

# CASE STUDY



## Royal Highland and Agricultural society of Scotland

*“For a business that is 222 years old, innovation, staff contribution and a team culture keeps us moving forward in a very competitive industry. We wish to be leaders in our field and Investors in People assists us in achieving our goals in benchmarking and giving our staff and business a strong credibility rating.”*

**Candy Jones, Human Resources Manager**



### BACKGROUND

**Size:** 38 employees  
**Sector:** Leisure, Travel and Tourism  
**Location:** Edinburgh  
**Status:** Most recently recognised in 2009

### THE ORGANISATION

The Society was founded in 1784 to promote the regeneration of rural Scotland, as well as the preservation of its poetry, language and music. Today, in the 21st century, the Society is for people who value the rural areas of Scotland. It is for people who enjoy the finest products of our land-based and allied industries. And it is for everyone who supports the very best standards in agriculture, forestry and stewardship of the countryside, which are such an essential part of our heritage - and our future.

The industries of rural Scotland are major contributors to the economy and character of our country. The land-based and allied industries are a major part of that rural economy. They produce much of our food and drink, manage and conserve our countryside and provide access for sport and recreation to millions.

- **A culture where we have more involvement with our staff on decision making and preferences for working processes**
- **Our yearly staff turnover rate is only 5%.**
- **Our financial results have improved 400% over five years**

## THE CHALLENGE

We wish to be leaders in our field and Investors in People assists us in achieving our goals in benchmarking and giving our staff and business a strong credibility rating.

## THE STRATEGY

Over the past six to seven years we have been improving our way of working and Investors in People has enabled us to put in place a culture where we have more involvement with our staff on decision making and preferences for working processes, methods and equipment.

On a day-to-day level, we have moved from a very traditional management style where consultation and inclusion of staff within the working and decision-making process was limited. Management is now built on much more direct and open communication. We have gradually developed a more straightforward approach of involvement with staff where it is clear that their participation is central to the organisation and the progress it makes.

This gradual change in style and culture has occurred through a great deal of coaching. As an organisation we are also keen to understand where we are within the marketplace - how do we measure up and how can we be better?

Each member of the management team has direct responsibility and control for their areas and they are incentivised and measured by Key Result Areas. Taking this management process forward, and given our commitment to the continuing development and involvement of our staff, in 2005 we introduced Proctor and Gamble's 360 degree feedback to the management team as a method of formalising the teams own personal development.

## THE RESULTS

Creating the best managers and staff requires commitment, involvement and belief on all sides. Going through the 360 process was very forward-thinking and unique for an organisation such as ours, particularly given our age of 222 years. The 360 gave direct feedback to managers positively highlighting performance and development areas. We now have in place a "competencies measurement structure", created with the assistance of our managers, and they are now also participating in a leadership development programme that will continue throughout the year. In time we will extend similar processes to all employees. Our yearly staff turnover rate is only 5%. Our financial results have improved 400% over five years and, especially in the involvement and procurement of capital goods, we know that our staff get more value out of the equipment / machines now than they used to, which all helps the bottom line.

Being reviewed gives us a "health check" as managers and individuals and our staff know it's a real achievement to be rewarded Investors in People status. Staff also know they are part of achieving the result and

it gives them the recognition of their hard work and efforts in creating a successful business.

All staff have access to the Assessor's review and can see the areas of success and improvement - we all want to be winners! This is all part of the process of continuous development for individuals and the organisation.

Don't hang back – get on with it and enjoy the results of your efforts.