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Kier Group – National Training Awards 2008

In 2004, Engauge (then MSA Interactive Ltd) set up a tailored competency-based 360 degree feedback solution designed specifically to support Kier Group's newly-developed Executive Leadership Programme.

On September 25th, 2008 Kier Group was awarded both a regional and a national training award for their Executive Leadership Programme. Read the case study presented at the National Training Awards event:

One of the UK's leading construction groups has revolutionised the way it develops senior managers and directors through the creation of its own Executive Leadership Programme. Now the Kier Group, based at Sandy, Bedfordshire, which employs more than 9000 people worldwide and has annual revenue of £2.1 billion, has been short-listed for a National Training Award. Kier is a leading construction, development and service group specialising in building and civil engineering, support services, private house building, property development and Private Finance Initiative.

"We operate through 5 main divisions, each focused on being the best in its class," Paul Sealy, Head of Organisation Development. "Our rare offering of in house expertise, coupled with our strategic alliance business units, presents Kier as one of few companies able to offer complete solutions for the delivery of a wide range of innovative schemes."

"But until 2003 there was little development for directors and senior managers of the group. Seventy percent of appointments to management boards were from external candidates rather than promotions. Staff turnover was running at 18 percent across the group. To keep the risk profile low and create greater continuity of business for the future, the retention and development of key senior executives was seen as paramount."

Kier developed a bespoke competency framework and based its Executive Leadership Programme (ELP) around it. It was launched in May 2004 for senior managers identified as potential directors within a three-five year time scale. Each Participant had an experienced director as a mentor to pass on know-how and leadership skills. Mentors also helped to set pre-course objectives and provide real world advice and support.

In 2005, the Kier Group board decided to extend the programme to existing directors in each of the businesses, and there are now over 110 participants at various stages of the programme, with 50 starting in 2008.



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The result has been more internal candidates promoted to director positions – 60 percent of all director appointments in our construction business up to 2007. This has resulted in a saving of recruitment costs of around £300 000 and a reduction of staff turnover of ELP participations to 5 percent against a group average, which has now reduced to 14 percent in 2007.

Ian Lawson, Managing Director, Support Services, said the ELP had revolutionised Kier's approach to executive development, and established a clear link between the skills being developed and success in the future. "We are engaging and managing stakeholder relationships earlier in the construction process." He added. "Customer focus, communication and coaching are paramount to us being successful and profitable at this stage. We have reduced recruitment costs as we can promote more senior managers, demonstrating to other staff that there are also opportunities for them."

"The feedback process provides great clarity for our Executive Leadership Programme on precisely where candidates should focus their attention. By repeating the 360-feedback at the end of the programme, we are able to give them a view of their progress. They can then decide on which steps to take to continue their development. We now use the same 360 solution for many of our other development programmes at Kier."

Paul Sealy, Head of Organisation Development – Kier Group Ltd

**Engauge works with organisations who want to engage their people
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