

**As part of a review into the best way to manage BIGGA Headquarters in the future, the Headquarter's Management Team decided to determine the relevance of Investors in People to the long term aims and objectives of the Association.**

# FUTURE INVESTMENTS

## **What is Investors in People?**

Investors in People (IiP) is the National Standard for the effective investment in the people in a work place. IiP sets the framework for integrating people management with a business plan by creating a culture of continuous professional development. This, in turn, can lead to a better qualified, happier, better motivated work force, which leads to less staff turnover and better customer care. For BIGGA, a happier better trained, well motivated Headquarters Staff means improved performance, better response times, better productivity and improved service to members.

## **Why is BIGGA doing it?**

As I intimated above, the BIGGA Headquarters Management Team have been looking at ways to improve the service to members through better customer care, increased sponsorship and maximisation of profit. This could be achieved by:

- Becoming more competitive.
- Managing staff in a way that improves flexibility and profitability.
- Investing in training and development of staff.
- Communicating the aims and objectives of the Association to all staff.
- Enhancing performance by having a 'winning' team.

## **What are the benefits?**

Investors in People delivers genuine business benefits to organisations which reach the Standard. As the Standard is concerned with continuous development, the benefits continue to expand. Many companies have seen improvements in sales, productivity, profitability, cost reductions and increased customer care. Moreover, staff are better motivated, which in turn reduces sickness and absenteeism. Investors in People see a reduction in staff turnover and attract better people while saving on recruitment costs.

## **What does it involve?**

For BIGGA Headquarters to become an Investor in People, it must meet 23 targets. These targets are

grouped into four areas ie, commitment, planning, action and evaluation. To meet the targets set in the first area, commitment, needs:

a. The full commitment from the Board of Management, Executive Director, Department Managers and all staff to train and develop all employees to meet the needs of the Business Plan.

b. Communication of the Business Plan's aims and objectives to all staff.

c. Consideration of what staff at all levels will contribute to the success of BIGGA and the effective communication of their contribution to them.

The second area, planning requires that:

a. BIGGA produces a written business plan setting down the aims and objectives of the Association.

b. BIGGA produces a written training and development plan, which specifies how the business aims and objectives needs will be met, including the identification of resources.

c. Objectives are set for training and development actions at organisation, team and individual level.

d. Training and development objectives are, where possible, linked to National Standards.

The third area, action, requires that:

a. All new employees are given an induction course.

b. Managers are effective in fulfilling their training and development responsibilities.

c. Managers support their staff and keep them aware of training and development opportunities.

d. Action is taken to meet training and development needs.

The fourth area, evaluation, requires that:

a. BIGGA evaluates the impact of training and development on skills, knowledge and performance, against the aims and objectives of the Business Plan.

b. The Board of Management understands the broad costs and benefits of training and development.

c. The Board of Management continues its commitment to training and development and to any improvements identified as a result of the evaluation.

## **How far has BIGGA gone towards Investors in People?**

The Board of Management, the Executive Director, the Management Team and all BIGGA staff are fully committed to managing HQ in such a way as to meet the requirements of IiP. This commitment has been achieved by communicating, both up and down, at Board Meetings, Management Team Meetings, Bimonthly Staff Meetings and at "Brainstorming Meetings" attended by all staff. BIGGA is now ready to commit, formally to the Principles of Investors in People.



## **INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**

As part of the process of reviewing the aims and objectives of the Association, the Management Team has reviewed all areas of membership services and benefits and how those services and benefits are provided. This process, which has involved all staff, has led to the production of a written business plan which sets out the main aims and objectives of the Association, over the next five years.

These objectives range from improving the profit margin, thereby improving membership benefits to ensuring that sufficient assessors are provided for N/SVQs in Turf Maintenance and Turf Management.

A formal induction programme is being developed, with input from all staff. This includes items such as Health and Safety, pay and conditions, working routine and telephone procedures.

A formal training plan, matched to the Business Plan is being developed. This plan will be linked to regular, biannual appraisals. Part of the plan includes training Sami Collins as a D32/33 assessor for Business Administration and setting a base line qualification of NVQ Level 2 for all office staff.

Communication of ideas, aims and

objectives is being improved. Staff meetings now take place twice each month, team meetings are being formalised and a staff newsletter will be produced each month.

## **What advantage will members gain?**

Visitors to Aldwark Manor are already seeing positive benefits of the work done so far. "Staff seem happier and better motivated," said one recent visitor. "They seem to be contributing more," he continued. Better staff motivation should lead to better customer care ie members should get a better service. Improved productivity should allow the staff to do more work in the working day, again leading to a better service for members and to increased income. Increased income can then lead to more membership benefits and, hopefully, increased membership.

## **What does it all cost?**

The North Yorkshire Training and Enterprise Council is providing support and advice at no cost to BIGGA. Assessment to the IiP Standards, by an independent assessor costs approximately £750. Staff training and development has been included in the Budget for several years and these costs should not increase in the short term. Any training and development that is identified through appraisal and regular monitoring will have to be resourced and budgeted. The only costs, therefore have been time and effort and the cost of assessment. A small price to pay in order to gain a better trained, better motivated, more productive work force, leading to a better service to all members.

Gaining Investors in People is not easy. It requires commitment by all members of staff, management team and Board of Management and a great deal of hard work. The IiP Standards are based on a common sense approach to people management and staff training and development. The benefits of working towards IiP can have a great impact on a company's business success and the success of BIGGA, as a company will be reflected in the increased benefits given to members.