

# Instron – Management Development Programme

## Background

Founded in 1946, Instron® is a global organisation that designs, manufactures, sells and services materials testing systems.

Instron employs circa 250 staff members in the UK from their HQ in High Wycombe but is owned by ITW (NYSE: ITW), a Fortune 200 company that employs nearly 49,000 people, and is headquartered in Glenview, Illinois, USA with operations in 57 countries.

The Curve Group were engaged to design a brand new, bespoke Management Development Programme.

A gap in the provision of learning and professional development for their management population was identified by the newly appointed HR Director.

They had lots of practical work experience but were lacking strategic knowledge.

The programme therefore needed to focus on equipping the management population with strategic planning, leadership and management tools and practices which they could deploy within 'Business as Usual' (BAU) activities in order to further enhance the performance of their teams.

There was also a strong desire to better align the Instron business with the values and vision of the broader parent company ITW in order to better align the two organisations.

## A Collaborative Design Process

The Curve Group's Learning and Development Business Partner led a collaborative design process with the senior Instron team. A framework was developed for the Management Development Programme, drawing upon best practice in the industry and responding to the unique business requirements highlighted by Instron.

The programme was then launched to the senior Instron team and the initial cohort of managers was selected to participate in the pilot programme.

During the launch, The Curve Group's Learning and Development Business Partner facilitated an informed learning needs session and invited the pilot cohort to:

- Feedback on and contribute to the final design (structure and content) and;
- Identify their own learning objectives they would seek to individually achieve throughout the programme

The cohort collectively flagged that there was a larger knowledge gap about the parent company ITW than was anticipated by the senior management team, and therefore it was agreed that the session on the ITW business model would be delivered much earlier on in the programme, so as to better equip the cohort with the broader context.

This allowed them to fully embrace and understand it more truly within the subsequent modules.

This collaborative approach to designing the programme engendered real, tangible buy-in to the programme from all parties from the off – a critical factor in the success of any training programme.

### Programme Delivery

The programme was designed to be delivered across a period of nine months, with one module being delivered per month.

This phased delivery enabled the cohort to focus on one key area of learning each month and a smooth, layered implementation of their learnings within their 'Business As Usual' activities throughout the course of the programme.

It also meant that the feedback received from the cohort after each module could then inform the following modules. This allowed the module content to be fine-tuned and continuously adapted so as to maximise the value of the programme and the opportunity to embed the learning.

The programme included a blend of modules delivered on the main by

The Curve Group's Leadership and Development Business Partner including:

- 360° Feedback Questionnaires and Coaching
- Understanding Self and Building Effective Teams using Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®)
- Exploring Leadership and Management
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Change Management

A Senior member of the Management team at Instron was invited to deliver a session on the ITW Business Model to remedy the knowledge gap which had been identified previously.

External subject matter experts were approached to deliver additional modules. For example, a module on 'Managing an Appropriate Work Environment' (Employee Relations) was delivered by an Employment solicitor.

### Embedded Learning

Upon completion of the course, in order to assess how well the learning had been absorbed and utilised, the cohort were asked to present back to the management team and their peers on how they were utilising the new skills, tools and techniques they had learnt, and the measurable actions they were going to put in place as a result.

It was clear during these presentations that the programme had successfully enabled them to achieve a greater understanding of

the parent company's values and vision and that they were confident to act more strategically within their roles, cascading their knowledge and plans to their teams.

The participants also fed back that joining up as a cohort, made up of staff from across the business, gave them far more exposure to other areas of the business and therefore a greater understanding of the wider Instron activities and objectives.

It was also a real bonding experience for the cohort and they have since continued to share learnings and progress between them as a peer group.

There are plans to conduct another round of 360° Feedback Questionnaires and Coaching 6-months from the completion of the programme, so as to measure the impact of the management development programme.

Based on the feedback thus far, it is anticipated that the programme will be rolled out to a wider management population at Instron.

## Testimonial

*"We chose to work with The Curve Group to develop the Instron Management Development Programme because of their flexible approach and willingness to work with us to design and develop a programme which was fit to meet our needs.*

*Feedback from the delegates has been positive and we are looking forward to seeing their continued development."*

**Jenny Baker**  
**HR Director – Europe**  
**Instron**

**The Curve Group are The award-winning Recruitment and HR Superheroes on a Quest to transform people's working lives. We are passionate about helping businesses to transform their HR and Recruitment functions by creating extraordinary people solutions, enabling them to achieve their strategic business aspirations.**



[www.TheCurveGroup.co.uk](http://www.TheCurveGroup.co.uk)



[sayhello@TheCurveGroup.co.uk](mailto:sayhello@TheCurveGroup.co.uk)



+44 (0)1295 811486