

Pilkington



dream 

plan 

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Client:

Pilkington

Issue:

Culture Change

Session:

13 one day sessions

Background

Pilkington has responded effectively to a complex and changing industry environment throughout its long history. In order to continue to meet business challenges, The Automatic was called upon to help develop a more cohesive workforce and draw on the wealth of expertise within that workforce in order to improve safety, efficiency and communication between teams. As the first phase of a Skill Investor* funded programme of staff training, The Automatic sessions would also help to determine staff development needs in preparation for the remainder of the programme.

Data gathering/heightening anticipation

In order to understand the day to day working environment of participants, prior to the sessions The Automatic team made a video of the processes involved in glass manufacturing at the Pilkington site. Talking Heads style videos were also made, whereby members of the team were asked a series of questions about their working life and environment, their aspirations and their ideas for change.



Client benefits:

"The Automatic has provided Pilkington's with a unique opportunity to identify what the business needs in order to develop its people for the future. It was an ideal forum for setting the scene for the business and exploring and developing team communications and strategies."

Gillian Brunt, Human Resources Manager
Pilkington

The Session

The initial programme consisted of 13 sessions, in total involving 158 Pilkington staff.

Sessions revolved around participants telling real life stories about work-based events. Participants were encouraged to reflect on how events from the past - both positive and negative - unfolded ("What happened and why?") along with possible alternative endings to those stories ("What could/should have happened?").

By interrogating familiar experiences, groups were able to identify strengths and weaknesses in procedures, policies and ways of working and come up with new, improved approaches.

Making learning/insights stick

After each session, participants were asked to record on postcards, ideas, suggestions and feelings emerging from their time in The Automatic, which were then sent to the next team due to attend a session.

This created a 'relay' effect, with teams passing on highlights of their experiences to other teams, sharing their learning and raising anticipation about the session to come.

The Automatic team produced a final report, which drew together all the ideas/suggestions from the sessions into one document, organised into four categories: physical work environment; future; health and safety; people.

The report also incorporated a list of agreed actions to serve as a route map for dedicated teams to follow in order to implement learning from the sessions.

Outcomes

- Greater awareness of relevant business drivers amongst workforce
- Improvements to workplace policies and procedures (particularly around safety and efficiency issues)
- Increased understanding of shared working environment

*Skill Investor is ESF funded and co-financed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and is managed by Partnership for Learning (PfL).

For more information: 0500 876 543