

Case Study

MRO Excellence Award

Unilever

The challenge

It was on the back of a chance discussion with Tony Latto, Unilever's Training Manager at the Leeds plant, that Brammer ended up working with Unilever on the creation and delivery of a huge training & development package.

Tony had talked of the need to make savings in energy consumption and in the site's overall efficiency. He also wanted to find innovations in engineering, saying that his engineers needed more in-depth skills for preventing failures and the associated downtime – both of which are expensive. For example, replacing a motor and gearbox can cause up to four hours of downtime in addition to the cost of replacement parts.

The solution

Eager to provide continual improvement to its customer, Brammer rose to the challenge posed by Tony that day, and helped devise a training programme that focussed on mechanical engineering, a critical function at Unilever's Leeds site.

Divided into six steps, training began with a questionnaire intended to identify any skills gaps, and ended with a practical final assignment taking four to six hours per week to complete and enabling trainees to apply their learning. This practical assignment required the engineer to resolve a 'live' problem in real time and, if necessary, enlist the assistance of Brammer's network of suppliers – many of whom are specialist training providers.

The programme comprised bespoke courses on topics such as bearing failure, chain and belt alignment, clutch coupling and gears and gearbox failures. And, to add realism to the training, Brammer constructed five rigs for instructors to use.

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The Outcome

This project has already yielded cost savings of over £88,000. It is anticipated that the final sum will run to between £600,000 and £800,000.

A further benefit is that the five rigs created by Brammer as learning tools for engineers are now also being put to use by Unilever in its recruitment process.

Brammer is proud to say that the project has been very well-received – not only by Unilever, who featured the project in last year's summer and autumn editions of its in-house magazine The Edge, but by large companies such as Nestle, Carlsberg & Britvic, who have visited the Unilever site to see best practice as part of their own training & development programme. Needless to say, Brammer is delighted to be invited by Unilever to provide refresher courses every six months.

Describing the project, Brammer's Regional Sales Executive Matt Hurrell, said:

"We found this an amazing opportunity to work with a blue-chip company, its engineers and development team. It was pulled together in a ridiculously short space of time, so a big thank you goes to the two Andy's and all the suppliers for pulling out all the stops."

Training Manager Tony Latto of Unilever, whose casual reflections set this huge project in motion, added:

"Working with Brammer has put us in touch with key suppliers who've delivered highly valuable training, and the opportunity to tap into this external expertise means we're driving our OEE forward. Our engineers say the training has been brilliant – perfectly pitched and a great refresher course. Most importantly for us, they now understand why our equipment fails."