

## new recruitment and retention strategy for Metal Bulletin

### the challenge

**how does a well-established company maximise staff retention and motivation in a challenging marketplace?**

Metal Bulletin plc is a global publishing company with a turnover of more than £45 million. The company takes its name from its principal title, 'Metal Bulletin', first introduced in 1913. Its mission then, as now, was to provide 'must have' timely information and price indications for the global non-ferrous metals and steel markets.

Today the company operates in an increasingly complex environment. Employing over 450 staff, its publishing business extends far beyond the metals and steel markets into non-metallic minerals, mining, financial derivatives, managed and hedge funds, textiles, energy, shipping, statistical analysis, and economic forecasting. The scope of its product offerings has also evolved from printed publications and consultancy to the full range of electronic delivery mechanisms and the staging of conferences, exhibitions,

and training seminars around the globe.

Operating within such an increasingly challenging market place, and with acquisitions accounting for the majority of the group's growth, Metal Bulletin

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recognised that its continued success was dependent on the development of effective and uniform management practices. In particular, to sustain and build upon its success, it needed to focus on both the

recruitment and retention of the best possible staff.

Gordon Thorne, Business Manager and member of Metal Bulletin's training committee explains the company's goals: “As a direct consequence of the calibre of our staff and their attractiveness to the competition, inevitably we lose people. Our challenge could be articulated simply. We needed to recruit the best possible people as efficiently as possible and to manage all of our staff in such a way that we maximised retention.”

Their challenge therefore was to embed a new recruitment and retention strategy across the entire organisation, which would form a core part of managers' job remits on a daily basis. Metal Bulletin realised that to do this effectively, it would need the help of an outside expert.

### the choice

**a long-term consultative relationship**

Metal Bulletin selected Forty2 as their training partner to help create and implement this new strategy.

Why?

“We were impressed by Forty2. They challenged our thinking, helped us to identify our specific issues and worked with us to develop solutions designed specifically for our situation”, says Gordon Thorne.

With a reputation for quality learning solutions that help businesses enhance their performance and increase employees' effectiveness, Forty2 was well placed to design a solution for both Metal Bulletin's immediate and long term objectives.

As Thorne continues, “Of the various training providers we considered, we felt

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us in an advisory capacity and guide us in the long-term. This was important; we wanted to develop a lasting collaborative relationship with a provider. We did not simply want a quick-fix with respect to our immediate issues.”

The proposition presented by Forty2 ensured Metal Bulletin would receive a truly bespoke answer to their challenges, one based on genuine collaborative partnership and long term commitment.

## the solution a holistic approach

Forty2 designed and delivered a three-phased solution, involving Metal Bulletin's management at all phases of the project to ensure the needs of individuals and the needs of the Group were consistently addressed:

**Phase 1** involved one-to-one interviews with a selection of potential participants. This enabled Forty2 to develop an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by the managers within Metal Bulletin and, as a result, to identify priority areas of focus for the training itself.

**Phase 2** was designed for senior management. Interactive workshops were run to meet a number of key objectives: to familiarise Divisional Heads with the content of the programmes their staff would be attending; to promote the importance of example behaviour; and to support senior management in the development of the coaching skills required to assist their staff through the training.

**Phase 3** involved delivery over three months of a detailed, interactive management training programme, with specific focus on

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selection interviews and staff retention, to 30 of Metal Bulletin's departmental managers.

Nick Anderson, a Director of Forty2, comments: “Involvement of senior

management can be a critical factor in terms of the success of any training initiative. Input from senior management during the design stage is invaluable. Just as importantly, it is essential that higher tiers of management lead by example, mirroring the messages we deliver during the training itself.”

Crucially, part of the Forty2 approach is to constantly monitor, evaluate and support the programme's participants to ensure maximum effectiveness. As Anderson explains: “We also provide senior management with coaching documentation and instruction designed to help them provide the necessary level of support to their staff, before, during and after the programme. The training we deliver is only the beginning. Effective coaching of participants by senior management helps and encourages the participants to utilise the principles we have covered, thereby ensuring real change in working practice.”

## the results immediate impact and lasting change

Having partnered with Forty2, Metal Bulletin's new strategy for the recruitment, management and retention of a skilled workforce has seen tangible benefits in both the productivity and motivation of its management and staff.

Forty2's ongoing support ensures a maximum takeout for participants of the lessons learned during training, and a relevant, practical framework to help managers quickly and effectively apply their learning to their everyday roles.

Tom Hempenstall, Metal Bulletin's Group Chief Executive, concludes: “All too often

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the impact of training is limited and the benefits short lived. The approach

adopted by Forty2 is designed to ensure exactly the opposite. We are amassing, through post-course interviews and performance appraisals, concrete evidence of long-term benefits that can be directly attributed to the programmes delivered. We put this down to Forty2's on-going approach, phased delivery and close involvement of the trainees' immediate managers. We have at last found a training company that creates both immediate impact and, more importantly, lasting change.”