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## CASE STUDY: Hearn Roofing

Date	05 January 2010
Location	Dorchester, Dorset
Sector	Construction and Home Improvement
No. of Employees	26
Key Benefits	We are much more focused on planning for the medium and long term and our staff has structured career paths and skills they didn't have before.



### Introduction

**Hearn Roofing, part of the Hearn Group of companies, is one of the south west's leading roofing contractors.** It handles single property contracts up to the largest of commercial developments such as re-roofing much of Magna Housing Association's 6,000-strong housing stock.

### Drivers for Commitment

Since making the Skills Pledge in November 2008, Hearn Roofing has put training centre stage for its apprentices, experienced roofers, supervisors, contract managers and senior business managers.

Everyone in the company underwent a training needs analysis and now has individual training plans with regular appraisals.

Seven apprentices are doing NVQ Level 2s in Roofing with their balance of skills factored into risk assessments and method statements for each work project.

It is a rigorous programme that ensures all aspects of a job are covered. These include process and project management, safe use of equipment and relevant expertise with tiling, slating, cement work or whatever the individual order demands. The company's investment in training involves regular team meetings, called 'toolbox talks', where all views are taken into account on work issues.

***"Part of our change in culture means we respect and support each other and in turn that helps with customer care. Training is there for the benefit of everyone – health and safety and skills development for us, and quality service for our customers."***

***Malcolm Pitcher, Business Development Manager***



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Apprentice Kane Wakefield, 19, (pictured (r) with colleague Harry Potter) left school with no qualifications and joined the company as a labourer. Now completing his NVQ course, Kane says: "With training we're all more positive in our work and we know the end product is really good. There are a lot of old boys out there with old skills but these days it's also important to have the qualifications to show you know how to do the job."

Recognised as one of the industry's top trainees, he was a finalist in the national SkillBuild competition which tests the skills of young construction workers.

Colleague Harry Potter, 20, says: "We've all been put through the training and as a result we've got a settled team, better morale and everyone gets on with each other. With qualifications we know we've got a much better chance of winning work and going on any site with confidence."

### Impacts and Benefits

Making the Skills Pledge reflects the same approach to training that brought Investors in People accreditation in June 2009. It has also prompted what Business Development Manager Malcolm Pitcher calls a "change in culture".

He explains: "The Skills Pledge is important because it is a real commitment made by a senior director within the business. The commitment certificate shows everyone that senior managers are serious about what they intend to do.

We can see the benefits to us as a company. We are much more focused on planning for the medium and long term and our staff have structured career paths and skills they didn't have before. In return they are given more responsibility. As well as the training plans, we have brought in better work scheduling, a better system for providing customer quotes and a clearer commercial model for managing payroll costs, margins and overheads.

"Part of our change in culture means we respect and support each other and in turn that helps with customer care. Training is there for the benefit of everyone – health and safety and skills development for us, and quality service for our customers.

"We will continue to train. We believe that as a result of what we have done in the downturn we will be better placed to grow in the recovery. We are winning contracts with people we wouldn't have been able to reach before. Training helps you work smarter and be more professional."