

BACKGROUND

Longwood Engineering designs, manufactures, supplies, installs and commissions a range of screens and screenings handling equipment for a range of sewage and waste water treatment applications. Their client base is typically the main water authorities, including United Utilities and Southern Water. Longwood Engineering employs 85 full – time staff with an annual turnover of £11.9 million.

Emily Homan, Administrator, is the School's main contact and is the sustainability lead for the business. Supported by the Directors and the HSEQ administrator, Emily is primarily responsible for company's Environment & Carbon strategy. Longwood firmly believe that being a responsible and sustainable business is key to being a profitable contractor. Sustainability is a core value within the business and has been for many years.



As a manufacturing company with its own supply chain, one of the biggest sustainability challenges is ensuring traceability of the products they buy. For example, the motors, gears and brushes they purchase are bought from a larger retailer who relies heavily on overseas suppliers - Longwood have targets set to ensure that they regularly assess their supply chain for approved suppliers with a lower carbon footprint. Targets have also been set in relation to apprenticeships, as sourcing the correct employees with the transferable skills required has at times proved difficult – the shortage of skilled workers is an issue throughout the industry.

INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

Emily first heard about the School from one of their key clients – United Utilities, one of the School's partners. Consequently, Emily Homan and Keith Wigley (HSEQ administrator) then attended the Infrastructure Supplier Day in Birmingham in June 2015. They were impressed at the involvement of the School's partners and found it a useful experience to assess of ability and future needs and to analysis what is required of them to become a Gold member of the School.

SELF - ASSESSMENT & ACTION PLAN

After attending the Birmingham Supplier Day, Emily arranged for the self-assessment to be completed during their weekly Management meeting, she recognised the importance of getting senior level commitment to the sustainability agenda and to also pool together company knowledge so as to get both a unbiased and accurate understanding of where the gaps in knowledge were, and a meaningful Action Plan.

Over the last 6 months Emily has embraced this opportunity, and has used the self-assessment and action planning tool as a mechanism to drive continuous improvement within the business and its supply chain. Emily plans to re – assess the business formally once a year to review and monitor progress within the School.

The Action Plan recommended Longwood Engineering should attend a number of the School's training workshops; however, the workshops have not yet been in a convenient location to justify sending their small team away for a day. The e – leaning modules have therefore proved to be a valuable and time efficient resource for the company. They have also helped highlight some of the issues faced by their customers within their own supply chains.

IMPACT

As a result of engaging in the School, Longwood Engineering has:

- ✓ Taken a proactive partnership approach to encouraging existing suppliers and potential new suppliers to join the School and embrace the sustainability agenda. Information about the School has been sent to key suppliers asking them to sign up, highlighting the business benefits of membership.
- ✓ Plans to use the School's e-learning modules, training workshops and online tools to help develop sustainability competence within the business.
- ✓ Taken a proactive approach to communicating sustainability related issues internally with a view to changing behaviours and cultures, and embedding sustainability into the core of the business.
- ✓ Achieved the Supply Chain Sustainability School Silver badge, and plans to promote their engagement with the School via the website and reference their 'silver' membership in the pre-qualification process where applicable.

BENEFITS

Competitive advantage – Although Longwood Engineering is relatively new to the School, they hope that their engagement in the School and 'Silver' status will ultimately result in helping them win more business as the School continues to expand, securing more client partners.

Identified relevant legislation and policy – the resources on the School have highlighted important pieces of legislation to Longwood Engineering that were not previously known.

Cost and time savings – Longwood Engineering trust that the resources that sit within the School are high quality resources, relevant to their industry. Emily uses the School as the 'go to' place for sustainability related information and updates, saving the business significant time and money searching the internet, trawling through hundreds of resources.



Reduced reputational risk – A greater understanding of their supply chain, in particular around ethical issues gives them the reassurance that their reputation is not at risk.

LESSONS LEARNED

Sustainability is an extremely complex issue and it is impossible to be completely up to date on everything.

Securing senior level buy in to the agenda and having employees with personal objectives more linked to sustainability are key changes to be implemented if Longwood Engineering is to continue to maximise its benefit from belonging to the school.

THE FUTURE

In order for Longwood Engineering to remain engaged in the School it is important to:

- ✓ Provide training workshops across the UK and in more convenient locations
- ✓ Continue to keep the resources fresh and up to date
- ✓ See evidence of the School's growth and success stories.