitan
Borough Council

Officers at Barnsley Metropolitan Borough believe achieving best value and working with contractors who respect their people go hand in hand. The Council is promoting Respect for People in its strategic partnership with Willmott Dixon for housing stock maintenance.

Assistant Executive Director, Keith Hilton, explains how they are taking the lead by setting targets and encouraging respect along supply chains.

Why did Barnsley need these toolkits?

"We wanted to gain a 3 star 'Excellent' rating for best value in 2003 for our £20m Housing Stock Maintenance programme and re-invigorate the local economy. Given the size and scale of our proposals, we needed a partner who could provide a highly skilled and motivated workforce. We wanted someone who would be committed to the development of people throughout the supply chain. So we developed a procurement process based on best value, which tested Respect for People and other quality indicators as well as price."

How did you use the toolkits?

"Initially we used the toolkits to understand Respect for People issues. We could see that it complemented our Investors in People and quality assurance systems. The results, particularly from the staff satisfaction surveys, were incorporated into our business improvement plans and used to set training objectives."

"We then wove the principles into the housing stock procurement process, believing that a motivated and skilled workforce is crucial to the delivery of an excellent maintenance service. We wanted tenderers who could demonstrate commitment to workers' health, safety, working environment, training and personal development. Six contractors were selected to tender from twenty-five potential tenderers who returned pre-selection questionnaires that included Respect for People issues."

What changes did you make as a result?

"For the first time we had tools to do a 'fair employment' evaluation of Building Works (our direct labour organisation) as well as prospective partners. It gave us criteria to eliminate firms who have a poor performance in Respect for People issues. We thought they would fail to recruit and retain the best talent and business partners and were unlikely to help us reach our best value goals."

What happens next?

"Now that our strategic partner Willmott Dixon is in place, we're setting up a task group to implement the Respect for People agenda. We get Building Works and Willmott Dixon to measure their progress with the *People Performance Indicators*. They will see how to improve by using the *Health and Safety*, *Workforce Satisfaction* and *Working Environment* Toolkits."

"We're transferring what we've learned from the housing stock maintenance procurement to other projects. We're also trying to promote Respect for People principles to local contractors through construction forums that the council organises."

"It may be possible to devise performance incentives which reward partners' commitment to people-related standards. These would include Investors in People and ISO 9002, workforce succession plan (for recruitment of apprentices), and training and development strategy."

Toolkits

Health and Safety

Workforce Satisfaction

Working Environment

People Performance Indicators

Key benefits

- *The toolkits identified Respect for People issues in the workplace simply by recording what was happening against best-practice checklists*
- *The toolkits gave contractors a clear guide to the 'people' standards needed in order to attract and retain good staff*
- *The toolkits offered a practical way to evaluate prospective partners on the basis of Respect for People principles.*

Barnsley Housing Stock Maintenance profile

The strategic partnership of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and Willmott Dixon employs about 90 people in maintaining Barnsley's housing stock. They are striving to address the industry's shortfalls and provide service excellence by addressing the Respect for People issues promoted by Rethinking Construction.

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Checklist underpins corporate knowledge of occupational health



Kelley Blanchflower,
Cambridge City Council

Cambridge City Council has used the *Site Health Checklist* in the *Health and Safety Toolkit* to track best practice.

Property Officer, Kelley Blanchflower, describes why and how they produced a portfolio of information to keep everyone in the organisation up to date on occupational health issues.

Why did Cambridge City Council need this toolkit?

"Our business plan commits us to aim for Rethinking Construction standards and to get better at managing processes. It's all about delivering the best-value services. We want to promote best practice and encourage our contractors to develop and build on the qualities they have already achieved.

"We thought we had a pretty good record in occupational health in City Services, so we chose the Health checklist for our trial. We thought that if we could develop this theme successfully we could then go on to the whole set of future toolkits."

How did you use the toolkit?

"We used the *Health Checklist* with employees in City Services, our direct labour organisation for housing repair and maintenance. Their Health and Safety Adviser Peter Harvey has welcomed Respect for People. He likes the toolkits because they communicate the standards he expects and promote better working conditions.

"A lot of activities were covered by standards such as the COSHH legislation but the information was not readily available. So we decided to draw all the occupational health information together in a portfolio intended for managers and supervisors. The idea was to create awareness, so its contents had to be relevant and up-to-date.

"A team of six managers discussed the questions in the checklist and contributed to the portfolio. They used the scorecard to rank improvement actions."

What changes did you make as a result?

"All City Service construction managers received the portfolio containing advice on policy, regulations, best practice and training. There were 25 areas identified for improvement and noise and vibration were of immediate concern. We've had consultants do an acoustic survey of operating equipment and our procurement criteria now specify the correct equipment to use to reduce the risk of vibration. We monitor these controls as well as other health and safety standards through job audits and health and safety inspections.

"The client is more proactive about reducing risks to health at the design stage through better work planning. We are reviewing corporate policy on alcohol and drugs at work and rehabilitation of those affected by occupational ill health. We have Respect for People meetings for managers and supervisors and also a newsletter called *Egan Echo* to tell everyone about our progress at Rethinking Construction.

"Managers will evaluate new training to reduce health risks from manual operations during site visits and face-to-face questioning of the operatives."

What happens next?

"We need to make the portfolio available in a more user-friendly format so that anyone can use it. It could be smaller and indexed. We want to introduce our contractors to the toolkit and involve supply team partners in future developments of the portfolio. We intend to progress onto other toolkits and involve other departments as well. The *People Performance Indicators* (PPIs) will be used to set targets for the council and we will ask contractors to score and report their PPIs every six months."

Toolkit

Health and Safety

People Performance Indicators

Key benefits

- *The toolkit was a good guide to what our portfolio of occupational health information should contain*
- *The toolkit alerted managers to occupational health issues that needed more effort, for example noise and vibration*
- *The portfolio captured and will retain knowledge that could be lost as people move out of the organisation*
- *Systems to monitor health in the organisation were improved.*

City Services profile

City Services is the housing maintenance division of Cambridge City Council. It has a direct labour force of 265 and the annual turnover is £18m.

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Working environment in water treatment works contract



Emer Murnaghan

Respect for People toolkits, trialled during construction of the £10m Derg Water Treatment Works in Northern Ireland, were key to making and demonstrating continuous improvement.

Project Manager, Emer Murnaghan, explains why the toolkits were invaluable in moulding a culture where managers and workers collaborated to achieve excellence on a very successful project.

Why did Derg need these toolkits?

"As an M4I demonstration project we were committed to creating a cultural change in our under-performing industry – but the question was how? We needed to identify areas for improvement, introduce the change and then be able to measure the effect of the change or 'benchmark the performance'. The toolkits provided a template to work on and compare ourselves with the rest of the industry through the benchmarking club."

How did you use the toolkits?

"We started the trial about mid way through the two-year construction. My first job as trial administrator was to present the idea to the workforce; we quickly gained support of both management and workers. I was present when the workers completed the toolkits the first time, to answer any questions. The checklists covered health, safety and the working environment. These first results, obtained under uniform conditions, became our benchmark scores. Also, we were able to compare our results with others in the trial by participating in the Respect for People Benchmarking Club."

"It soon became clear where we needed to improve. Presenting the results on the radar charts made it easy to understand, and we kept the workforce interested in the programme by posting these around the site. When we repeated the toolkits, some months later, it was encouraging to see the benefits of the improvements we made reflected in better scores. We'd never been able to measure progress like this before."

"Contractor Farrans introduced their new health and safety management system immediately after the first use of the toolkits; the timing could not have been better. The toolkits were used to help us evaluate the effectiveness and impact of this new system, to ensure the standards are maintained and where possible improved upon."

What changes did you make as a result?

"We made quite a lot of changes; these are just a few examples. You can see that we dealt with many of the usual suspects, often with quite simple, inexpensive solutions."

"Measuring noise can be rather scientific, so we introduced a rule of thumb - if you can't hold a normal conversation with someone a metre away, then you need ear protection. We held a special 'toolbox talk' to introduce this concept. We solved the frequent problem of unhealthy toilets by setting up a hygiene inspection rota; but not management inspections: we got the workforce to take responsibility. It's quite simple really - does it function, is it clean, is there paper and soap?"

"Traditionally managers attend safety meetings, not the people taking the risks. We made sure our sub-contractors were present at weekly site-safety meetings. And the contractor introduced daily 'task talks' to look at risk assessments and methods for the day's routine. We reviewed the site induction and re-inducted the whole site to ensure new members of the team are correctly briefed about the standards expected when working on the project."

What happens next?

"We held the post-project review immediately after the handover of the Derg works so that the lessons could be transferred to the Lough Macrory water treatment works - a similar project being designed and built by the same team. By making Lough Macrory a demonstration project, we're sure we can prove the business case for widespread use of the toolkits, especially in their post-trial format."

Toolkits

Health and Safety

Working Environment

Key benefits

- *The toolkits brought the workforce into the decision-making process; they helped transfer responsibility for working conditions away from management and made it a shared responsibility*
- *The workforce became more aware of important issues; they began to realise their input was valued and as their trust and confidence increased so did the momentum for change*
- *A programme of ongoing training of the workforce was introduced to reduce accidents on the project.*

Derg profile

DERG is a £10.4m water treatment works commissioned in spring 2002 for the Northern Ireland Water Service. Ferguson McIlveen were the project managers and joint-venture contractors Earth Tech Engineering (process) and Farrans (Construction) were designers and builders. The project employed up to 85 people on site over the 104-week contract period.

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Toolkit gets managers and workers talking about the workplace



Paul Lightfoot,
Doncaster
Metropolitan
Borough Council

Trialling the *Working Environment Toolkit* at Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council's Building Services has given the workforce a channel to voice their opinions. And targeting training on more specific activities has emerged as good way to cut accidents.

Performance and Best Value Manager, Paul Lightfoot, explains the first steps Building Services have taken to monitor, measure and improve the working environment.

Why did Doncaster MBC need this toolkit?

"We knew without measuring anything that we had a problem with the working conditions in our depots. The Respect for People toolkit provided us with a practical way of finding out what were the specific problems we had to solve."

How did you use the toolkit?

"We trialled the toolkit in depots across the Borough with a cross section of the workforce – depot supervisors, tradesmen and union representatives. They were suspicious at first because they were not used to being asked for their opinions. But once we explained the reasons behind the toolkit they were quite keen to work with us. We felt it was important to maintain interest after the questionnaire stage so we arranged meetings at each depot so that everyone who gave us feedback could discuss the results with their area manager. We then compared the outcomes from each depot to decide where would be the best place to start improving conditions."

What changes did you make as a result?

"The *Working Environment Toolkit* has been a real eye opener. The questionnaire got us started. But it was the meetings that proved the best improvements come directly from employees. The toolkit has been a catalyst for change, a communication aid. People are used to reacting to safety issues. This toolkit is proactive and that's why I think it gets results. We can't show accident figures falling yet, but we know they will; we're still in the heightened awareness phase when people are more likely to report incidents.

"Our accident records revealed 65% of our accidents were down to slips, trips and falls, manual handling and being hit by moving objects. We introduced reversing-of-vehicles training, provided copies of Managing Vehicle Safety at the Workplace and marked out the safe pedestrian routes in depots. We now have supervisors taking OCN Level 2 in Health and Safety in the Workplace. Other initiatives include asbestos training for all staff and Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) training for selected operatives. We've also done a complete review of risk assessments.

"We noticed noise and dust as common fears in the workplace. Although we are trying to cut down the worst noises, we needed to extend hearing protection immediately to everyone in the depots. We are tackling the source of dust by using stronger bags that will not split so easily. We found that some employees were not aware of some risks, such as 'vibration white finger'. After we circulated information about it we noticed people taking actions to minimise its effects. We're also taking preventative measures to avoid accidents, such as separating traffic and pedestrian routes in the depots.

"Potential problems can be nipped in the bud before they get worse and to underline our commitment we have arranged training for a new Union safety representative."

What happens next?

"We took these first steps in the trial and now we are starting a rolling programme to use the new toolkit frequently. We will soon have a champion of better working conditions, in every depot, who will collect and co-ordinate the results and help the depot manager in making improvements. We want to have one toolkit in action somewhere in our depots all the time. We will use the Area Forum for managers and depot workers to discuss workplace issues and what we should do about them."

Toolkits

Working Environment

Key benefits

- *The toolkit facilitated dialogue with an initially suspicious workforce; consequently, managers were more likely to learn about safety-related incidents*
- *Managers and workers recognised the need for a safety representative*
- *The analysis identified specific manual handling tasks and sources of dust that were putting workers' health and safety at risk*
- *Training became less general and was focused on how to handle specific objects that were troublesome.*

Doncaster MBC Building Services profile

Building Services employs about 500 operational staff in the main building trades – plumbers, joiners, bricklayers, plasterers, roofers, electricians, fitters, gas fitters, painters, bench joiners, uPVC window manufacturers and fixers – as well as managers and technicians. There are 43 apprentices.

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DONCASTER
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Traditional builder says “Yes” to Respect for People toolkits



Clive Newton,
Emanuel Whittaker

Central and local government clients are increasingly concerned that contractors’ workforces should reflect the diversity of the local population. Maintenance contractor Emanuel Whittaker is taking up this challenge. Their work in modernising social housing demands that they foster strong relationships with tenants – often the same people needed to diversify the workforce.

Managing Director, Clive Newton, reports on their toolkit trials.

Why did Emanuel Whittaker Limited need these toolkits?

“Our business may have been founded in 1837 but we are working to the present day Respect for People aspirations. It’s more difficult to recruit and we used the *Equality and Diversity in the Workplace Toolkit* to learn how to attract people who can contribute to our business regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability and age.

“Partnering is a key strategy for us. We were keen to demonstrate good practice to partners and tenants by using the *Work in Occupied Premises Toolkit*. We wanted to understand the customer’s concerns and exceed their expectations of the construction process; the toolkit would show us how.”

How did you use the toolkits?

“We used the *Work in Occupied Premises Toolkit* to make sure we covered all the essential points in our initial discussions with tenants. They raised points with us too. This helped to take away their fears and answered many queries before they became concerns. Our workforce found this valuable and they were honest in their self-assessments.

“We knew we were losing out on a large potential labour source by employing mainly white males on projects in a largely Asian community. So we used the *Equality and Diversity Toolkit* to see how we could break out of this pattern. The company directors completed the questionnaire in consultation with those responsible for recruitment and retention and took care to respect local sensitivities. We looked at our sites through new eyes and tried to gauge just how attractive a proposition they would be to a woman or a member of our ethnic minority community here in Oldham. The answer was ‘NOT VERY’.”

What changes did you make as a result?

“From now on we are determined to attract a more diverse workforce. We work with our local government partners Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and try to match their recruitment targets. When we market our company to potential employees, clients and the local community, we now have a clearer understanding of our diversity objective and ways to achieve it. Oldham Housing helped us to develop a simple diversity policy that everyone can understand. There are practical changes to make: better washrooms for women, canteen arrangements that respect social customs, and facilities for worship. These actions will gradually raise the level of respect for construction in the Asian community.

“The *Work in Occupied Premises Toolkit* focused our minds more clearly on the needs of the customer. Our main action was to improve inductions for everyone on site so that they are more aware of the environment where they are working and the effects of their actions on others.”

What happens next?

“We will carry on forging links with residents to build up confidence in how we work in their homes and also encourage them to join us. I know we have a lot to learn from our workforce so the next toolkit we will trial is *Workforce Satisfaction*.”

Toolkits

Equality and Diversity in the Workplace

Work in Occupied Premises

Key benefits

- *The knowledge of best practice learned from using the Work in Occupied Premises toolkit gives a competitive edge in bidding for maintenance contracts*
- *The Work in Occupied Premises toolkit promotes dialogue with occupants so that both parties make the most of the construction*
- *The Equality and Diversity in the Workplace toolkit identifies barriers to recruitment and retention that you may not know about. Using it is tangible evidence that you are willing and also shows the progress you are making in this difficult issue.*

Emanuel Whittaker profile

Established in Oldham in 1837, Emanuel Whittaker Limited is an SME employing 110 people. The annual turnover is expected to exceed £10 million in 2003.

They specialise in planned maintenance work for public sector housing clients. The guiding principle of their 165-year pedigree is maintaining a flexible approach to new working practices and clients’ needs.

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Architects take time for a break



Phil Partridge,
gcp Chartered
Architects

A small firm of architects wanted to bring out the best in their employees. The *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* has been used to influence and support change.

Phil Partridge explains their approach and provides **Respect for People** with valuable feedback about something vital that is missing from the toolkit – chocolate bars.

Why did gcp Chartered Architects need this toolkit?

"Architecture is a buoyant and vibrant industry. We are challenged to explore untrodden territory in the quest for client satisfaction, a journey we are unable to embark upon without our people. We decided to tackle the issues that affected efficiency and profitability – productivity, relationships with clients and the ability of an employee to work at their optimum. The *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* fitted in neatly with our ISO 9001 (2000) Quality Assurance accreditation held since 1994."

How did you use the toolkit?

"The directors handed the project over to the employees because they felt their close involvement would hinder the whole process. We had their full support and we believe this method produced the best possible results.

"We got 100% response with the survey. This came as no surprise because the whole exercise was a team effort. The directors kicked off the programme at a staff meeting explaining their intentions. A questions and answer session cleared confusion and the *Workforce Satisfaction* questionnaire was distributed anonymously and collected via a box in reception. Kit Kat bars were given out to thank those who had responded and encourage the rest to 'take a break' and fill in the form."

What changes did you make as a result?

"The general conclusion was that we had to do something about communication, facilities and equipment if we were to achieve the excellence that would deliver customer satisfaction – the challenge where all this started. The final *Report for Action* produced a list of suggested improvements. Sharing the report amongst the employees gave us important comments. It was vital that we understood their feedback so these comments were recorded, responded to and acted upon.

"We did what the report said – we improved personal working space, redesigned the office, put in new equipment and revamped welfare facilities. We now have a notice board that all employees can contribute to, allowing the rest of the organisation to see progress. This includes current projects, lessons learned and practices to be shared so the knowledge can be passed on. Formal communication will be addressed through a meeting to explain the firm's aspirations and recognise achievements. Job roles in the organisations have been defined to give the firm more structure and to drive the whole business forward. The *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* facilitated all these changes."

What happens next?

"During the Respect for People project we got external help through the Business Link Advisory Service, and we bounced ideas off the adviser to help formulate plans. We are registered with Constructionline, the UK's register of pre-qualified construction services, and we are keen to see our Respect for People actions reflected in even better performance scores. We plan to revisit the checklist again in about six months, taking forward the lessons learned, and incorporating new questions."

Toolkit

Workforce Satisfaction

Key benefits

- *Changing the office layout improved efficiency, supporting ISO 9001*
- *Managers came to understand the environmental changes needed to achieve quality in design*
- *Simple communication such as a notice board illustrated how important it is to share information in the firm for staff learning and development.*

gcp Chartered Architects profile

gcp Chartered Architects provide architectural design and project management services. The practice was established in Bath in 1986, serving public and private sector clients as well as community and not-for-profit organisations. Now based in Keynsham, Bristol, the 12-strong practice serves clients nationwide.

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SME sets the example



Arthur Hyde, Hyde
Building Contractors

Arthur Hyde says: "No more excuses, we need to use the toolkits from Respect for People to improve the business. They don't take time, they save time. I was a sceptic but now I'm convinced to carry on using them."

"An SME does not have the resources to get involved with activities that don't add value."

Why did Hydes need these toolkits?

"Our main contract in 2001/2002 was the development of a social housing project for South Shropshire Housing Association. It was a demonstration project for the Housing Forum. Part of the partnering agreement was to improve on the 'people' standards. Paul Sutton, development director at the Association, has had the foresight to take the lead and encourage change on the project. As a main contractor I wanted to demonstrate continuous improvement, especially how we managed health and safety. I never anticipated that we would be considering appraising and training the workforce, an alien concept that I thought belonged in text books."

How did you use the toolkits?

"I was persuaded to personally complete the *Safety Checklist*. As I discussed it with the adviser, it became evident that this was more than just paper work. I soon realised the potential and took the toolkits onto site for all nine direct employees. I was surprised by their enthusiasm and the many questions they asked.

"Everyone on site has completed a toolkit. I introduced a toolkit to a selected group at a time. Initially we covered health, safety and welfare. The second time we covered the (trial) personal checklists – Worker Satisfaction and Personal Working Environment. The results were graphed and fed back to the client and workforce. We encouraged the workforce to provide ideas for improvement over an extended lunchtime. This was a really worthwhile exercise. Our PPI benchmark score for Employee Satisfaction was 76%. We must be doing something right to have a satisfaction response like this."

What changes did you make as a result?

"I have no fancy management team to report to me so the first thing I did was to get back onto site. I could soon see where we needed to improve. Here's what we did – it starts from day one on site.

"Inducting a new recruit is common decency, not to mention good practice. All our direct employees have gone through an induction and now understand specific requirements highlighted in the toolkits. They are aware that only competent personnel use the equipment they have been trained to use. We list the site rules in the lunchroom as a reminder. Accommodation and toilets were in need of TLC, we've done them up and make sure they are cleaned regularly.

"I can now see the link between competence and training. We've been a member of the CITB scheme for 12 years and consulted the adviser on how to help employees who were interested in further training. The whole organisation has committed to CSCS (the industry recognised scheme providing a passport to work for competent workers) and our nine site employees have passed the health and safety touch screen test. We now have three apprentices under training. We're doing our bit for *Accelerating Change*, making our mark on the qualified labour problem.

"The tools uncovered problems that were hindering productivity. Devoting the time to solving these problems has unlocked the productivity of our people. I now have more time because I'm not sorting out everyone's problems. We have won another contract with our major client and I'm writing our first company newsletter to tell the workforce."

What happens next?

"We'll carry on using the toolkits and encourage our subcontractors to do the same. If they see the benefits I have seen, I will soon be able to convince them. My relationship with the client remains strong and the toolkits provide another bridge for ensuring they have made the right choice of contractor. I've recently scored the industry headline KPIs and intend to use them as a guide to further improve the business."

Toolkits

Health and Safety

Workforce Satisfaction

Working Environment

People Performance Indicators

Key benefits

- *The toolkits identified where cost savings could be made on site*
- *The findings led to a clear company policy on inductions and better provision of welfare accommodation*
- *The toolkits highlighted training that was necessary and motivated employees to achieve CSCS certification.*

Hyde Building Contractors profile

Hyde Construction is a housing contractor with a portfolio from private client extensions to new-build social housing development. Their main client partner is South Shropshire Housing. Hydes employ 10 people.

Contact

Arthur Hyde

Partner

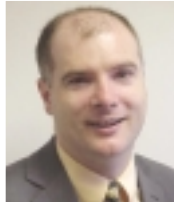
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HYDES
BUILDING CONTRACTORS

Introducing PPIs – power to the people



Kevin Flavin,
Llewellyn

Respect for People's key performance indicators, known as the *People Performance Indicators* (PPIs), cover 10 key people-management issues – employee satisfaction, staff turnover, sickness absence, safety, working hours, travelling time, diversity, training, pay and Investors in People.

London Area Director, Kevin Flavin, explains how measuring PPIs has benefited Llewellyn.

Why did Llewellyn need the PPIs?

"We recognised that we have two types of customer – internal and external – and that if we could improve motivation and empowerment we could improve customer service. The question we needed to address was how to make this happen?"

How did you use the PPIs?

"We first saw the benefits of measuring key performance indicators when we partnered with Sainsbury's. Using the KPIs gave project teams focus, which in turn brought major improvements in performance. We set up an internal initiative that we called A TEAM FOCUS. We started by looking at how we serve our internal customers and it was not long before we saw improvements in our overall service delivery. We surveyed management and staff across the company, looked at service interfaces between departments and asked how things could be improved. Issues such as doing what was asked on time and actively working with colleagues in other departments as one team were flagged up. This had a powerful motivational benefit that we had not anticipated. After initial reservations staff began to own their action plans and competition developed to see who could provide the best service. Then we discovered the *People Performance Indicators*.

"We measured the PPIs at company and project levels. We looked for issues in the initial company scores, but there was no obvious explanation for some results. For example, management scores were sometimes different from the rest of the staff, but looking deeper it became clear that managers and staff often had quite different perceptions. This explained how managers' opinions had led to some strategies that caused frustration among our staff. At project level, measuring the PPIs showed how the so-called 'soft' issues are linked to customer service issues such as quality and timeliness."

What changes did you make as a result?

"Each project and department produced an action plan by analysing their PPI scores. These were posted on our Intranet so everyone could see progress and opportunities to share ideas and discuss the different approaches. As we measured we saw improvements and understood how measurement can drive change. For example, the buying team decided that they needed to reorganise themselves to provide a better service to project teams, and they established their own performance benchmarks for things like time to respond to inquiries and the number of requests awaiting action.

"The PPIs are a way to compare 'people' standards in construction. We intend to be a top company in recruiting and retaining the best talent because we believe that this will produce higher service levels and better customer satisfaction. The evidence shows this is true. Our workload has risen by 80% in the last two years with a 70% increase in partnered and negotiated work. We don't believe this would have happened without a focus on our people.

"We're working hard to improve communications. In a new meeting format, senior managers regularly examine the eight key areas of our business plan and report to all staff what is happening on each of these in turn. We include our project teams in this approach, getting their support initially in a two-day workshop explaining what the business was about. We would never have thought of these things before."

What happens next?

"We will use the revised Respect for People Toolkits to support our work towards the *Investors in People* standard. We believe that improved PPI scores on projects will make us stand out from our competitors as good contractors and employers.

"The PPIs have taught us a lot about how we manage and motivate our people and they will remain part of our core business indicators. We will also encourage our supply chain to use them."

People Performance Indicators

Key benefits

Since setting up A TEAM FOCUS in 1999 Llewellyn has noticed:

- Measured customer satisfaction has gone up 23%
- 25% more projects are completing on time
- Workload and profitability have increased
- Defects are being resolved faster – the number of projects with defects remaining after the defect liability period has fallen by two-thirds.

Llewellyn profile

Llewellyn has over 100 years experience in the construction industry. Now part of Rok Property Solutions PLC, Llewellyn is a main contractor with an annual turnover of £180 million. The core business of its London office is new build and refurbishment for housing associations and local authorities.

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Toolkit reveals causes of staff turnover



Tim Smith,
Mowlem Aqumen

Mowlem Aqumen Defence Services (MADS) engaged in the Respect for People trial because the toolkits offered an impartial view of how the company was dealing with its employees. The process would enable MADS to see how they compared with other facilities managers as the toolkits and associated People Performance Indicators are taken up by benchmarking clubs.

Operations Manager, Tim Smith, explains how assessing worker satisfaction made them think again about site accommodation, staff progression and training.

Why did Mowlem Aqumen Defence Services need this toolkit?

"Recognising that we had higher than average staff turnover on some sites, we wanted to see whether satisfaction with accommodation, working hours and working routines was affecting turnover.

"Another driver was the need to prepare the organisation for a change to Prime Contracting. Our organisation structure will transform from being relatively flat to a pyramid formation allowing more opportunities for advancement. We thought the toolkits would help us to identify some of the training needs prompted by this change."

How did you use the toolkit?

"We distributed the *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* on sites in the Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Humber region. I wanted every member of the workforce to complete a toolkit, so I set a deadline to make sure it happened. Because forms can easily get lost on a site, I arranged a time and place for staff to complete the questionnaire anonymously. We got a 100% response from our 85 employees in the region, showing that they were certainly interested in what we were doing.

"Once returned we analysed each site and noticed two common themes – concern about accommodation and training for 'Prime Contracting'. Change was clearly needed across the business, not just on isolated sites."

What changes did you make as a result?

"The *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* helped us to identify issues and clarify the problem, and also in benchmarking. The results confirmed some things we already knew. In some cases these were out of our immediate control, such as the quality of site accommodation provided by the client was poor, some dating back to the second world war. Our first action was to review the result within Mowlem Aqumen Defence Services, then we told the MoD because we need their cooperation to improve site accommodation. For the first time we have evidence of staff dissatisfaction to support our case with the client.

"The other main areas for improvement are the opportunities for promotion and training. Restructuring of the 'flat' company for Prime Contracting means people used to dealing with lowest-price subcontractors need to adapt to collaborative working and achieving value for money. There are opportunities for promotion to fill these new broader roles but we know the workforce needs more training to make it happen. Overall, we are pleased at our position in the benchmarking club and we're now setting about the task of improving on the areas that are not so strong."

What happens next?

"The next task is to understand why employee satisfaction varies between sites and regions. Building on our success in the trial, we will use the new *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* on all Mowlem Aqumen Defence sites across the country to establish why some sites succeed and others fail to retain satisfied staff, but we know there are external factors such as house prices. When we have identified what makes employees satisfied and dissatisfied we intend to transfer the lessons learned across the business."

Toolkit

Workforce Satisfaction

Key benefits

- *The Workforce Satisfaction toolkit identified the significant causes of excessive staff turnover on MoD sites*
- *Satisfaction was boosted by devising a new framework for promotion and training*
- *Good scores from the toolkit will provide the means for communicating what is best practice between sites.*

Mowlem Aqumen Defence Services profile

Leeds-based Mowlem Aqumen Defence Services is the facilities management division of the John Mowlem Group. It employs some 300 people to provide services on Army, Navy and Air Force sites for the Ministry of Defence.

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Pearce adopts toolkits for project measurement



Charlotte Curtis,
Pearce Retail
Services

Bristol based Pearce (Retail Services) is tackling respect for people issues head-on in adopting a number of toolkits developed by Rethinking Construction.

Performance Measurement Coordinator, Charlotte Curtis, reveals how the *People Performance Indicators (PPIs)* and toolkit measurement system has provided a catalyst for improvement.

Why did Pearce need these toolkits?

"As part of the formal measurement system that is used within Pearce Retail, we had been looking for measures that would help us improve the business by focusing on people. Getting effective measurements of relevant 'people' issues was the key. The checklist and scorecard format offered the answer."

How did you use the toolkits?

"We introduced the PPIs and four toolkits on two quite different projects – one a large extension in a busy city centre, the other a refurbishment on a retail business park. Using the checklists, we interviewed personnel from Pearce, trade contractors and the clients on both sites. Then we completed the scorecards, taking into account all their answers. It helped us identify our key competitive strengths as well as areas for development. A working party drawn from across the business looked at how we could improve. On the strengths of their findings a number of changes have been made to processes, roles and responsibilities."

What changes did you make as a result?

"The PPIs helped address the areas which are often hard to quantify. Our Health and Safety Manager Pete Creese, welcomed the results, especially the zero reportable accidents per 100,000 employees that gave us a benchmark score of 100% for Safety. The *Health and Safety Toolkit* has really encouraged people to think about stopping bad practices. We're taking a fresh look at safety. Our new 'branding' award is encouraging tidier sites. We've introduced toolbox talks and a safety contravention warning system, and we decided to use fully hoarded boundaries instead of temporary barriers.

"Our sickness absence rate of only 2.5 days per year puts us in the top 8% of construction employers. We used the *Health and Safety Toolkit* to better understand the causes of stress on projects and how we might tackle this difficult problem. We're training more forklift operators to reduce the risks of manual handling and we challenge more trade contractors to use better lifting arrangements such as Genie lifts. A new vaccination programme for first aiders is aimed at reducing their risk of exposure to diseases such as hepatitis, tetanus and polio. We are pleased to see that our average of 11 training days a year for each employee shows we are in the top 10% for training.

"The *Work in Occupied Premises Toolkit* is terrific for getting everyone working together. We've certainly sharpened up our client feedback process with, amongst other things, the introduction of a post project review. The toolkit highlights issues like cultural diversity, gender awareness and customer care that need to be covered in site inductions. Translating the toolkit for a team of Latvian workers made a noticeable difference in the care they took on our client's premises. Monitoring noise before we start the project means that we can now have a rational dialogue about noise levels."

What happens next?

"We will be integrating some of the toolkits into our measurement system to be rolled out across all projects, using the *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* with our direct and indirect employees. We'll need to repeat the measurements periodically to check that we're making progress. The *People Performance Indicators* will remain an external reference point against the construction industry progress."

Toolkits

Work in Occupied Premises

Health and Safety

Working Environment

People Performance Indicators

Key benefits

- *Practical measurements of people-related issues that are difficult to quantify*
- *Measurements that help to justify changes in policy and process*
- *A dialogue on people issues that promotes more proactive attitudes.*

Pearce profile

Pearce (Retail Services) Ltd provide a project management, design and construction service to a core group of retail clients. The client base is approximately 60/40 food/non-food retail. Pearce have offices in Bristol, Chesterfield and London, and have 160 direct employees.

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DLO tests workforce satisfaction



Dawn O'Sullivan,
South Staffordshire
Housing
Association

Staffordshire Property Care is contracted to deliver maintenance services to South Staffordshire Housing Association. Payment is linked to quality as measured by key performance indicators and there are constant business changes that all need monitoring. The *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* was used to measure the perceptions of the employees engaged in this work.

Dawn O'Sullivan, Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager, describes how they used the toolkit and the improvements they made as a result.

Why did Staffordshire Property Care need this toolkit?

"In June 2000 Staffordshire Property Care introduced a Cash Value Incentive Scheme based on the National Housing Association Federation's schedule of rates. This change improved the rate of work being completed because it links payment to the DLO and its employees with the work actually done. Managers thought this was a good time to assess the workforce's views of how the change had affected them. The *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit* was an ideal way to find out."

How did you use the toolkit?

"Lee McCann, our DLO Manager, was very supportive of the Respect for People toolkit trial. His relationship and enthusiasm with the workers captured their interest, so vital for its success. We introduced the toolkit during an in-house training seminar to explain the objective and answer questions. We involved everyone in the DLO and had 100% completion of the survey in one day.

"The managers analysed the responses and suggested actions in a management report. We communicated the results back to the workforce, showing actions linked to their responses so they could see how they had influenced the improvements. People are more supportive of an initiative if the process is clear."

What changes did you make as a result?

"A positive response to questions about pay confirmed satisfaction with the cash value incentive scheme. But we found that communication was a weakness, such as people not being aware of opportunities for training and other jobs. We're paying more attention to this. For example, we now use pay slips to let employees know about jobs we are trying to fill and career progression opportunities such as training, secondments and apprenticeship schemes. If we create awareness of opportunities, our people say that they are likely to tell others outside the company – an extra marketing medium. A true ambassador of the industry will attract the personnel we desperately require.

"We are proud of our new secondment programme for fostering career progression. The annual appraisal focuses on the aspirations of the individual and leads to a training plan to encourage their development. We have a parallel process for identifying the skills we need so we can train and recruit to bridge gaps. We have also devised a simple procedure for workers to request training at any time.

"We were pleased with an average score of more than seven out of ten for employee satisfaction that puts us in the top 30% of construction employers (according to the *People Performance Indicators*). In the DLO we routinely measure the key performance indicators for performance against response time, employee satisfaction, tenant satisfaction, productivity and absence due to illness. Regular announcements of the indicators show how the workforce is contributing to the success of the organisation. We know our employees want to be involved because they asked for feedback on how they influenced our success. KPIs are to be linked to each individual's work, making it easier for managers to recognise the contribution each person makes. We recently created a 'Worker of the year' award to recognise the most outstanding worker contribution."

What happens next?

"I would expect our Employee Satisfaction score to improve after the changes we have made so we will need to measure it again to find out.

"We can achieve best value in our services but only if we involve our workforce. We look to the Respect for People toolkits to draw out future improvements."

Toolkit

Workforce Satisfaction

People Performance Indicators

Key benefits

- *Low satisfaction about some issues highlighted the need for better communication, leading to a pay-slip initiative to spread messages to the workforce*
- *The toolkit identified low satisfaction with career progression, leading to an improved appraisal process and a secondment scheme*
- *The results from the workforce satisfaction toolkit give measurements that can be benchmarked and linked to performance indicators. This supports 'best value' thinking and shows a willingness to improve.*

Staffordshire Property Care profile

Formerly the Direct Labour Organisation of the South Staffordshire District Council, Staffordshire Property Care is now South Staffordshire Housing Association's DLO. It employs 55 operatives and has a reputation for delivering a high quality service and value for money.

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Toolkit trial improves BAA's airside working environment



Keith Allen, The Pavement Team

AMEC, the international engineering services company, operates in 40 countries with annual revenue exceeding £5 billion. A business of this size needs to make extra efforts to care for its people to ensure it remains at the cutting edge.

AMEC leads The Pavement Team with BAA, its client partner. Regional Continuous Improvement Manager, Keith Allen, reports on the first phase of their Respect for People programme.

Why did The Pavement Team need this toolkit?

"Innovation, quality and value will not be maintained if people are not respected. In The Pavement Team we saw the Respect for People toolkits as a way to improve relations between managers and the workforce, but we didn't anticipate such an encouraging response from everyone."

How did you use the toolkit?

"The Respect for People programme needed to be seen as a valid business process, so getting it right first time was important. We set up an integrated steering group of thirteen members who devised a phased programme with targets for achievement. There would be a different theme for each phase. In this first phase we examined the working environment using the *Personal Checklist & Scorecard*. We decided that members of the steering group should conduct the survey face-to-face with each worker at their place of work. We sampled 77 workers at three airports, representing 15 trades.

"It was immediately apparent that the quality of dialogue in these interviews was positive. Workers commented openly on day-to-day activities and how these affected their ability to work productively. The time invested in the face-to-face survey approach was easily justified by the improvements we made. Each site was given a clear set of responses to use for improvement. The actions have been communicated to the site workforce through a poster campaign and toolbox talks, and back to the whole Pavement Team and AMEC via management reports, presentations and our Intranet."

What changes did you make as a result?

"The enthusiasm and overall response by the workforce to this process was very positive, and we learned how they perceived AMEC and the Pavement Team in terms of the working environment. The 111 suggestions for improvement were particularly useful to the steering group. We investigated all these suggestions and in many cases we changed our procedures and policies; so far, we've made 36 prioritised improvements across welfare, safety, health and training.

"We thought we had a good feedback process *VOICE* (Voice of Operatives in Construction Environment) but the survey revealed that it was not working adequately. Its reputation was poor and in parts of the project the process was ineffective. The toolkit identified the problems and the workers offered solutions. Since the changes and re-focus we have seen a 50% increase in attendance and contribution to the process on site.

Other improvements are training all appropriate AMEC personnel as banksmen and making sure that each project has at least one slinger/signaller available. All AMEC staff now have access to free tea and coffee."

What happens next?

"The second phase will use the *Workforce Satisfaction Toolkit*. With the publication of the new toolkits, we are planning a rolling programme to use them all and to tailor them to our own business activities. We will add further questions based on our improvements to see how they have affected business activities."

Toolkit

Working Environment

Key benefits

- The toolkit improved communication with the workforce – 77 responses and 111 suggestions for improvement leading to 36 actions including changes to policy – and questioned assumptions about *VOICE*
- Some specific improvements:
 - free tea, coffee and drinking water facilities for all
 - individual lockers for all
 - monthly training in occupational health
 - ear protection readily available for all
 - information on soaps and barrier creams
 - improved cleaning of welfare facilities
 - more banksmen and slinger/signallers
- The toolkit provided evidence to justify further investments in safety-related training.

The Pavement Team profile

The Pavement Team is a long-term partnering agreement between BAA and AMEC for the project management, design and construction of airside pavements at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports. The team includes second and third tier contractors with a total workforce of about 400.

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TGWU says: 'Ask the workforce'



*Bob Blackman,
Transport and
General Workers
Union*

The Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) challenges the construction industry to reconsider urgently how it respects and invests in people. The industry's future depends on how they are treated. They are the industry; without its people it is nothing. The responsibility to change lies with everyone.

Bob Blackman, General Secretary of the Building Construction and Craft Group, explains how the TGWU sees the toolkits as a catalyst for this change.

Why did T&G need these toolkits?

"We often find that decision-makers and those in authority neglect the workforce. Although not necessarily deliberate, this omission yields many unforeseen consequences. We believe the way to unlock innovation and performance is to have an open and honest dialogue about facilities and conditions. Our union is frequently involved in disputes that waste time and resources when a more mature engagement with the workforce would have prevented it. We wanted to see how the toolkits would engage the construction workforce in the dialogue the industry so badly needs."

How did you use the toolkits?

"The toolkits were used on 20 sites, selected as a cross-section of construction projects across the UK. Union convenors and other members completed the toolkits on their sites and fed this back to our central office, allowing us to examine any regional differences. In all, we analysed about 800 scorecards from the toolkits we trialled.

"I'd admit some people were initially sceptical and we knew communication of the results would be critical to the success of the trial. A simple report back to the sites and regional convenors highlighted best practice and recommended ways to reverse low scores. For example we produced Fact Sheets to raise awareness of the risk of exposure to asbestos and water-borne diseases on site. The toolkits allowed us to survey efficiently and gain a better understanding of the needs and perceptions of the workforce."

What changes did you make as a result?

"First let me say there were some positive results – site layout, tidiness, use of PPE and public safety scored pretty well in our trial – and we commended our members and their employers for this.

"We found that the questions in the toolkits helped educate the workers about important items such as the Construction Skills Certification Scheme. Over 90% of responses indicated that the toolkits had made them aware of new things – just by asking them! The questions were also terrific 'memory joggers' of things previously covered in health and safety training, teasing out things workers did not understand. It was much easier for our reps to advise on training when needs were so clearly identified by the toolkits.

"Health problems are easily overlooked because ill health creeps up without the clear sign that an accident gives. The health checklist used simple questions to reveal where people's health was at risk. Common examples included lifting of material more than 25kg, exposure to harmful noise levels and the need for more training in these areas.

"Collecting the views of the workforce often revealed the reasons for absenteeism and poor time keeping. It's evident that improved access to site and alteration of shift patterns would solve many productivity problems."

What happens next?

"The union welcomes the toolkits because they can immediately improve communication between our members and their managers. The structured and impersonal approach allows key issues to be identified and dealt with before they become problems requiring union intervention. We'd much rather see problems pre-empted before they develop.

"There is no quick fix to the poor image of working in the construction industry. Change will take some time so the sooner we start the better. Our union will encourage more sites to use the toolkits and I am pleased to report that four major projects – Terminal 5, Wembley Stadium, Liverpool Housing Maintenance and the CTRL – are adopting them. I commend the support of these big project teams; but really you don't need a mega project to reap the rewards of respecting the workforce."

Toolkits

Health and Safety

Workforce Satisfaction

Working Environment

Key benefits

- *The toolkits were an efficient survey tool for asking workers what they thought about their working conditions*
- *The toolkits educated the users and helped them to understand required standards*
- *The process provided statistical evidence for change with suggested sources of help to improve*
- *Managers adopting the toolkits will open up communications with workers.*

Transport and General Workers Union profile

The TGWU has some 80,000 members working in the construction sector. The Building Construction and Craft Group represents members with expert legal advice on employment conditions and provides financial support after an accident and ill health.

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