Managed Service Provision Case Study

The pharmaceutical client had established that their existing model of using temporary agency contractors onsite to support their own scientific staff no longer met all their requirements.

CK Group were selected by a rigorous competitive tender process to provide a new model of outsourced managed service provision in the areas of Molecular Pathology, Neuroscience, Bioinformatics, Cheminformatics and Analytical Chemistry in support of the client's cutting-edge discovery research program.

The model was conceived to retain and develop further the highly skilled temporary, long-term contractors in place but also to reduce the administrative and management burden of the client's own staff and to provide a more beneficial employment package for them with a view to improving attraction and retention. Future recruitment was included in the model and CK Group's proven inhouse specialist recruitment ability was considered key to success in this area.

At the outset CK took on:

- TUPE transfer of existing contractor workforce
- A disjointed team who were sceptical of the new change and had little knowledge of or contact with each other
- No consistent management structure in place
- Minimal HR support
- Low motivation levels within the team around their status on site
- General dissatisfaction in the team with the terms of their temporary contract

Key Project Issues

1. Disjointed team with low morale
2. Client understanding of the model
3. Recruitment and induction of new employees
4. Key Performance Indicators

CK Group

ckgroup.co.uk

01

Disjointed team with low morale

Management Structure

A management structure was put in place based on CK Group's established team structure. This included on site HR support and clear lines of accountability and responsibility.

Enhanced contractual terms

Employees gained permanent contracts with benefits such as enhanced leave entitlement, sick pay and pension contributions and private medical cover.

Management of performance and absences

Regular structured performance reviews were put in place with informal reviews and follow-up. Training was agreed and provided and any concerns or issues raised were tackled promptly to ensure effective resolution. Robust absence management was put in place and performance management was begun to deal with any concerns.

Introduction of Team Coordinators

Team Coordinators were appointed from the existing team, to create supervision and resolution capacity on the ground. They were able to bring technical and scientific understanding together with an element of peer support to the resolution process. The creation of this new role provided a very welcome development opportunity for team members, who were provided with extensive support and training so that they understood the model well and were ambassadors for it.

Team Communication

All employees had regular 1 to 1's with their Team Coordinator or HR, plus an open-door HR policy to encourage communication. Client feedback was sought for structured reviews, a quarterly newsletter celebrated successes and featured 'get to know you' articles. Surveys were also conducted to gauge employee engagement.

Team Building

Key to helping the teams come together and form stronger bonds were team building activities such as treasure hunts and sports days and regular get-togethers to welcome new starters. A journal club was also started as an opportunity for the teams to support each other and encourage development in their scientific presentation skills.

Development opportunities

A new role was also created for a Health and Safety representative. Soft skills training was identified and delivered and "lunch and learn" sessions were organised on various popular topics, all well attended.

02

Client understanding of the model

Because the nature of the model was new, it was important that all stakeholders understood its purpose and where the boundaries lay. Buy-in from client senior management was crucial so that they could promote and educate their teams on the necessary rules of engagement. This was done by building relationships and leading by example. CK was highly visible on site and there were many opportunities to engage with managers and educate on the model. The operational benefits and improvements being implemented by CK very quickly became clear. Early successes helped build a relationship of trust and co-operation for mutual benefit.

Regular formal steering group meetings supported the strategic management of the contract, quickly addressing and resolving any issues and promoting continuous improvement.

03

Recruitment and induction of new CK employees

New CK employees were recruited and selected almost entirely by CK, with some input from the client at the final stage to confirm competency level and technical ability. Effective recruitment and induction processes were key to success as it was important that everyone understood from day one the nature of the CK/client relationship and how they would fit within this.

This was addressed with:

- Clear messages delivered by the recruitment team throughout the recruitment process
- Interviews conducted by CK HR and CK Team Coordinator alongside client technical assessments
- A CK-specific induction and team "meet and greet"
- A CK buddy being assigned to all new recruits

04

KPIs

Key Performance Indicators were established in all areas to ensure the service delivered was aligned with and exceeded client expectations.

Project Success

There were many factors instrumental to this project's success, which started with a team of only 20 that grew over 5 years to 36 and achieved extremely positive client and employee satisfaction survey scores throughout:

- A clear and transparent management structure and governance
- Mutual trust in aiming for common goal
- Strong performance management with clear and regular feedback
- A fully supported team with a sense of pride and belonging
- Development opportunities aiding retention of highly skilled individuals
- HR support / open door policy
- Strong client relationships to enable resolution of problems
- Open and transparent communications
- High profile team engagement program
- Much reduced admin / recruitment burden for the client

CK Group