

# GOOD PRACTICE IN ACTION

## CHARLES FARRIS LTD - MERE, WILTSHIRE

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The factory of Charles Farris Ltd, a leading supplier of candles and accessories to UK cathedrals and churches, has been passing on the complex skill of candle making for over 160 years. Sixteen staff currently work at the factory, predominately in manufacturing, packing and distribution roles.

Despite the in-house training offered to staff, the company recognised the need to continually motivate and increase staff skills. To support this need their Business Link Wiltshire Business Adviser suggested they contact Train to Gain for information and advice on external training.

*“We believe in offering people rewarding jobs, but sometimes factory work can be a little repetitive and we have few progression routes. Our staff are very important to us and we recognised that we could invest in staff development by providing the opportunity to take up external training,”* said Alan Matthews, the General Manager at Charles Farris.

Alan contacted the Train to Gain service and met with Skills Broker Phil Newton to discuss the company’s training needs.

Alan said, *“Train to Gain found suitable NVQ courses at Yeovil College for a number of our staff. Six employees took part in NVQ Level 2 in Performing Manufacturing Operations; three took part in NVQ Level 2 courses in Warehousing & Distribution and three in Customer Service. We were delighted, especially with the impact the training has had on customer service.”*



### CASE STUDY

*Above: four members of the Charles Farris Ltd team received their NVQ certificates at a special presentation at Wells Cathedral - one of the company’s biggest customers*

The effect the training had on staff development was also evident as Alan explained: *“We saw a real change in staff in terms of motivation and they also seemed to more readily embrace the fact that they are an integral part of the business and they can also shape its future.”*

**“We had great feedback from Alan after the training, especially about how empowered employees felt after the courses. Many returned to work and suggested new and more effective ways of working,”** said Phil.

So, does future training burn brightly for Charles Farris Ltd? *“Yes it certainly does!”* said Alan. *“Taking on board external training has made us want to create more opportunities and we are now looking at management and leadership training for team leaders. We are also looking for other training courses for those who attended NVQ Level 2 courses, which we hope to undertake next year. We will certainly be back in touch with Train to Gain.”*

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## CLARKS VILLAGE, STREET



Shopping outlet Clarks Village, managed by specialist retail Property Company, Realm, is home to over 90 businesses in Street, Somerset. This busy outlet is a haven for shoppers looking for designer and high street goods at discounted prices.

In October 2006, Louise Evans of Realm was contacted by Train to Gain following discussions with Somerset Chamber of Commerce, of which Realm is a member.

Louise Evans from Realm, said: "We were delighted that our membership of the Somerset Chamber of Commerce provided the network for Train to Gain to contact us. We have seen the success of a previous programme in another outlet village in our portfolio; Atlantic Village in Bideford, Devon, where hundreds of employees took up NVQs in Retail Skills, so we were keen to get on board."

Train to Gain Skills Broker Robin Kyd arranged for the Train to Gain roadshow trailer to be set up in the Village in November 2006 following its regional tour.

Skills Brokers were available throughout the day to provide independent advice and information on how to improve their competitive edge and gain advice on developing staff.

*"The roadshow was really busy throughout the day. Retailers as diverse as Black & Decker and Savoy Tailors Guild met with Skills Brokers to receive advice and information on training needs and suitable courses for employees, such as NVQ Level 2 in Retail Skills."*

*"Businesses were able to learn more about what training is available and how to access funding streams. We also provided information on how training can make a difference to employee development and the business as whole. It's great that so many employers took time out to attend the roadshow as the training could provide real business benefits,"* said Robin.

From the success of the roadshow Train to Gain has arranged follow-up meetings with a number of interested companies and will research the best training options for the businesses.

**"We were really delighted with the success of the roadshow and we have had great feedback from the businesses. I am really looking forward to seeing the full impact of Train to Gain and the benefits it will bring to employees, businesses and the Village as a whole,"** said Louise.

## NIGHTINGALE ROOFING & BUILDING SERVICES

### CASE STUDY

In 2003, brothers Markus and Maurice Micklewright established Nightingale Roofing & Building Services in Newton Abbot, Devon. Just three years on the company is looking at an annual turnover of around £1 million and undoubtedly part of its successful growth has been its investment in training.

Between 2005 and 2006, to cope with the expansion of the business, the company took on four staff, increasing its team to ten. By almost doubling its staff within a year, the company was keen to develop their skills and accessed Train to Gain in May 2006, being put in touch with Skills Broker Janet Powell.

Their training implementation plan included specific skills, as well as generic leadership and management training, all of which may be accessed through Train to Gain.

*“We wanted to provide select roofing service solutions under one roof and we discussed our training needs with Janet. She was able to research whether Metal Roofing & Cladding, Single Ply Membrane, Built-Up Flat Roofing and Slating & Tiling NVQ courses were available locally,”* said Markus.

*“We were delighted as Janet found suitable courses through the South Wales & South West Roofing Training Group in Exmouth. We have staggered the training, four colleagues are currently undertaking the NVQ courses and in time all colleagues will be given the opportunity to take the courses.”*

Janet said: *“As well as finding suitable training courses for a range of staff, we were also able to source funding streams to support their investment in training. The company is*

*currently looking for new premises and we were also able to suggest other services and companies, which could support them. I think this really shows the wider brokerage service Train to Gain is able to offer and how it can make a real difference to companies.”*

*“Investing and developing our colleagues so they can deliver outstanding safety, service and skills, is a priority for us. The training has already made a huge impact in terms of business growth and team development,”* said Markus.

**“We were delighted with the help and information we got from Train to Gain, being a small business we were unable to spend the time researching the different training courses that were available to us. Janet was brilliant, really supportive and provided great guidance. We will certainly be back in touch with the service and wouldn’t hesitate to recommend it to anyone else.”**

# GOOD PRACTICE IN ACTION

## AMESBURY ABBEY NURSING HOME



### CASE STUDY

Salisbury-based Amesbury Abbey Nursing Home is a private care home for the elderly with 42 residents and over 90 employees including carers, waitresses, kitchen staff and cleaners. A few years ago the business was facing a high turnover of staff, but the funded training from Train to Gain has had a real impact on the retention of staff.

Louise Burgess, began working at the home 13 years ago as a healthcare assistant and has undertaken a great deal of accredited training. In 2003, Louise became a qualified NVQ Assessor and she is now Training and Development Manager for the nursing home group, responsible for assessing the staff's NVQ progress. From her own training experience, she felt that the staff and the business would benefit from greater access to funded training and approached the Train to Gain pilot scheme for advice.

Louise said: "I was put in touch with Train to Gain Skills Broker, Phil Newton, who talked me

*through the training options for our employees and funding streams which were available to us. Many of the carers have now completed their Level 2 NVQ, which has greatly increased their confidence, so they now feel empowered to use their knowledge to raise the standards of care for clients."*

**One of their carers, Loraine, a long serving member of staff, adds: "Training has really helped me to work well with other colleagues and respond to clients' needs. It makes you stand back and evaluate how you have been doing things and makes you think. With more qualifications, you are empowered to question and are more sensitive to change."**

Louise adds: "We have introduced an achievement recognition system among the carers. The colour of the trim on their uniforms indicates achievement at various NVQ levels. Clients know the system and take an interest in progression of staff, which has contributed to the overall positive atmosphere at the home."