

Quantuvis puts Hitachi Rail on-track for stronger leadership and communication...

Keeping Hitachi Rail Europe's high-speed Class 395 trains in operation on the Integrated Kent Franchise brings serious maintenance and safety responsibilities. Effective leadership and communication within Hitachi's rolling-stock maintenance teams underpins the company's professional approach. Since January 2012, Quantuvis Consulting UK has supported Hitachi by delivering Institute of Leadership Management (ILM) training at the company's Kent maintenance and repair facility...

Alex McFarlin is a rail training specialist for Hitachi Rail Europe based at Ashford in Kent. An important part of his role on the prestigious Class 395 project involves running management skills training. It's vital training for the men and women who service and maintain the sophisticated 140 mph (225 kph) dual-voltage trains to ensure their efficiency and safety between London and Kent.

In the beginning

'I inherited the relationship with Quantuvis from a colleague,' explains Alex. 'Quantuvis had been appointed after impressing our HR department. Since then, we've worked with them for staff development. Now we're planning to extend their role in our leadership development training. They're an integral part of our team now, a trusted partner that we hold in very high regard.'

Working closely with Hitachi

Since January 2012, Quantuvis has supported Hitachi with training for the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) Level 3 Certificate in first-line management for the company's internal apprentices.

'Their input has filled a vital training gap for our apprentices as they do one session a month over

the course of a year – plus various related projects and assignments.'

Now he's seen Quantuvis in action, Alex has a clear perspective on what differentiates them from other trainers he's worked with.

'From our first meeting, it was obvious that Quantuvis offer much more than just systematically working through a course syllabus. Just as we encourage our operatives to go the extra mile with rolling stock servicing and maintenance, Marilyn and Richard from Quantuvis drew extensively on their real-life experiences to add value to the training. This really brought the subject to life for us.'

Seeing the benefits already

With 18-months of training complete, Alex reflects on the positive outcome of Hitachi Rail Europe's relationship with Quantuvis.

'I've noticed a change in our teams already,' he explains proudly when discussing the benefits of the training. 'You can see how individual management styles have started to develop and mature under the Quantuvis training.'

'I can see management styles flourishing and colleagues developing more rounded, mature skills that will serve them well throughout their careers. Although we haven't yet quantified the benefits, it's obvious that employees' professionalism and confidence has increased over the last year.'

Alex expects more benefits further down the line, not only from the current ILM training, but from additional root cause analysis (RCA) training that he's planning with Quantuvis.

What the team says

As a trainer who has sat in on several Quantuvis sessions as well as arranging training for others, Alex understands the value of the newly-gained management and influencing skills. With completion of the first Level 3 Certificate course and a new Level 2 programme planned, it's still relatively early days for the Quantuvis-Hitachi training collaboration. Despite this, Alex describes how, towards the end of the course, he noticed participants enthusiastically discussing the benefits and applications of their new management skills. That's got to be good for Hitachi Rail Europe as well as the individuals concerned.

Into the future – building on success

Based on their positive experience with Quantuvis since early 2012, Alex is already

looking forward to building on the already-close working relationship.

‘For a start,’ Alex continues, ‘there’s the forthcoming root cause analysis (RCA) training for our duty staff managers; this will be recognised with an internal award from Quantuvis.

‘Having seen how Marilyn and Richard’s company works, and the quality of their training, we are confident that internal certification backed by Quantuvis is just as good for our purposes as going outside for the usual external certification.’

Improved pathways of communication

That’s high praise indeed for Quantuvis, the Maidstone and Cheltenham-based consultancy that’s been successfully delivering effective and sustainable development programmes for enlightened organisations for nearly a decade.

‘With the RCA training we’re looking forward to improving pathways of communication and our ability to cover all the angles when we carry out investigations,’ says Alex. ‘It’s very exciting and very important for our business.’

Endorsements like this reflect very well on Quantuvis and demonstrate yet again the high regard in which they are held by Hitachi.

Unreserved recommendation

Such is the impact that Quantuvis has had on the Hitachi Rail Europe teams that Alex has already recommended them and would unreservedly do the same again. ‘So far it’s only been internal recommendation for some of my other Hitachi colleagues. They can clearly see the personal development benefits.’

From his privileged viewpoint as a rail training specialist and course participant, Alex only has positive things to say about Quantuvis.

‘I really like their working style and their flexibility when the demands of our round-the-clock working have required short-notice rescheduling. The Quantuvis method is the exact opposite of traditional “dry”, inflexible teaching where someone just reads from course notes. They are very practical and always grounded in the reality of real working environments and organisational cultures.’

‘Good for our company and employees’

Asked to sum up the experience of collaborating with Quantuvis, Alex’s succinct reply says it all: ‘Think professionalism, added value, ‘bringing

more to the table’, a solid holistic approach and massive enthusiasm.

‘And of course there’s that ever-so-helpful flexibility when faced with our 24-hour operational requirements. It’s good to see, it’s good for our company and our employees, and it’s good for Quantuvis.’ ■

More information

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