

Productivity take-off in the aerospace industry

In the spring issue we reported that BAE Systems have stipulated the IMS Certificate as a mandatory qualification for all their IE staff. The good news for the IMS doesn't stop there.

UK productivity trainer Scott-Grant is pretty upbeat for two reasons. There has been a significant increase in the number of businesses who are looking to companies like Scott-Grant to get practical help and advice on improving their productivity – and a high number of those businesses are in the UK aerospace industry.

Scott-Grant's MD Richard Taylor explained: "We have been impressed with the number of companies connected with the aerospace industry in this country who are seriously committing to Lean and industrial engineering techniques as the way forward. Productivity is very much in the spotlight – and the skills and techniques introduced in the IMS Certificate course are considered ideal ingredients in addressing productivity issues effectively. The IMS Certificate is definitely hailed as the industry standard professional qualification.

"It is really encouraging that organisations in the UK aerospace industry have become so active in recent months and have wanted to introduce their people to and get them trained in these techniques. We hear a lot of negatives about economic pressures, but there are many positives around too and they tend to get a little buried."

The case of Bombardier Aerospace, Belfast is a prime example. Recently the company has invested in the development of productivity skills and techniques. Eight employees have been trained for the full IMS Certificate course in Belfast on four one-week modules – and all have achieved the qualification.

Meeting objectives

Bombardier's industrial engineering manager Harry Montgomery wanted manufacturing engineers to have a formal professional qualification in productivity techniques and he felt that the IMS Certificate would

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achieve that objective. The course trained Bombardier participants to apply both industrial engineering and Lean techniques in their work.

The investment by the company in helping to develop productivity improvement expertise is excellent news for the institute and the profession. It is a further example of the importance placed by the aerospace industry on these fundamental techniques.

Other companies who are associated with the aerospace industry, for example in fabrication, assemblies and component manufacture have been to Scott-Grant to be trained in the productivity techniques covered in the IMS

Certificate. Productivity really seems to be flying high.

Technical director Mike Seaman from Scott-Grant said: "The aerospace industry is responding to their market challenges and looking to improve response and delivery times, to maximise their potential, eliminate waste and balance their resources. Focussing on better and leaner processes enables all organisations to improve their productivity levels and add value throughout. We are delighted to have trained scores of people in recent months with an involvement in the aerospace industry and to help with the influx of new members for the IMS. It's a win all round."