



MURATA ELECTRONICS (UK) LTD

Improving Workforce Skills

Performance, skills and culture change



MuRata, Headquarters

MuRata Electronics (UK) Ltd. is a major supplier of specialist electronic components to the UK industrial and domestic marketplace. Based in Hampshire, the UK operations are wholly owned by MuRata Manufacturing Company Limited of Japan where the products are manufactured. Since the 1940's, MuRata has continued to grow and now has more than 34,000 employees worldwide and more than 200 in the UK.

MuRata was established in the UK in 1982 and customer service and 'getting it right first time' are some of the core values upon which Murata UK prides itself. The company has enjoyed rapid trading growth but the increasing growth in staffing levels and the skills level of their staff has become a cause for concern. MuRata asked ICL for assistance and a consultant from ICL's Enterprise Consulting, Steve Wright set up a project to assess the performance, attitudes and development needs of all management and staff. The aim of the project was to identify:

- the skills needed to improve their performance in their current roles,
- a personal development plan identifying additional skills and experience needed for future role/s.

First, interviews were conducted with senior managers to get a perception of the company culture, attitudes to staff training and an understanding of training courses available within MuRata.

A skills survey was then prepared and sent to all management and staff that would identify the individual's unit and role, previous formal training attended and where, their views on their skills and limitations and their development needs. This was followed by one-to-one interviews where the consultants could further explore the survey comments and consider further training and development needs. Finally, the consultants prepared a Development Needs Assessment Report based on the outputs of the surveys and interviews.

Developing Individual Capability

The project found a significant proportion of staff were covered by career structures but many did not understand the entry criteria and role definitions. The objective was to identify the training, education and development to enable them to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the professional performance of their jobs, and for the development of their potential consistent with the needs of the business. At the end of the consultancy each individual employee would



possess a personal development, career development and training plan to be jointly actioned with their line manager.

The development programme identified three discrete areas for development:

1. **Product and company knowledge** – non technical staff found the range and complexity of electronic components difficult to understand. They also wanted to have a better understanding of MuRata background, current global business and strategic plans. Structured product training and internal seminars were organised.
2. **Role skills** – skills and knowledge requirements to enhance performance on the job, e.g. business development training, IT user refresher training, stock management techniques, advanced Excel training, etc. Where appropriate, training was identified where staff had identified their next career move, for example, staff supervisory training, management reporting, preparation of finance reports, e.g. actuals against budgets, etc.
3. **Personal skills** – such as interpersonal skills, workshop facilitation, presentation techniques, time management, culture change and attitude skills.

A Career Guidance Centre was also set up to provide staff with an ongoing opportunity to review current skills, receive guidance on career direction and consider future development options. Personnel staff would advise managers on the selection criteria and assist in identifying those staff who would benefit from attending a career guidance centre. Personnel staff would also support managers in the debriefing and implementation of the resultant action plans.

The project enjoyed top management support throughout and it was later reported that the continuing programme of staff development had significantly improved productivity, staff morale and attitudes and staff retention.



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