



IT'S ALL ABOUT DELIVERY FOR FOWLER WELCH

introduction

Fowler Welch Coolchain is one of the UK's leading fast moving consumer goods supply chain organisations, working with supermarkets, food manufacturers, growers and importers. They operate a warehousing and distribution network handling fresh, chilled and ambient temperature products. Their business is run from the head office in Spalding in Lincolnshire at the centre of a major growing area, with several main hubs strategically located at key import, growing and production areas supported by a number of regional facilities, one of which is based at Washington, Tyne and Wear, where they employ circa 150 people. They operate over 300 tractor units with over 700 trailers servicing over 5,000 unique delivery points. The company also manage a wide range of Pick to Order warehouse operations.

The company had engaged Van Hee several times over the past eight years to provide ad hoc training for drivers, but following the move into new purpose built facilities in Washington in 2008 the business decided it was time to upgrade the performance of drivers and warehouse staff, to more closely meet the company's mission to deliver the highest levels of quality and service to their customers. Their Washington depot was the first to receive this training and has now started to be rolled out across the company.

They therefore opened discussions with Van Hee at the end of 2008 and a full new comprehensive training programme was devised to start in April 2009.

programme objectives

- have all drivers trained to the same level of competency
- improve compliance record by eliminating infringements
- create a greater understanding and Importance of legal requirements of the industry
- increase efficiency of warehouse operations
- improve journey planning
- achieve a higher level of customer service

special challenges

- devise a programme with little or no disruption to drivers' normal working day
- the company operated a 24 hour, 7 days a week operation
- one of the most challenging issues was a shift pattern that started well outside the normal working day, with shift starts at 2:00, 3:00 and 4:00am
- to accommodate early and late shift work
- drivers being potentially sceptical about classroom work
- there were several foreign drivers, particularly Polish nationals, posing special language difficulties

people involved

- 70 Drivers
- 20 Warehouse people
- 1 Supervisory/ Management

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van hee training strategy

No classroom work - all training was delivered on the job.

Kept the same assessors throughout the training so there was continuity allowing the drivers to get to know the assessors which made them feel more comfortable and relaxed.

Polish national, Kate Jaworska, a training information office with Van Hee for 18 months, helped with the induction session and helped the drivers to complete paperwork. She also translated all the knowledge questions.

Van Hee assessors are encouraged to add value - and to be constantly improving the systems and quality of the content, delivering the training in a way that best suits the customer.

company support

The management team and team responsible for training of Jimmy Lee, John Benton, Dave Gretton and Colin Crosby managed the training very well, making all facilities available and making sure drivers were where they ought to be at the right times. Their open encouragement made things as relaxed as possible for the drivers.

NVQ driver assessment

The NVQ qualification is all about assessment of how well the learner does their job. The Van Hee Assessor went out with the drivers (including the very early starts) over one complete shift, thereby not interrupting their existing work schedule. They assessed knowledge and observed ability, identifying where the driver needed further guidance. Then after a sufficient period to address any issues, the assessor joined the driver for a second full shift.

outcomes

driver

- 30 drivers trained by Van Hee 4 years ago to NVQ Level 2 have now successfully completed and attained NVQ Level 3
- 40 newcomers have completed and attained NVQ Level 2
- 25 new starters currently undertaking NVQ Level 2

warehouse

- 20 warehouse people have completed and attained NVQ Level 3
- 10 operational people have completed and attained NVQ Level 2



benefits to client

“The last year’s training programme has really benefited our drivers as well as the company. They are all driving in a much more responsible way, compliance infringements are much reduced and they are all working to the same standards. We now have a much more settled team working well together.”

Jimmy Lee, Regional General Manager North
Fowler Welch Coolchain

future plans

- all new drivers will be required to undertake NVQ Level 2
- further development for individual drivers to ensure both they and the Company realise the benefit of the training
- arranging process and technology training

costs

Van Hee arranged the whole programme to be on a fully funded basis.

Van Hee issued training vouchers for the first stages of the training which the company were then able to redeem to provide the later training. The whole programme being self funded.

timescale

Over 12 months.

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