

Norco GRP Ltd

BUSINESS SECTOR: Manufacturing

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 50-249

REGION: SOUTH WEST

Business Profile: Norco GRP was set up in 1985 in Poole and today turns over £10 million operating from two large production buildings.



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Mark Northey
Managing Director

The challenge

GRP is one of the world’s most versatile materials and Norco’s mouldings are used in a wide range of products ranging from rigid inflatable boats, coffee vending machines and even an air lock/docking capsule of a space craft, although its core market remains the marine industry.

Norco continues to invest in new plant and equipment to improve productivity and is implementing a lean manufacturing programme on the factory floor.

However, the company sees skills development as underpinning its continual growth – in recently making the skills pledge it highlighted its commitment to training to all of its staff.

What is the Skills Pledge?

The Skills Pledge is a voluntary, public commitment by the leadership of a company or organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, and work towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2 (equivalent to 5 good GCSES). The purpose is to ensure that all staff are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the company/organisation.

The solution



Norco has a strong commitment to training. Ten years ago it set up a dedicated, company-funded training facility and also has gained Investors in People accreditation. It is now working closely with Train to Gain to further unlock the skills potential of its 180-plus employees.

Train to Gain Skills Broker Paula Best set up an arrangement to deliver training from experienced coach Mike Tanner, XR Training and Bournemouth and Poole College.

So far this year, Norco has trained over 50 of its employees in Management, Team Leading, NVQ Level 2 in Composites, and Business Improvement Techniques at both Level 2 and 3. Four of its staff has undertaken an NVQ Verifiers Course.

The results

Mark Northey said: “Train to Gain’s commitment to source a wide range of training providers to suit our needs, alongside their ability to assist with funding where possible, has ensured that Norco has strengthened year after year.”

“Their help will also mean we will be able to continue to expand into an additional site next year and look to employ a further 40 people in the local community while supporting the whole of Norco GRP with fully-trained, keen, committed and hungry individuals with a desire to develop themselves and continually improve the company for its future success.”

He also praised trainer Mike Tanner. “With Mike’s Insight programme both manager and director get instant, accurate ideas that they can focus on, discuss and implement for direct and immediate continual development of both individual and organisation,” he said.

Paula Best said: “Norco is a great example of a manufacturing company that is whole-heartedly embracing training as a way of building a highly-successful, dynamic, global business.

“The relationship between the company, Train to Gain and the training providers is going from strength to strength.”

What is Train to Gain?

Train to Gain is a Skills Brokerage service, managed and funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) that helps employers find the training they need for their employees. Train to Gain links employers with Skills Brokers who work individually with them to find out what their employees’ training needs are, work out a training plan, and then help to find the right training for them.



Learning and Skills Council