

Assessment Report

Investors in People assessment report for B-Skill Ltd

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On behalf of Investors in People North of England

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Commercial in Confidence

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INTRODUCTION

B-Skill Limited was first established in 2000 to provide support to young people and adults nationally, to access and achieve vocational, educational and employability skills. The organisation offers appropriate services across the country in geographical areas such as the North East, North West, South East and the Midlands, working also with partner organisations. The organisation currently has dedicated premises in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (head office) and in Bootle, Liverpool. There is one associate trainer based in the West Midlands.

The organisation offers a variety of services and programmes, including:

- Apprenticeships (including Team leading, Management, Business Administration and Customer Services, amongst others)
- Vocational qualifications
- Pre-Employment Training

B-Skill's website clearly displays statements with regard to being passionate in engaging employers and working with learners to support personal development, to raise aspiration and achievements for all. In line with this, the organisation holds the Matrix Award, last assessed in January 2015 and has also achieved the Committed to Equality Standard.

With regard to Investors in People, B-Skill first achieved the standard in 2001 and has therefore held the Investors in People award for nearly fifteen years, a commendable achievement.

The organisation has experienced significant change since the last Investors in People Review in 2012. Changes to Government funding has meant that the business has had to work smarter and flexibly to adapt to the changes in funding streams and at the same time deliver a consistently high quality assured service to learners, employers and partners. Following a disappointing Ofsted result in 2014, the business has focussed on improving the quality of the delivery. Key appointments have been made to support the drive for continuous quality improvement, including the recruitment of an experienced quality assurance manager who assures the quality not just for B-Skill's own direct delivery but also for B-Skill delivery partners. The introduction of a more rigorous monitoring and performance management process has resulted in a high turnover of delivery staff.

As a result of the improvements made, B-Skill achieved a Grade 2 at Ofsted Inspection in December 2015.

Methodology

An initial meeting was held with the HR Specialist in July 2015 to start to plan for the Investors in People review. A follow-up meeting was held between the Investors in People specialist to meet with the Director and the HR Specialist in September 2015 to discuss the objectives for the review and the organisation's request to hold the review around sufficient evidence requirements to achieve a Silver award.

The review was initially agreed for October 2015. The organisation then requested a change of date to December 2015. As an Ofsted inspection was imminent at the time of the Investors in People review, it was agreed that this review would be for the Investors in People standard, with a view to receive a "top up" assessment to achieve a Bronze or potentially a Silver Investors in People award in the future.

13 people were interviewed, which represents approximately 34% of the current workforce. Face to face interviews were held at head office in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Some telephone interviews were held with staff based at Bootle and staff who operate from a home base.

Documentary information was also reviewed and included B-Skill Business Plan 2015-2019, B-Skill Strategic Plan 2015-2017, B-Skill Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2013/2014, updated 2015, Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2015, Ofsted reports 2011-2014, CPD Event Schedule 2014 and 2015, the Performance and Personal Development Appraisal process (including probationary period review, documented KPIs and individual annual mandatory training plan) and Matrix Report 2015.

The report has been written under the five key headings of strategic planning, culture and communication, effective management, managing performance and developing people at the request of the organisation.

The Investors in People specialist would like to thank everyone for their commitment to the interview process, and to the hospitality afforded whilst on site.

KEY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

STRATEGIC PLANNING

(will review business strategy, planning and achievements)

B-Skill Ltd has developed a business plan, covering the period 2015-2019. The plan focuses on the strategic overview, as well as specific areas within the business, such as finance, business development, client relationship, operations, quality, and human resources. The stated aims are expected to be achieved by developing the business in line with the organisation's strategic business plan.

The B-Skill Business Plan reflects that there is likely to be further reductions in government funding for skills, and as a result, to achieve growth aspirations, additional funding streams, contracts and services will need to be developed.

The organisation's strategic plan 2015-17 recognises the organisation's values and its strategic aims and objectives. The plan also states the B-Skill Vision for the organisation, which is:

"B-Skill is all about people – and about all people. Our aims are simple and sincere. Success is achieved by equipping all people through learning, each to recognise and realise the opportunities that are available to them, enabling all people through learning, each to achieve fulfilment and to take pride in their own special contribution to society. This is both our Passion and Purpose".

The plan is developed by the executive team with discussion with the management team, and consultation with staff. There is a regular staff conference, which provides opportunities for staff to come together and review and discuss the plans and objectives for the future, as well as review success and opportunities for continuous improvement. The most recent staff conference enabled discussion around the Common Inspection Framework for Ofsted and the Apprentice Reforms for 2017.

The Managing Director explained that more recently, he has visited staff in their working environments and sought their views with regard to future direction of the business.

"I get feedback and views from the trainers when I go out and visit them", " We hold an annual staff conference where staff have the opportunity to provide feedback", "Managers meet with their staff on a regular basis".

The plan recognises some of the new opportunities for the future such as Learner Loans and Trailblazers. There has already been some success for the organisation in terms of its future objectives. As the Managing Director explained,

" We are moving away from facilities management. We want to go to higher value added products. We've looked at industries to support apprenticeships. We deliver health and social care, we have been innovative in the delivery of learner loans and we've moved into digital trailblazers. We've recruited the first trainee in the country onto a software developer trailblazer".

There is an opportunity for the organisation to review the strategic objectives set in line with strategic aims, to ensure that objectives are set using the SMART formula. This would enable accountability and measurement to drive performance for the future. **(See continuous improvement plan)**

It is recognised within the organisation's business and strategic plans that the continued commitment to quality is vital to the future success of the organisation.

The organisation produces an annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR), which enables the organisation to conduct an analysis of key areas such as quality of teaching, learning and assessment, leadership and management, outcomes for learners, equality and diversity, health and safety and safeguarding.

It was explained that the SAR process is thorough and embedded within B-Skill. Following the Inspection of the organisation in 2013 where progress and improvements were recognised by Ofsted, the Executive committed to support the improvements required to achieve a "Good" grade in Ofsted at the next inspection, expected in 2014. A detailed quality improvement plan tackled the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted and the SAR in 2014 reported significant progress made in a number of areas including improving the success rates on both classroom and apprenticeship programmes. However, B-Skill were still relatively new to apprenticeships delivery and it transpired there were some expectations around wider outcomes for learners which had not been fully appreciated by the organisation. The feedback from inspection in July 2014 was very disappointing for the business when Ofsted graded the organisation "Requires Improvement".

The Quality Assurance Manager who was new to the business at the time of inspection in 2014 was able to take an objective stance and focus on the detailed feedback from Ofsted. With the agreement of the other members of the Executive and management team a revised QIP was developed.

"We needed to go back to basics, ensuring we had the right members of staff with appropriate qualifications and approach in delivery positions. We lost some staff along the way who didn't wish to come with us on this journey for improvement. We now have a capable, committed team".

The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) has been reviewed and improved in terms of format to now include clear objectives directly linked to the overall aims, for example, to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in all programmes for all learners to be good or outstanding, with objectives stating the requirement for staff to hold appropriate qualifications within a stated timescale.

The QIP provides a focus for continuous improvement and achievement within the organisation. Business Improvement Monitoring Meetings are held regularly and attended by key personnel, such as the directors, managers and the Human Resources Specialist.

The QIP provides a focus for continuous improvement and achievement within the organisation. The plan has clear objectives linked to overall aims, for example, to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in all programmes for all learners. One target to help reach this overall objective is for staff to hold or achieve appropriate qualifications within their first 3-6 months of joining the organisation. The QIP is colour coded, red, amber and green to show progress made which is monitored regularly by directors and managers at the monthly Business Improvement Meeting.

The QIP and SAR are available on SharePoint which is accessible by all staff. Regular meetings are held throughout the organisation with delivery staff to review progress and staff are able to present their ideas and opinions accordingly. (Please see culture and communication section). This supports a clearer understanding of what is to be achieved and has provided a focus in securing a "Good" grade from Ofsted.

The management team encourage all staff to be involved in the self assessment and quality improvement planning process. Trainers are involved in the plans for improvement and are encouraged to voice their opinions and air concerns openly.

The Performance and Personal Development Appraisal process operates for all staff within the organisation. This process includes the setting of clear and agreed objectives and KPIs for all staff. Regular one to ones are also held with staff to monitor their progress in line with their objectives and KPIs. (please see Managing Performance section).

There have been a number of successes with regard to the improvement objectives for the organisation. Directors, managers and staff provided the following examples:

- Success rates in both classroom learning and apprenticeships have been consistently high for the last three years
- Over 50% of learners from completing our classroom based employability programmes achieved a positive progression, with those moving into employment increasing from 13% to 36%
- The achievement of a “Good” grade in the most recent Ofsted Inspection, December 2015
- The organisation has achieved Committed to Equality Gold Standard for Equality and Diversity.

CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

(will review communication, support to staff and continuous improvement)

The organisation has ensured that there are a number of opportunities and ways in which communication and the sharing of knowledge and information can take place. This includes holding a variety of meetings internally such as the business improvement meetings, team meetings and standardisation meetings. In addition, one to ones are held with staff to enable a more personalised approach.

The Managing Director visits all operational sites to meet staff. The organisation can act upon the feedback received from these visits to create further opportunities for continuous improvement.

“I see the individual trainers and learners, for example in Yorkshire and the Midlands. I see them in their working environment and the problems they have, for example, some trainers couldn’t access Wi-Fi so we provided them with tablets”.

Work based learning trainers visit head office for Standardisation meetings and for one to ones. Observations of teaching, learning and assessment are carried out on a regular basis with all trainers and tutors. Observations take place regularly according to an annually agreed schedule with quarterly moderation activity and all staff and subcontractors are included. The IQA team also carry out Observations of Assessment with the trainers. All trainers are required to achieve a minimum of Level 2 in English and maths, and internal support and guidance is provided by the Functional Skills Specialist.

A key area of improvement activity within the organisation has been the engagement process with learners. The learner journey was revised to include an additional step prior to induction to ensure learners receive appropriate IAG and a thorough initial assessment which allows them to make an informed choice of learning programme.

The revised learner journey has been the key to a number of B-Skill’s successes, ensuring the right learners are recruited onto the right programmes with identified progression routes. This has resulted in B-Skill programmes having a positive impact on people’s lives as well as their work.

“Through observations, trainers are now at Grade 2”

“At inspection, Ofsted confirmed Equality & Diversity is being promoted effectively”

Staff and Managers understand that they can visit the two sites regularly to work together and share good practice.

People are encouraged to share ideas and opinions for continuous improvement, which can be seen in the good progress towards achievement of targets in the QIP.

People provided a number of examples to demonstrate that they can take ownership of their work and be involved in decision-making at a level appropriate to their role. Examples included the changes made to the tracking system for learners.

“Staff bring their ideas to the team meetings”

*“Ofsted commended on our highly effective tracking system, the idea came from a staff member”
We’ve built on it further by introducing four checkpoints which the IQA team check and monitor for progress”.*

“When we have team meetings and we introduce something new, trainers all have their input”

“We’ve had separate meetings to prepare for Ofsted using action plans”.

“There are examples of “You Said, We did”, on the wall in the training room”.

B-Skill has a strong commitment to continuous improvement and managers and staff provided a wide range of examples to demonstrate how the organisation is continuing to embrace improvements on a regular basis and how it has improved performance.

The organisation has been subject to Ofsted Inspection within a 12–18 month timescale following previous Inspection. The organisation was Ofsted Inspected the week prior to the Investors in People review. The result of this Inspection was the organisation was graded as ‘Good’, a significant improvement from the last Inspection.

“I’m very proud of the staff. It’s a great feeling. It was a unanimous grade 2 from six inspectors”.

The observation of teaching and learning and assessment process has become more rigorous and consistent and includes all staff and subcontractors.

The organisation works with a number of awarding bodies for certificated programmes. Feedback from those organisations is also considered in terms of continuous improvement.

In line with elements of the business plan in terms of future strategy and engagement with customers, there is now a Client Relationship team in place with key objectives and KPIs to be achieved. Development opportunities have been accessed such as NEPO (North East Procurement Organisation) and bid writing. There is a weekly profile monitoring system with a spreadsheet being completed on a daily basis and monitored weekly.

The organisation recognises the commitment from staff to the success of the organisation and ensures people are provided with support in a number of different ways. This could be the opportunity to work from home or being provided with additional time to work with learners. There is also development support between staff members to share knowledge and expertise, such as Maths and English (functional skills). There is a dedicated staff member in this field, who has provided direct support to staff to assist them to achieve appropriate qualifications.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

(will review leadership and management capabilities and effectiveness)

As part of the organisational restructure, three key managers with proven experience and knowledge of the training industry, and specifically the private sector were recruited to the organisation. The managers are specialists in their specific discipline - quality assurance, operations and business development.

“We have a solid management team now. This has made a difference”.

A management away day was held to bring managers together to focus as a team on operational priorities. There was positive feedback in general with regard to the format of the day's programme, but it was suggested, however, that not all the activities used on the day were beneficial. **(See continuous improvement plan)**

The organisation sets out its expectations in terms of the behaviours for managers. This includes good communication, ensuring people contribute, being open and honest, discussing challenges, leading by example, providing support for the team, holding people accountable for their work and contribution and ensuring high standards.

It is suggested that behaviours for managers that are linked to the core values of the organisation could be considered and adopted more formally into the Performance and Personal Development Appraisal process.

"I expect the managers to adhere to our values – honesty, integrity, opportunity".

The performance of managers is formally reviewed throughout the six month period of probation. Managers have KPIs which are identified, agreed and documented at the first one to one, and reviewed on an on-going basis. The annual Performance and Personal Development Appraisal process reviews achievements to date, objectives, goals and targets, commitment to the organisational values, feedback and other key areas. As part of this annual appraisal process a development plan is agreed, and this is monitored on a regular basis.

Directors and managers described a range of different personal development activities to support them in their role. This included the 'Stage Fright' programme for one manager to support them presenting information to a larger group and to further develop her confidence in this field. The Business Development Manager described attending a Bid Writing training on Open Tendering provided by the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) to support the opportunity to bid for and procure additional contracts for the future.

In line with the focus on continuous improvement and to support staff to perform effectively against agreed targets, KPIs and objectives, training is planned for managers in the New Year (2016) to focus on performance management. In addition, the HR Specialist is to become the HR Manager and is considering a formal management qualification as an appropriate development opportunity.

People confirmed that they work for effective managers. They provided a number of examples to recognise the support and encouragement provided by managers. However, a very small minority of people suggested that they were not always sure of which manager to go to with certain queries or who they were answerable to. **(See continuous improvement plan)**

"My Manager is very effective with systems and tracking. I get support and guidance and she knows me as an individual."

"The Managers are really good. I've been provided with support".

"My Manager gets the job done, is hard working and knows her stuff".

MANAGING PERFORMANCE

(will review objective setting and support to manage performance effectively)

B-Skill looks to continually improve the Company Induction Process to ensure staff are well inducted into their job role. All staff are invited to participate in an induction at head office, regardless of their place of work. People described receiving an effective induction and that they were made to feel welcome.

"My induction was a two-day process. I met different people in the team to understand what they did. I got policies and procedures. I got a real feel for the organisation. I looked at the objectives for the business. I was made very welcome. They're a lovely bunch".

The organisation operates a yearly Performance and Personal Development Appraisal Process to agree objectives and review learning and development requirements. Direct links to the QIP and business strategy are reviewed. In discussion with staff, a small minority of staff were not always able to fully describe the KPIs they are working towards. **(See continuous improvement plan)**

It is suggested that behaviours required and linked to the core values of the organisation could be considered and adopted into the appraisal process, as previously mentioned for managers, so everyone in the organisation can consider this for the future. **(See continuous improvement plan)**

One to ones are also held between managers and staff around every two months to provide ongoing support, monitor and review targets and progress and review operational issues.

The organisation aims to ensure people feel valued and recognised for their contribution. There are opportunities for reward and recognition within the organisation, which includes verbal and written thanks and praise, highlighting success stories and providing additional time off, as examples.

A celebration was held following the successful Ofsted inspection result. As a thank you to all of the staff, an additional day's holiday was given, and all the staff were able to take Christmas Eve as an extra holiday day.

"We are getting Christmas Eve off for everyone's efforts. That's nice".

Directors and managers offer praise and thanks to staff, both verbally and in writing and efforts are made to ensure success stories are featured in the local press. There is a good news file in reception.

People confirmed that they feel recognised and valued for their work. They provided a number of examples, which are demonstrated by the following quotes.

"Absolutely. If you've done something, they do thank you and let you know your contribution".

"Yes, definitely. They take on ideas and recommendations. The director has been really good. He's been on appointments with us".

"My manager tells me I'm knowledgeable and gives me feedback"

"To celebrate our successful Ofsted result the director bought chocolates and bubbly".

DEVELOPING PEOPLE

(will review learning and development requirements for all staff, in support of organisation strategy)

B-Skill had a very strong culture with regards to learning and development for staff and is fully committed to developing all staff throughout the organisation. The organisation plans appropriate activities and develops a yearly CPD events calendar. The CPD event schedule for 2015 documents all the CPD activities throughout the company and the staff that have participated which is a mix of individuals and groups of staff. Examples of some of the CPD activities range from NCFE Level 2 in Equality and Diversity for all staff to a GCSE Maths Enhancement course for an individual staff member.

Following the Ofsted Inspection in 2014, Teaching and Learning became a focus for improvement for the organisation. Whilst all teaching and delivery staff had the appropriate teaching qualifications, the organisation commissioned a series of teaching workshops from an external consultant to improve this area. Staff described the benefits of attending the workshops, they said it either refreshed knowledge of

good practice or provided new ideas to improve future practice. Examples provided included using ICT packages such as Photoshop to use images and text in presentations.

"It was worthwhile. It gave ideas they didn't have before. It has had a positive impact".

In addition, the organisation has also received training from an ex-police officer with regard to "Prevent and Radicalisation", a programme designed to recognise the signs of radicalisation. This is to support staff to work with learners so they are prepared to notice signs of radicalisation as early as possible.

All staff have individual annual training plans which are developed as part of the appraisal process. These annual plans are reviewed on a regular basis with the manager to ensure that sufficient progress is being made.

People confirmed that the organisation is committed to supporting learning and development. People described the wide range of CPD activities the company offers the staff and how they have utilised the knowledge and information into their work.

"I've completed an Equality and Diversity Level 2 qualification. I had a guidance book on legislation which I use daily with my learners in their programme"

"I've done loads of training. In 2014, I did Level 3 Teaching and Development in Education. I've just achieved Level 2 Functional Skills".

One particular example provided during the interviews described the development of a new learning programme which was in line with the organisation's business strategy to develop new contracts and services. The tutor described undertaking appropriate development in the field of Health and Safety and then using the knowledge and information gained for learners to support them to achieve.

"They have supported me in Health and Safety so I can deliver the award. I've had really good outcomes with 100% achievement rate with my learners".

Learning and development such as Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity are offered to all staff with refresher training taking place on an annual basis to ensure staff have the most up to date knowledge in these key areas.

"Some trainers have completed E-Safety and Child Exploitation. We do loads of training at B-Skill".

Learning and development has already been planned for 2016, one of the key areas they will be focusing on will be IT training as this has been highlighted as a development need for a number of staff, in order for them to use IT more effectively within the organisation.

"IT training is planned across the organisation, this even includes the management team and will focus on areas such as spreadsheets which is an area for development".

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of all the evidence gathered during the assessment visit, the Investors in People specialist can confirm that B-Skill Ltd continues to meet the requirements of the Investors in People Standard. Many congratulations to everyone for a fantastic achievement!

A Continuous Improvement Plan is included with this report which should be considered with the Investors in People Specialist at the Continuous Improvement Meeting, scheduled for 16th February 2016.

Within the continuous improvement plan, the Investors in People Specialist has made recommendations directly related to the findings within the report. In addition, as the organisation previously held the Investors in People Bronze award, the specialist would encourage the organisation to receive a "top-up" assessment to Bronze again or consider Silver, as the organisation has plans in place to aim to achieve this level of recognition and award.

There is now a new framework/standard for Investors in People, which was launched in September 2015; therefore the specialist has also made reference in the continuous improvement plan to elements of the framework. This will hopefully provide the organisation with both an insight into the new standard, as well as starting to plan accordingly for the next Investors in People review, due in September 2018.

APPENDIX 2 : INVESTORS IN PEOPLE FRAMEWORK TOPIC MAP

- The areas which are included in your Investors in People Assessment are shaded in grey

PLAN				DO				REVIEW	
01: BUSINESS STRATEGY	02: LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY	03: PEOPLE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	04: LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	05: MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS	06: RECOGNITION & REWARD	07: INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT	08: LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	09: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT	10: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
THE STANDARD TOP MANAGERS SHOULD MAKE SURE (AND THEIR PEOPLE SHOULD CONFIRM) THAT:									
<p>The organisation has a vision / purpose, strategy and plan (1,2)</p> <p>People are involved in planning (4,5,6)</p> <p>Representative groups (where appropriate) are consulted when developing the plan (3)</p>	<p>Learning priorities are clear and linked to the plan (2)</p> <p>Resources for learning and development are made available (1,3)</p> <p>The impact will be evaluated (4)</p>	<p>People are encouraged to contribute ideas (1,5)</p> <p>There is equality of opportunity for development and support (2,3,4)</p>	<p>Managers are clear about the capabilities they need to lead, manage and develop people (1,2)</p> <p>People know what effective managers should be doing (3)</p>	<p>Managers are effective and can describe how they lead, manage and develop people (1,2,3,4)</p>	<p>People believe they make a difference (2)</p> <p>People believe their contribution is valued (1,3)</p>	<p>Ownership and responsibility is encouraged (1,3)</p> <p>People are involved in decision – making (2)</p>	<p>People’s learning and development needs are met (1,2,3)</p>	<p>Investment in learning can be quantified (1,2)</p> <p>Impact can be demonstrated (3,4,5)</p>	<p>Evaluation results in improvements to people strategies and management (1,2,3)</p>
YOUR CHOICE TOP MANAGERS SHOULD MAKE SURE (AND THEIR PEOPLE SHOULD CONFIRM) THAT:									
<p>Clear core values relate to vision and strategy (7,11,13,17,19,23, 24)</p> <p>Key performance indicators are used to improve performance (9,15,21)</p> <p>Social responsibility is taken into account in the strategy (10,12,16,18,22, 25)</p> <p>People and stakeholders are involved in strategy development (8, 14,20)</p>	<p>The learning and development strategy builds capability (5,8, 12)</p> <p>Plan take account of learning styles (10,15)</p> <p>People help make decisions about their own learning (9,13,14,16)</p> <p>Learning and development is innovative and flexible (6)</p> <p>There is a culture of continuous learning (7,11, 17)</p>	<p>The recruitment process is fair, efficient and effective (6,11,14,19,22, 27)</p> <p>A diverse, talented workforce is created (7,12,15,20,23, 28)</p> <p>A work-life balance strategy meets the needs of its people (*,13,16,21,24, 29)</p> <p>Constructive feedback is valued (9,17,25)</p> <p>The structure makes the most of people’s talents (10,18,26)</p>	<p>Leadership and management capabilities for now and the future are defined (4,9)</p> <p>Managers are helped to acquire these capabilities (5,6, 10,11)</p> <p>Leadership and management strategy link to business strategy, taking account of external good practice (7)</p> <p>Everyone is encouraged to develop leadership capabilities (8, 12,13)</p>	<p>Managers are role models of leadership, teamwork and knowledge sharing (5,6,7,9,10,13,1 4,15,16,17,20,2 2, 23)</p> <p>Coaching is part of the culture (8, 12,19,25)</p> <p>People are helped to develop their careers (11,18)</p> <p>There is a culture of openness and trust (21,24)</p>	<p>Reward and recognition strategies link to business strategy and are externally benchmarked (4,6,8,9,12,15, 18)</p> <p>Representative groups are consulted (where appropriate) (5, 14)</p> <p>What motivates people is understood (10, 16)</p> <p>Success is celebrated (11, 17)</p> <p>Benefits strategy goes beyond legal requirements (7)</p> <p>Colleagues' achievements are recognized (13,19)</p>	<p>Effective consultation and involvement is part of the culture (4,6,7,12,13,17)</p> <p>People are supported and trusted to make decisions (9,15)</p> <p>Knowledge and information are shared (5,10,14)</p> <p>People are committed to success (16)</p> <p>There is a culture of continuous improvement (8, 11)</p> <p>People can challenge the way things work (18)</p> <p>There is a sense of ownership and pride in working for the organisation (19)</p>	<p>Learning and development resources are used effectively (4,8,13)</p> <p>Learning is an everyday activity (11,18)</p> <p>Innovative and flexible approaches to learning and development are used (5,14)</p> <p>People are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential (9)</p> <p>All learning is valued and celebrated and is an everyday activity (6,10,17)</p> <p>Mentoring is used (7, 20)</p> <p>Personal development is supported (12,15,16,19)</p>	<p>The contribution of people strategies is measured and evaluated (6,10)</p> <p>Impact on key performance indicators can be described (7)</p> <p>Performance improves as a result (11,13,14)</p> <p>Career prospects improve (12)</p> <p>Flexible and effective approaches to measuring return on investment are used (8)</p> <p>Return on investment in people is reported to stakeholders (9)</p>	<p>Self review and information from external reviews are used (4,5, 10)</p> <p>Effective feedback methods are used to understand people's views on how they are managed (6,7, 11,12)</p> <p>Internal and external benchmarking are used (8)</p> <p>People's views on how they are managed improves (9,13, 14)</p> <p>People believe it's a great place to work (15)</p>

APPENDIX 3 : CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN – B-SKILL LTD

Business Issue What	Suggested Action(s) How	Potential Benefits / Impact of Taking No Action Why	Suggested Timescale When	Potential Solutions / Support Available Who
To continue to ensure SMART objectives are set within the organisation's business strategy and plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure objectives are set as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) objectives to continue the good practice developed over the last year period 	Benefits: will involve all staff, everyone will have a clear understanding of what they need to do to support the organisation to achieve its objectives, potential to further improve morale and motivation	By end July '16	Directors and managers
To involve managers in the development of any further team based programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should a team-based programme for managers be arranged again, involve managers in agreeing content and activities by setting clear objectives 	Benefits: maximum benefits in terms of outcomes for management development	By end July '16	Directors and managers
To state the core values and behaviours required within the organisation more clearly within the appraisal process, to then evaluate performance of all staff more formally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the section within the appraisal process for core values List the values to enable greater discussion on this area around performance Ensure behaviours are also documented accordingly 	Benefits: in line with the requirements of the new Investors in People framework, as there is now an Indicator for Living the Organisation's Values and Behaviours	By end of July '16	Directors and managers

<p>To ensure all staff are clearly aware of the reporting mechanisms in place linked to managers' responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the organisation structure and manager responsibilities • Ensure all staff are specifically aware of which manager to go to for advice and guidance, as well as reporting 	<p>Benefits: issues will be resolved more quickly, efficiently and effectively, people are clear on management responsibilities, the potential for less duplication of work or work being overlooked</p> <p>In line with the new Investors in People framework as there is a new Indicator for Structuring Work</p>	<p>By end Mar '16</p>	<p>Directors and managers</p>
<p>To support all staff to have a greater understanding of the KPIs set to measure performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support all staff to have a clearer understanding of the KPIs agreed for them to measure and drive performance 	<p>Benefits: more opportunity for success in achieving KPIs to drive success and performance within the organisation</p>	<p>By end July '16</p>	<p>Directors and managers</p>
<p>To receive a "top-up" assessment to return to an Investors in People Bronze award or potentially a Silver award</p>	<p>Consider the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core values • KPIs • Learning and development strategy • Equality and diversity • Work-life balance • Reward and recognition • Sharing of knowledge and information • Continuous improvement culture • Self-evaluation • External review 	<p>Benefits: organisation should continue to hold the Investors in People Bronze award, in line with statement within the business plan and/or potentially move to Silver</p>	<p>Before December 2016</p>	<p>To be discussed at the feedback meeting to determine if the organisation wishes to receive a top-up assessment within 12 months of this review</p>

<p>To consider the requirements of the Sixth Generation framework for Investors in People</p>	<p>To be discussed at the feedback meeting The specialist will review both the new framework and process at the feedback meeting</p>	<p>Benefits: will provide a greater insight into the changes and framework for the standard, will enable the organisation to start to use the framework to look at opportunities to improve business performance as a result of adopting the new framework</p>	<p>Directors, managers and the HR Officer</p> <p>Additional support from idg</p> <p>Workshops are currently available in Sunderland and Harrogate from idg</p> <p>Should form the focus for the 18 month's interaction</p> <p>A copy of the New Framework is available from the Investors in People website</p> <p>www.investorsinpeople.com</p>
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Delivered by idg, the licensed delivery partner for the North of England

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