

## Delivering excellent standards of service for customers

### **3663 Catering Equipment** incorporating hospitality and design

*“Achieving the Investors in Excellence Standard is a sign that in these difficult times, we are still travelling in the right direction. Recognition as an Investor in Excellence shows our stakeholders that not only are we holding our ground with profit lines, but we are investing in the depot, our people and our customers”*

**Lee Morton, Depot General Manager, 3663 Catering Equipment**

#### **Background**

3663 Catering Equipment is part of 3663 First for Foodservice providing caterers with a ‘one stop shop’ for all their catering equipment needs. The organisation has been established since 1927 and operates throughout the UK with next day delivery from the Bristol Warehouse.

Customers include restaurant chains such as Pizza Express and Zizzi’s through to county councils and independent restaurants. The depot has always recognised the importance of excellent customer service and the catering equipment team is committed to delivering right first time, on-time products.

With over 8,000 catering equipment items in stock, the depot needs to be firmly in control of all activities to ensure its customers are offered a wider choice of quality items at competitive prices. In addition to web orders, customers can choose to phone, fax, post or email their orders.

As the depot expanded to incorporate new products and clients as well as increased orders and delivery routes, it recognised the need to challenge and constantly improve its business model to successfully manage this increased demand. In 2008, Lee Morton (Depot General Manager) approached Investors in Excellence to help improve and build upon the foundations of excellence that were already in place.

#### **The benefits of excellence**

3663 Catering Equipment started its excellence journey from the same unenviable position as many businesses – increasing demands from a growing customer base and a need to improve levels of efficiency and service.

Using the continuous improvement mantra – ‘Plan, Do, Check and Act’ - the business was able to review its performance and identify and address key issues. The depot implemented the Investors in Excellence Standard as its preferred framework for business excellence. With the increased demand and frequency of orders, using the Standard has helped the depot manage a rapid change of culture, improve processes and continue to deliver increasingly high levels of customer satisfaction.

By working with the Investors in Excellence Standard, 3663 Catering Equipment has identified several key benefits of implementing the Standard as an improvement framework including:

- **Increased profits.** From a loss-making position in 2009, the depot now delivers double digit profits resulting in a 160% increase in profits to date (2011).
- **Improved employee satisfaction.** Increase in overall employee satisfaction results to 82% making it one of the leading arms in the business with the company overall average at 67%.
- **Enhanced customer credibility.** The kudos of achieving certification as an Investor in Excellence has helped the depot gain major national accounts.
- **Smarter working.** A structured approach to business improvement gave 3663 Catering Equipment the roadmap it needed to effectively keep out-going costs at a minimum while with careful planning, tripling its output.
- **Staff engagement.** The Standard involved everyone at the right level helping the depot to get to know its team and understand what each individual can bring to the table.
- **Common improvement language.** All employees are able to translate and understand the importance of improvement in their daily work; set the process up, Plan, Do, Check, Act and repeat this across all activities to ensure improvement occurs in all areas of the business.

### The future

3663 Catering Equipment has demonstrated a clear commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. The depot has embraced the Standard and continues to reap the benefits of having a structured approach to operating its business. The depot plans to continue with its improvement work, seek new ways of delighting its customers and is endeavouring to take its learnings and spread the word to other parts of the organisation.

If you recognise the challenges faced by 3663 Catering Equipment, get in touch today to find out how IiE can help you achieve similar successes ([click here for more details](#)).