

case study



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Bodelwyddan Castle Hotel



Background

Size: 154 people

Sector: Hotels and Leisure

Location: Wales

Status: First recognised in 2000; achieved Investors in People Champion status in 2004

The organisation

This hotel is owned by Bourne Leisure, part of the Warner Holidays group of 13 hotels and UK resorts. As the name suggests, it's a Grade II listed building with ivy-clad turrets and walled gardens in a beautiful setting in North Wales countryside.

The hotel has 352 beds and a staff of 154 who provide 24 hours a day service for 365 days a year. It's an adults-only establishment providing three, four and seven night theme breaks offering everything from tranquillity to cabaret and dancing.

- Staff turnover rate has fallen from 34% to 19% p.a.
- Profit per employee has risen by 15.4%
- 93% occupancy rates throughout the year

“Investors in People accreditation gave us credibility within the local community and the exposure we receive from achieving Champions status definitely impacted positively on the number of people applying to work at the Hotel.”

Terry Sterling, General Manager



The challenge

Hotels rely on a mix of transient resident workers and live-out employees from their locality. Providing high levels of service every day of the year with a full complement of staff is always a challenge. In its rural location, Bodelwyddan Castle was experiencing difficulties in both attracting and retaining staff in most of the range of job roles within the hotel.

The strategy

Management at the hotel had heard about Investors in People but were sceptical about its effects. Another local hotelier who had used and benefited from the Standard sang its praises, and Bodelwyddan Castle Hotel made a commitment to achieve the Standard on his recommendation. Practices and processes started to change. The business plan was formalised and approaches to development of all employees within it were a key feature. Committees of employees were set up to work on aspects of achieving the Standard.

Heads of departments took ownership of the work in their sections. Staff suggestion and reward schemes were set up. The hotel's mission was updated to reflect its wish to be the leading location in the Warner estate - a profitable and cost-effective operation, popular with its customers, whilst maintaining exceptional standards in guest satisfaction and commitment to employee development. Recognition as an Investor in People was achieved in 2000.

The results

The hotel has gone from strength to strength. Investors in People has helped to recognise the potential within the hotel. People are developed to be multi-skilled and flexible, and several have been supported to progress to supervisory and management positions. The hotel has an enviable

93% occupancy rate across the year, profit targets grew by 8% in 2003, staff retention has increased and applicants for vacancies outnumber the posts available. Potential employees now apply on the recommendation of their friends and families.

All employees have a keen eye for controlling costs and, for example, energy bills have been significantly reduced. Successes are celebrated, morale is excellent and Investors in People is now "part of the great culture at the hotel". It has won the Group's "Best All-Inclusive Destination" Award and three national tourism awards. Its rate of complaints is continuously falling – it's the lowest in the group – and the number of compliments from delighted customers continues to rise.

Champion status

Bodelwyddan Castle Hotel feels it has achieved a great deal and is delighted to have been recognised as an Investors in People Champion. Its aims to build on its success and is now actively looking at work-life balance issues for its people working on round the clock operations in a 365 day year.

The hotel has already been sharing its experiences within the hospitality, tourism and leisure sectors and continues to do so.

Networking, comparing experience and learning are firmly in its culture. It has particular experience of communication, motivation, culture/style change, learning and development planning and delivering Investors in People in sectors with a transient workforce.

