

CASE STUDY



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | South
West

GINSTERS (Lynher Bakery)

"It has been excellent seeing the profile of Ginsters continue to increase and for us to be recognised for the way we engage and develop our employees. Investors in People has certainly helped us to remain focused in this area and we have found value in aligning our assessments to look at the impact of change and improvement programmes we have introduced into our business. Our annual staff survey links well to the Investors in People standard and this is demonstrating a high level of workforce engagement. Having positive and engaged employees is essential because it helps us to continually grow our organisation"

Nicky Taylor
Learning & Development Manager



Nicky Taylor, Learning & Development Manager, Ginsters

BACKGROUND

- Size:** 750 employees
- Sector:** Manufacturing - food industry
- Location:** Callington, Cornwall
- Status:** Most recently recognised July 08. First recognised in 1996. Recognised a total of 15 years to date. Nicky Taylor is also an Investors in People Employer Representative.

THE ORGANISATION

Ginsters, based in Callington, Cornwall, was founded in 1968 and initially produced Cornish pasties. The company was acquired by Samworth Brothers in 1978. Since then the company has widened its product range to other baked goods and also sells sandwiches and other items produced by other group companies. Customers include the major retail groups, garage forecourts and convenience stores.

- **Staff perceive a very strong commitment to continuous improvement**
- **Staff commented on effective, open and honest communication and feedback.**
- **Managers were seen as effective, competent, knowledgeable, supportive and positively involved with staff and their development.**
- **Staff are effectively developed to high skill levels which mean managers are confident in delegation.**

THE CHALLENGE

Ginsters recognise the importance of making sure their people are well looked after. They saw Investors in People more as a tool to confirm that what they were doing was right rather than driving them to do things in a certain way.

Although Ginsters have excellent internal communications in place, including their own staff association, different methods of communication are challenging for any business the size of Ginsters and they wanted to ensure they had the best systems in place and continually implement new ones.

THE STRATEGY

Investors in People relates well with Ginsters KPIs for the business and Ginsters saw it as a way of aiding planning and communication. Their Assessor, Carolyn Inger was given a particular area to look at. The assessment was used to look closely at the Personal Development Programme and the effectiveness of change. Other areas that were given particular attention were the 'Learning & Development' and the 'Culture & Change' programmes in the bakery.

It's important to know the bottom line impact on any actions taken and Ginsters were aware that they could use Investors in People to put evaluation processes in place. Although mandatory training, which is essential due to legislation, is not evaluated, other training is, and it is helpful if this is periodically checked.

Staff turnover is low at Ginsters but they wanted to be able to map their human resource strategy against Investors in People.

THE IMPACT

At interviews for new staff, the applicants are made aware of how the company helps people to develop and Investors in People has proved an easy way of promoting this. There was a time in Cornwall when teenagers would be told by their parents "If you don't study, you will end up working at Ginsters". Nowadays, parents say to their children "If you study hard at school, you may be able to work at Ginsters". There has been a rigorous assessment process for new roles and excellent training is offered. There has also been a positive impact of people moving into new roles.

Through using Investors in People Ginsters were able to demonstrate to people the part they played in business planning decisions. There are a range of ways that staff are rewarded and recognised such as profit sharing, social events and the Active Workplace Programme.

The 'Active Workplace Programme' encourages people to lead more healthy and active lifestyles. A gym has been built on site and a range of activities arranged to encourage staff to engage in the programme. These activities have all come about as a result of staff suggestions.

Also in place is a health screen programme, initially introduced with what was, at the time, Caradon District Council. In partnership with 'Sport England' Ginsters have arranged for research into the impact on providing these healthy lifestyle opportunities to staff.

Ginsters are also involved with Skills for Life which they promote internally. This can often be a sensitive issue for employees so the business has tried hard to get as many people engaged as possible. It is always looking for new ways to achieve this including working with its Sector Skills Council to look at industry specific support. ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) is offered in conjunction with Cornwall College Saltash and, for those staff who live farther away from the Bakery, courses can be offered nearer to their homes to help them engage easily with their learning. ESOL concentrates on speaking, listening, reading, writing and conversation skills.

THE RESULTS

Investors in People was helpful in communicating leadership and development and re-assured people that it does reach the Investors in People framework. Years ago, there would be panic when the Investors in People assessment was due. Now there is no preparation at all – it is not needed, as all of the systems fit in with Investors in People framework. Staff are happy to take part in interviews for the assessment.

Investors in People helped Ginsters to ask themselves 'how are we engaging our employees with our strategy and plans for the business?'

By introducing evaluation procedures, Ginsters are now able to measure the effectiveness of their training, their communication systems and their business planning systems.

Investors in People enabled Ginsters to assess what they do and how it related to initiating and maintaining the improvements needed to make sure they maintained standards.