

new skills bring added value for OSRAM and its customers

the challenge

how to achieve growth in a contracting market, without compromising profitability?

Founded in 1919 and now operating in 140 countries, OSRAM is no stranger to cultural change. One of the world's leading suppliers of innovative lighting products, Osram is also well aware of the need to control cultural change to achieve positive results. Since its entry to the UK market earlier this century, OSRAM UK has achieved consistent growth and currently turns over £67.5 million, employing around 125 people. Even so, OSRAM recognised the need for additional growth to further enhance its success.

In particular, one of OSRAM UK's divisions, the OEM Business Unit, was facing a major challenge: how to increase market share from 14% to 20% in 2 years, in a contracting market, without compromising profitability?

Graham Lewis, OEM Division Business Unit Manager, sums up the

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challenge: “This was tough given the market conditions. To continue being successful we needed to think and operate in a new way. Our goal was to adopt a strategic approach to business development, building long-term

partnerships with key accounts. Our focus was to add value to our customers' businesses.”

Adding value was therefore an ideology that required implementation across the whole division: “For this to happen,” adds Lewis, “we needed to work effectively as a team, sharing best practice and maximising the strengths of individual members.”

Lewis recognised that he could not meet this challenge alone. He needed the assistance of an external organisation that could effectively develop the skills and behaviours of staff to bring about the desired cultural change; a partner with the proven track record to deliver real results and a maximum return on investment.

the choice

a partner who could add real business value

OSRAM selected Forty2 as their training partner.

Why?

With a reputation for quality and impact, the Forty2 approach is based on true collaboration, working closely with customers to enhance their performance and achieve tangible results.

As Gerry Kurzon, Head of Personnel at OSRAM UK Ltd explains: “We were interested in an organisation capable of understanding our business and

developing strategies that would help tackle the real business issues facing

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us. We were not interested in just another course provider.”

Forty2's unique proposition of a broad range of bespoke learning solutions that met individual and business needs was attractive to OSRAM. As Kurzon describes it, key to Forty2's selection was “their willingness to spend time in discussion with us. In particular, to challenge our own understanding of some of the issues.”

the solution

a new way of working

The first step for Forty2 was to generate commitment to the new direction across the whole division and prepare staff to successfully adopt a new way of operating.

Forty2 founding Director Nic Fallan explains: "Our starting point was to consult directly with the participants and involve them closely in the development of the programme to ensure that they recognised the need for change."

Forty2 facilitated a series of preliminary workshops and one-to-one meetings designed to communicate the goals of

the initiative and to help the team members define their new roles, and associated skill development areas. Learning programmes were then

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implemented which focused on enabling employees to move towards true partnership with their own clients,

and develop with them strategies to add mutual value.

Fallan continues, "Our approach allowed us to maximise OSRAM's investment by raising levels of commitment through delivery of programmes that were directly in line with both the goals of the business and the participants' own requirements."

the results

benefits through the highest standards

Now, OSRAM are enjoying improved business efficiencies within their OEM Business Unit. In particular, as a result of the training the OEM division has emerged with a focused, unified strategy for its business development.

As Lewis says: "The training has undoubtedly helped my staff. We identified those customers who were most open to the concept of 'business partnership' and focused our energies accordingly. The training programmes provided my staff with the skills required to develop strategies designed to add real value to the selected customers' businesses.

Consequentially, we have built strong commercial partnerships and have helped our customers grow. As a result, we have increased our sales by 25%

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and are making steady progress towards our goal of 20% market share."

Furthermore, as Kurzon concludes, Forty2 are setting standards industry-wide: "The net effect of these programmes has been to set standards for our sales people which the competition is busily chasing."