



LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Leadership and Team Development Specialists



The Company

E A Ellison is a leading UK company in the hair and beauty products market. Its HQ is in Coventry, which is also the home of its 'state of the art' Training Academy. Ellisons has a national field based and telesales operation together with Cash & Carry outlets in Coventry, Birmingham and Leicester. It is passionate about becoming the leading supplier and absolute best in its field.

The Goals

- Develop a more professional management team
- Improve communication and understanding
- 'Raise the bar' in customer service provision

The Results

- Vastly improved service levels and account retention
- Enhanced Teamwork across departments
- More professional and 'engaging' leadership
- Improved results!

Ellisons: from Paternalism to Professionalism

Ellisons provides cash and carry outlets and online ordering for colleges and organisations in the hair and beauty sector. Not only does it stock 6,000 products, it also showcases contemporary salon furniture and equipment as well as ensures those in the profession can keep up to date with the latest trends through its training academy.

Managing through the tough times

Ellisons was a growing company when Leadership Resources was engaged in 2000 to provide a 3 month training programme aimed at helping managers understand the importance of how to run a team, how to communicate well with others and the benefits of aligning personnel objectives to business needs. 12 months later, the company secured an excellent report as part of Investors in People, which was partially supported by the investment the company had made in training.

Over the last ten years, Leadership Resources has supported Ellisons on its journey as it has moved from a command and control culture, to an organisation that has strengthened and become more efficient throughout the credit crunch of 2008-9 due to its philosophy of 'exceptional service' and 'doing things properly.' It has been able to do more, with less, and is beginning to see the benefits in terms of sales - the retention of high profile clients such as Virgin Active and Champneys - and customer satisfaction, despite the continuing uncertainty of the economic climate in 2010. This is because the management team has "stuck together", continuously monitors performance and understands the importance of ongoing appraisals and valuing its staff.

"These characteristics have been developed and reinforced by Leadership Resources' practical, thorough approach to designing courses. Courses which are pitched correctly for each participant and can be applied immediately in the workplace," explains Pam Linforth, Director of HR.

Investing for results

The company continues to grow from within and now has a range of programmes from supervisor training to management and leadership development, key account management and customer service events aimed at developing a business which can anticipate and respond to the ever-changing external environment and move towards treating customers 'they way you would want to be treated' in establishing how each individual customer's needs can be met.

However, recognising that you cannot send staff away on a training course and expect them to make a difference if nothing changes, the company has supported its people by encouraging them to practice the techniques learnt and to cascade the new open and engaging leadership style across the organisation.



Ellisons: from Paternalism to Professionalism

"Leadership Resources has been instrumental in helping to reinforce the sound management principles of 'objective, plan, execute, review and amend' – otherwise known as OPERA – and ensuring everyone has an action plan in place at the end of the programme which is followed up," comments Pam. "Staff become energised by the programmes which means the company has seen improvements."

Pam believes that the ability of Leadership Resources to deliver the right messages in the right way, and flex the content of the courses in response to the evolution of the company, has meant that staff have been able to grow in confidence, managers understand themselves more and, importantly, appreciate the role of other departments in achieving the company's vision.

As a result of this increased confidence and clarity around where the business should be heading, the team led a management buy-out in 2009 when the owners sought to retire from the company.

And the journey continues ...

But the story does not end there. Ellisons aspires to be the best in its business and seeks to continue to 'up its game' by investing in its people through Leadership Resources.

Recognising that communication and the way you treat people is the key to results, it is looking to enhance the level of intuitive communication across the organisation – "what you do as well as what you say, or not say, is just as important these days," comments Pam. "Leadership Resources has certainly left an impression and we see this relationship lasting for the longer term."



Ellisons team building exercise – thinking "outside the box" to achieve an objective