



Press Release

Bristol Firm receives government funding to set up state of the art learning centre for staff

A heating controls designer and manufacturer has received funding of £32,000 to set up a state of the art learning centre at their premises in Bristol. The firm, supported by the trade union Amicus will provide staff with the opportunity to attend courses on site attended by lecturers from Norton Radstock College. The aim of the programme entitled 'Engage', part of the 'Learning Works for All' scheme is to enable staff to increase their skill base in areas that are beneficial to the business as well as non-business dependent.

"We feel that by securing the funding to develop this learning centre, we are developing the future of our staff and the business. The opportunity to offer on-site training to existing staff members is something we are extremely proud of and feel that as a result we will develop a highly skilled, loyal team of people who will be a real asset to Horstmann."

Les Woolner, Managing Director, Horstmann Controls

The money awarded will go towards brand new state of the art computer equipment and lecturer's attendance on site at Horstmann's Bristol based factory. The manufacturing, technical and skilled person's union Amicus has been central to the process of securing funding for this project. The Learning Works for All fund presents an enormous challenge to the union and management team at Horstmann to provide the employees with a unique opportunity to train in varied subjects both vocationally and socially.

The main aims of the scheme are:

- To encourage employers, however large or small, to invest in staff development
- To identify potential and spread good practice
- ensure individuals and employers get quality advice
- promote learning accounts to overcome financial barriers
- develop workplace training which is beneficial and available to all staff at every level

A committee comprising of the management team, members of the TUC, Amicus and Norton Radstock College will decide upon a suitable curriculum for Horstmann Controls based upon skill requirements and business needs. The staff will have the opportunity to attend courses during work time if the course is business dependent and in their own time if not vocational. Staff members are excited by the prospect of the on site learning centre and delighted that the company is getting involved with this initiative:

“The company has always encouraged employees to attend courses but this would often mean lots of travelling and days out of the office, this way we get to learn new skills on site with the all the benefits of attending a fully equipped college. The new skills will help us to progress further within the company helping it to grow as we do.”

Abi Johnson, HR Officer, Horstmann Controls

Ends

Notes

1. The 'Learning Works for All' Project (LWfA), managed by the South West TUC has supported 31 union-led partnership projects to increase the skill level, confidence and performance of individuals and organisations in the South West region. The project has been independently evaluated by The Centre for Organisational Effectiveness (part of the institute for Business and Law, Bournemouth University.) www.unionlearn.org.uk
2. Bristol based Horstmann Controls is one of the UK's leading designers and manufacturers of metering and controls for domestic heating. The UK office of Electricity Regulation (OFGEM) approves Horstmann for the certification of

electricity meters, as does the British Electrical Approvals Board (BEAB) for Horstmann domestic products.

3. Amicus is the UK's largest union representing manufacturing, technical and skilled employees. Visit www.amicustheunion.org for further information.