

Results:

Between 2007 and 2009

- Staff turnover has improved by 52%
- Training courses attended annually increased from 183 to 628 (243% improvement)
- Absenteeism has improved by 29%
- Staff satisfaction has improved by 10%
- Days lost due to accidents have reduced by 33%
- Vehicle fuel efficiency has improved by 9%
- Vehicle accident damage has reduced by 26%

SPAR Distribution Sees Real Impact Through Skills



Company:	SPAR Distribution (part of A.F. Blakemore and Son Ltd.)
No of employees:	560
Core area of business:	Retail food distribution

The Business Challenge

Two and half years ago the SPAR Distribution division of West Midlands based employer A F Blakemore and Son was facing real human resource challenges; staff turnover and levels of absenteeism were both running above industry average rates; staff satisfaction levels.

Skills gaps, minimal training/ development activity and a lack of employee engagement were impacting the culture, human resources and overall business efficiency measures.

The Solution

New management, including a new MD and Logistics Director, together with a review of the company family values, led to new practices in business and a greater focus on workforce development. The board recognised that in order for the business to grow, levels of workforce competence and capability had to be developed.

SPAR Distribution appointed a HR Development Manager, investment in training dramatically increased and in partnership with training provider - Targeted Training Projects (TTP) National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in Storage & Warehousing and Driving Goods Vehicles were introduced.

In 2008/2009 SPAR Distribution put 150 staff through management and vocational training programmes leading to qualifications and plans are in place to do the same again over the next 12 months. Achievements in 2008 / 2009 included three senior managers enrolling in a bespoke graduate leadership and management degree at Birmingham University; 25 operations managers / supervisors achieving Level 3 management NVQs; 35 operations managers attending behavioural management courses; over 100

staff achieving warehousing or transport Level 2 NVQs; 25 drivers achieving SAFED qualifications and over 30 staff gaining forklift truck or upgraded LGV licences (C+E); 5 staff completing a warehouse to wheels career development programme.

The future

SPAR Distribution plans to continue with a similar level of staff development through a series of initiatives including NVQs and Skills for Life programmes. The company plans to develop its own in-house trainers and assessors and is looking to ensure that all staff participate in some form of training each year. Following a successful Driver CPC approved centre registration in 2008/2009 the company will also be delivering its own Driver CPC programme throughout their driver community.

The company is keen to embed its new family values into everyday life and is currently developing a full programme of community activities, health and wellbeing programmes, charity / social events for their staff. It is envisaged that these measures will contribute towards ensuring that A F Blakemore is an employer of choice for those looking to work in the logistics sector.

Rob Clements, HR Manager—SPAR Distribution

The introduction of the NVQs has helped us to develop and recognise the skills of our staff and improve the performance of the business. Working closely with Targeted Training Projects has enabled us to develop programmes aligned with the needs of our business across the workforce. As a result we are seeing real benefits in terms of workforce retention, reduced absenteeism and improved levels of staff satisfaction.