



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE REVIEW REPORT

Kenard Engineering (Dartford) Company Ltd

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Assessor - Investors in People

On behalf of Inspiring Business Performance Limited

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Delivered by IBP, an official partner for London, South East and South West England

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1. Executive Summary

The Assessor would like to thank all the staff who took part in the review – everyone showed how committed they are to making the business a success and to identifying ways to keep improving.

There is a super team working culture at Kenard Engineering with many long serving staff. Example quotes:

“I love working here – it is a really nice place to work”; “Everyone gets on so well”; “They are really supportive”; “It is really welcoming here”; “We are trusted to make decisions and manage our own day”; “It is an easy place to work”; “They trust you here”; “The Company treats us well – especially with overtime”; “They really support you when you need it”; “They are more lenient here than other employers”.

Staff feel that they are in good hands with the leadership team. Staff believe that Kenard Engineering offers better job security than a lot of other companies. Despite difficult trading circumstances in the past, the senior management team has managed to retain staff and continue to build on skill levels, quality processes, invest in equipment and develop strong IT systems.

The following areas were recognised as good practise:

- Team working atmosphere;
- Open, honest and approachable senior management team;
- Improved communication structure;
- Focus on developing a culture of continuous improvement;
- Focus on improving Health & Safety;
- Clear business planning process and use of KPIs;
- Graduate recruitment and apprenticeship scheme;
- Responsibility and trust;
- Commitment to training and development;
- Caring and supportive culture;
- Social responsibility – support for charity fund raising and strong links with education;
- Structured people processes – appraisals and team meetings are embedded within the culture;

Opportunities for future development:

- Dealing with some staff behaviours – line managers to have training and tools to help have ‘courageous conversation’; team discussions on issues and acceptability; and HR support to deal with issues quickly.
- Consider reviewing some policies to support managers with staff issues e.g. smoking policy and also attendance policy.
- Reward and recognition – identify a staff group to review reward mechanisms and how these are working. E.g. review sick pay equality; pay bands and links to

competencies; PRP transparency and frequency; set up of team awards; ensure recognition for those who work 'over and above'.

- Set up of an employee consultation team/ social committee to work on improving people strategies and developing social events.
- Consider launch of improvements/ changes to ensure staff are positive and engaged for example, offer places on 5S training and provide coaching/ training on new processes.
- It would be useful to establish a Company Training Plan which could include: annual CPD for leaders and managers; twilight personal development sessions for apprentices and staff interested in topics; 5S strategy; graduate development and mentoring.
- People policies and strategies are not reviewed with staff feedback. It would be helpful to include discussion with an employee consultation team, focus group or as part of a staff survey.
- The appraisal form could be improved with input from staff and managers to re-word some questions, remove/ change scoring criteria and focus on key behaviours required to match the values of the business.
- As the senior managers are working towards developing an empowering culture it may be helpful to focus management development on enhancing coaching skills.
- Other staff feedback areas included:
 - Request to have more regular (quarterly) full company meetings from MD
 - Greater transparency of recruitment opportunities – notice boards, emails.

2. Introduction

Kenard Engineering Company Limited (Dartford) is a precision mechanical engineering company founded in 1954. It specialises in the manufacture of precision components using modern manufacturing methods and state of the art manufacturing equipment. As a world class supplier the components are used in a range of different industries which include aerospace, telecommunications, medical, formula one racing, nuclear and power distribution.

The Company's mission statement is "to continually strive for innovative manufacturing solutions through teamwork and technology, to consistently exceed our customers' expectations through quality and service". Kenard Engineering Company Limited is wholly owned by two brothers. Its Head Office is located at Dartford in Kent and there are 72 staff.

Kenard Engineering acquired an engineering manufacturing business in Tewkesbury and will be working towards and extending Investors in People recognition to this business. Also in the Kenard group is Seiki Systems Ltd which is a software company, based in Brighton, writing and selling manufacturing software and Dlog (UK) Ltd who provide specialised PC Terminals.

The Company first achieved IIP recognition in 1997.

This report will provide a summary of the areas of good practise and development areas followed by suggestions for moving towards an Investor in People Silver or Gold recognition.

3. Areas of Good Practice

Team working/ supportive culture

There is a lovely team working atmosphere within Kenard Engineering – staff are very supportive of each other and are willing to share knowledge and train each other. There are many long serving staff who are committed to the success of the business. (Indicator 6)

Senior management team

The senior management team were described as being open, honest and approachable. There is a commitment to 'do right by people' and genuine care is taken to support staff when they need it. Staff really value the sense of job security and feel that the business is in good hands. (Indicator 5)

Improved communication structure

Since the last IIP assessment, there have been good improvements to the communication structure throughout the business. There is a good two way meeting structure especially with the set-up of daily production meetings and twice weekly DMM meetings which capture staff feedback. In addition the Company Newsletter and quarterly presentation to all staff are successful in sharing business updates. (Indicator 1)

Focus on developing a culture of continuous improvement

Since the last review the quality systems at Kenard Engineering have improved significantly with the recruitment of a new senior Quality Manager. The focus has been on empowering staff to take ownership for ideas and making improvements. 5 S training with NVQ level 2 in Business Improvement Techniques (BIT) has been rolled out to a number of staff who have been engaged in making workplace improvements. The focus on quality systems has been explained via presentations to all staff. There is a clear process for all staff to use the Problem Solving Sheets (PSS) as well as DMM boards to list ideas/ issues and to ensure there is a clear feedback loop. (Indicators 3 & 7).

Focus on improving Health & Safety

The Company has really focused on improving the Health & Safety of staff within the workplace. The H&S committee meet regularly and discuss issues or concerns. Staff feel that there is a real commitment to providing H&S training and to purchasing equipment which supports staff safety. (Indicator 8).

Clear business planning process and use of KPIs

The development of the business plan includes feedback from all managers within the business and the focus is shared at the annual Summer BBQ event as well as business briefings during the year. Staff are very focused on providing a quality product and are proud of their work achievements.

There is a clear vision for the business and the business values are understood by all staff. Since the last IIP review, work has been carried out to ensure that KPIs are used within the business rather than just for customers. Display boards are used throughout the office and workshop which provide staff with up to date information on current performance against KPIs. KPIs are provided for delivery times, quality, scrap and rework.

Graduate recruitment and apprenticeship scheme

The Company continues to have an excellent apprenticeship scheme to ensure future succession planning for skilled engineers. A structured training programme is provided supported by attendance at college and qualifications. Some apprentices have been supported onto achieving higher level qualifications including sponsorship for a BSc Degree in Engineering.

More recently the Company has recruited engineering graduates to ensure the development of high potential and future succession planning. (Indicators 2 & 8).

Staff Responsibility and Trust

Staff described a calm working environment where they are trusted to get on with their work and make decisions. A 'no blame' culture was described where discussions take place over what went wrong and what can be learnt from the mistakes made. In particular, the night shift work as a 'self- managed' team and are a close knit unit who look out for each other. *"It is a calm place to work"; "I like the fact that I can work flexibly, as long as I get my*

work achieved I can choose to work through lunch, come in earlier and leave earlier”; “It is give and take here – you work extra when they need you and they don’t mind if you need to leave early sometimes”; “I really value the approach to overtime – you can choose how much you want to do as long as the work is there”. (Indicator 7).

Commitment to training and development

There is an ongoing commitment to staff development even when the Company is facing financial pressure. People are encouraged to identify their learning needs at their appraisal discussion and skills matrices identify team learning needs. There is a regular in house training programme in place to share knowledge and expertise across the staff team. Many staff have had the opportunity to undertake 5S training and the NVQ level 2 in BIT. In addition, some staff have opportunities to undertake external courses and undertake academic and professional qualifications. There is a very good training evaluation form which ensures that a review of training application and ‘sign off’ takes place. (Indicator 8).

Caring and supportive culture

Many staff really appreciate the caring and supportive culture which emanates from the top. *“When you really need help – they are really good to you”; “When I needed time off they paid me and I felt really looked after”; “you really find out how good your employer is when you need help – they cannot do enough for you here”; “Julie, our HR lady is wonderful – she will do everything she can to support you and give you time”. (Indicators 5 & 6).*

Social responsibility

All the staff take part in raising funds for the Lions Hospice which is led by a member of staff. The Managing Director dedicates 1 day each week to working as a Governor within education to ensure that engineering skills are developed as a career path from school and college leavers. (Indicator 1).

Structured people processes

Appraisals and team meetings are now embedded within the culture. (Indicator 5).

4. Development Opportunities

Staff Behaviours

There was overwhelming feedback that some staff behaviours are not being addressed which leads to frustration from staff who are working 'above and beyond'. In particular, examples surrounding smoke breaks, talking, sleeping, working to a 'bare minimum' level and listening to music via ear phones. There is also a perception that it takes a long time to deal with issues and some people have been given too many chances.

It may be helpful to have some small group discussions on behaviours and what is acceptable/ not acceptable in order to reset standards. In addition, equipping managers more with some training and tools to help them have 'courageous conversations'. (Indicators 1, 5 & 6)

HR Policies

It may be helpful to set up some clearer HR policies concerning smoking and attendance to support managers when tackling issues. The use of absence triggers with Bradford Factor scoring may be helpful for reviewing attendance levels.

It may also be beneficial to have a Company Handbook and Managers Handbook.

Reward Strategy

Staff feedback concentrated on the perceived unfairness of sick pay between office and the workshop as well as a level of cynicism around the profit related pay scheme. It may be useful to establish a staff group to review reward mechanisms and how well these are working. E.g. review sick pay equality; pay bands and links to competencies; PRP transparency and frequency; set up of team awards; and ensuring recognition for those who work 'over and above'.

In addition, some staff appeared to feel 'entitled to' receiving a number of benefits which are more generous than statutory requirements and those offered by other employers. It may be useful to share with staff the value of the total reward package offered by Kenard. (Indicator 6)

Staff Consultation

Many staff liked the idea of having a social committee to work on Company social events such as the Christmas party. It may be beneficial to extend the remit of this to an Employee Consultation Team who work on improving people strategies as well as developing social events. (Indicator 3)

Employee Engagement

There were missed opportunities for engaging staff in business improvements. Consideration could be given to the way changes are launched to ensure staff are positive

and engaged. For example, offer places on 5S training rather than tell people who will attend. (Indicator 7)

Company Training Plan

It would be useful to establish a Company Training Plan to meet organisational development needs. This could include: annual continuous professional development (CPD) for leaders and managers; twilight personal development sessions for apprentices and those staff interested in different topics; 5S strategy; graduate development and mentoring. (Indicators 2 & 9)

Self-Review of People Policies/ Strategies

People policies and strategies are not reviewed regularly with staff feedback. It would be helpful to include discussion with an employee consultation team, focus group or as part of a staff survey mechanism. (Indicator 10)

Appraisal Format

The appraisal meeting is in danger of becoming just a 'process'/ paperwork completion exercise. The length of the form and time needed to complete the paperwork are barriers to both staff and manager's motivation to complete the appraisal. The appraisal form could be improved with input from staff and managers to re-word some questions, remove/ change scoring criteria and focus on key behaviours required to match the values of the business. It is important that staff understand that this is 'their meeting' and therefore have ownership for the format. (Indicator 5)

Coaching

The next focus for leadership development could be on developing coaching skills to support the empowering culture that is developing. This will provide help with coaching tools such as the GROW model, NLP and appreciative enquiry to help during one to ones and more formal appraisals. (Indicator 4)

Other staff feedback areas included:

- Request to have more regular (quarterly) full company meetings from MD
- Greater transparency of recruitment opportunities – notice boards, emails.

Using the Investors in People Extended Framework

It may be useful for the management team to undertake a self review against the Investors in People extended framework and decide upon areas that would be beneficial to focus on. For example, refocus on Vision and Values, establishing a 360 degree leadership review process.

5. Stepping Up to Silver/ Gold

IIP Extended Framework - The following table provides an overview of the additional evidence requirements needed to meet the Silver/ Gold standard. The following key provides an idea of where Kenard Engineering currently sits based upon discussions:

<p>Clear core values relate to vision and strategy</p> <p>Key performance indicators are used to improve performance</p> <p>Social responsibility is taken into account in the strategy</p> <p>People and stakeholders are involved in strategy development</p>	<p>The learning and development strategy builds capability</p> <p>Plans take account of learning styles</p> <p>People help make decisions about their own learning</p> <p>Learning and development is innovative and flexible</p> <p>There is a culture of continuous learning</p>	<p>The recruitment process is fair, efficient and effective</p> <p>A diverse, talented workforce is created</p> <p>A work-life balance strategy meets the needs of its people</p> <p>Constructive feedback is valued</p> <p>The structure makes the most of people's talents</p>	<p>Leadership and management capabilities for now and the future are defined</p> <p>Managers are helped to acquire these capabilities</p> <p>Leadership and management strategy link to organisation strategy, taking account of external good practice</p> <p>Everyone is encouraged to develop leadership capabilities</p>	<p>Managers are role models of leadership, teamwork and knowledge sharing</p> <p>Coaching is part of the culture</p> <p>People are helped to develop their careers</p> <p>There is a culture of openness and trust</p>	<p>Reward and recognition strategies link to organisation strategy and are externally benchmarked</p> <p>Representative groups are consulted (where appropriate)</p> <p>What motivates people is understood</p> <p>Success is celebrated</p> <p>Benefits strategy goes beyond legal requirements</p> <p>Colleagues' achievements are recognised</p>	<p>Effective consultation and involvement is part of the culture</p> <p>People are supported and trusted to make decisions</p> <p>Knowledge and information are shared</p> <p>People are committed to success</p> <p>There is a culture of continuous improvement</p> <p>People can challenge the way things work</p> <p>There is a sense of ownership and pride in working for the organisation</p>	<p>Learning and development resources are used effectively</p> <p>Learning is an everyday activity</p> <p>Innovative and flexible approaches to learning and development are used</p> <p>People are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential</p> <p>All learning is valued and celebrated and is an everyday activity</p> <p>Mentoring is used</p> <p>Personal development is supported</p>	<p>The contribution of people strategies is measured and evaluated</p> <p>Impact on key performance indicators can be described</p> <p>Performance improves as a result</p> <p>Career prospects improve</p> <p>Flexible and effective approaches to measuring return on investment are used</p> <p>Return on investment in people is reported to stakeholders</p>	<p>Self review and information from external review are used</p> <p>Effective feedback methods are used to understand people's views on how they are managed</p> <p>Internal and external benchmarking are used</p> <p>People's views on how they are managed improves</p> <p>People believe it's a great place to work</p>
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Recommendation and Next Steps

Having carried out the assessment process in accordance with the guidelines provided for Assessors by Investors in People – United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills, the Assessor is satisfied that Kenard Engineering (Dartford) Company Ltd meets the requirements of the Investors in People National Standard (39 evidence requirements plus an additional 10 towards the extended framework). For future decision making concerning Investors in People – a bronze level recognition is a minimum of 65 evidence requirements, silver is 115 additional evidence requirements and Gold is 165 evidence requirements.

Investors in People recognition is granted indefinitely, with a proviso that reviews take place no greater than 3 years apart. Reviews can be undertaken at any time and more frequent reviews are recommended to maintain levels of good practice and continuous improvement. The organisation should discuss the timing of the next review with their Assessor using the Improvement Planning Meeting to agree the best strategy for future use of the Investors in People framework.

Both the Assessor and IBP would welcome your feedback on this review and you will be supplied with a Client Feedback Questionnaire to complete on line. We would very much appreciate it if you would complete the questionnaire after your Improvement Planning Meeting has been concluded.

Should you wish to contact a Client Relationship Manager at IBP for any reason, please telephone 0800 612 3098, use the contact option on our website www.ibp.uk.com or send an email to info@ibp.uk.com

6. Options for your next review

Stepping up to Silver

Kenard Engineering may like to consider adding on some extra evidence requirements within the next 2 years to achieve the 'Silver' award.

Investors in People Rolling Review

Rolling Review is a popular model for ongoing assessment which builds evidence over a three year timeframe, rather than all at once every three years. An annual review can be focussed on the parts of the framework most relevant to you at the time, reflect changing business priorities and focus on different parts of your organisation at different stages.

7. Support Available

Investors in People Interactive

This **free** online support tool is designed to guide you through development activities and help you maintain the benefits of using Investors in People as an organisational development tool. Obtain an on-going understanding of your organisation's current strengths and development areas by using the tool's diagnostic function which is built around 5 management practices which relate directly to the Investors in People indicators



You can also review and update your progress within the tool and access a wide range of downloads, good practice tips, templates and other resources to inspire and inform - no matter where you are on your Investors in People journey

www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/interactive

Promoting continuous improvement

IBP offers an integrated advice and assessment support service, workshops, surgeries and networking events to promote continuous improvement and maximise the benefits of working with The Standard. We also work with a team of highly experienced consultants to offer an extensive range of tailored business support and organisational development solutions to help improve business performance. Details of the support available to you can be found on: -

Internet:  www.ibp.uk.com
Telephone:  **0800 612 3098**
Email:  info@ibp.uk.com

8. IIP Framework - Outcomes Table

Core Standard										
Total number of core evidence requirements assessed - 39										
Total number of core evidence requirements met – 39										
	Indicators									
ERs	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
5	✓		✓						✓	
6	✓									

Wider Framework										
Total number of additional evidence requirements assessed - 19										
Total number of additional evidence requirements met - 10										
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
4	Core	Core	Core		Core				Core	
5	Core		Core						Core	
6	Core									
7	✓									
8	✓									
9	✓									
10										
11	✓									
12	✓									
13										
14	✓									
15	✓									
16										
17										
18	✓									
19										
20										
21	✓									
22										
23										
24										
25	✓									
26										
27										
28										
29										

9. Improvement Action Plan

This Action Plan can be considered further at the follow up meeting.

Area	Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Staff Behaviours	To discuss issues and frustrations with staff and reset clear standards of behaviour concerning smoke breaks, sleeping, use of ear phones etc. Possible small group discussion with 'Is this OK?' cards. Equip managers and supervisors with tools to have courageous conversations – provide training.		
HR Policies	To consider setting up some clearer HR policies concerning smoking and attendance to support managers when tackling issues. Consider use of absence triggers with Bradford Factor scoring. Consider establishing a Company Handbook and Managers Handbook		
Reward strategy	Review reward strategy and consider using a staff focus group for this. Review sick pay equality, frequency and transparency for PRP and whether open/ transparent job bands are needed linked to competencies.		
Employee consultation team/ social committee	Consider setting up an employee consultation team to work on key projects such as reward strategy as well as taking ownership for developing social events (e.g. Christmas party)		
Company learning and development plan	Establish a company development plan which could include: annual CPD for leaders and managers; twilight personal development sessions for apprentices and staff interested in topics; 5S strategy; graduate development and mentoring.		
Review process for people strategies and policies	People policies and strategies are not reviewed with staff feedback. It would be helpful to include discussion with an employee consultation team, focus group or as part of a staff survey.		
Appraisal form refresh	The appraisal form could be improved with input from staff and managers to re-word some questions, remove/ change scoring criteria and focus on key behaviours required to match the values of the business.		
Update Skills Matrices & competencies	Continue to update skills matrices and ensure that competencies are used. Enhance current system e.g. to enable TNA reports to be generated.		
Management development	Establish annual CPD for all managers e.g. coaching skills to support developing accountability.		

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