

case study | UK Power Networks

The UKPN Way: Creating a measurable culture to support the vision



“The best thing we have seen is a significant improvement in performance in just about every area. Engagement from the employees between 2011 and 2012 for example has improved by something like 25 percent. The reliability of the network has improved by 40 percent... Ultimately, getting judged to be Utility of the Year, I think is a reflection of everything we’ve done, and importantly the commitment that the management team and the employees have put in.”

— Basil Scarsella CEO, UK Power Networks

UK Power Networks (UKPN) was formed in 2011 when Cheung Kong Group (CKI) acquired three electricity networks — in London, in the southeast and east of England. UKPN delivers electricity to a quarter of Britain’s population — about 20 million people and eight million households.

Chief Executive Officer Basil Scarsella declared his aims for the company, including to be benchmarked by industry regulator Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) in the top third for customer service, reliability and efficiency, and to be benchmarked by employees, based on regular surveys, in the upper third of companies treating their employees fairly and with respect.

He engaged Senn Delaney to help shape the culture at the newly formed company, which has 5,000 employees, to help realize these aspirations. He wanted to create a culture that would help the power distribution company fulfill its goals of delivering a first-class network as measured by reliability, customer service, cost efficiency and safety and become an employer of choice and respected corporate citizen.

Since the power distribution company embarked on the culture-shaping program, creating the UKPN Way culture, progress has been measured on several key goals.

- In 2012 UK Power Networks dramatically improved the reliability of power supplies, customer satisfaction, staff engagement and development, and achieved a strong financial performance.
- The company beat strong competition to win the prestigious 2012 Utility of the Year title, and its

Olympic delivery team won Team of the Year at the Utility Industry Achievement Awards in December, 2012. In addition, a standout achievement was the delivery, on time and on budget, of the Olympic Park’s new state-of-the-art electrical network and keeping the power running for Games venues and London transport hubs.

- UK Power Networks had also been shortlisted for the Environment category in recognition of its unique partnership with wildlife trusts.

Some key milestones since embarking on the culture-shaping work include:

- Sustainably cost-efficient – indirect costs down 19% in 2011
- A respected corporate citizen – customer minutes lost down 42% in 2011
- An employer of choice – Employee engagement has improved by 25%; in 2011, lost time incidents were down 46%
- Improving customer satisfaction: 76% reduction in customer complaints (compared to 2010) and continual improvement in Ofgem ranking; Zero Harm 46% reduction in LTIs compared to 2010

“What is the biggest difference that I’ve seen? Improved performance, which is why we embarked on a culture change program in the first place,” says Scarsella.

learn more about Senn Delaney

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