

A good night's sleep

Omni Facilities Management relies on Mentor's advice line to keep its housekeeping business operational

If

you've ever spent a night in a Hilton, Marriott or Crowne Plaza, the odds are that Omni Facilities Management will have had a hand in curating your experience. The company is a leading provider of housekeeping staff to hotels all over the UK, employing 4,000 people across 150 hotels, including Hilton and InterContinental properties.

"The hospitality industry, in particular hotels, can be challenging from an HR perspective," says Rebecca Stafford, director of human resources at Omni. "It has a transient workforce and there can be quite a few employee relations matters, ranging from casual absence to theft allegations. It's good to have Mentor guiding us through any unforeseen obstacles that arise."

She adds that, along with Acas (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service), Mentor's website and eBulletins are their main source of legislation updates. She's also a fan of

the 24-hour advice line. "The advice line is very good. It's very supportive and the people are knowledgeable. Even after working in HR for 18 years, it's always good and reassuring to get a second opinion – and you know it'll be objective and professional."

Omni has been operating for over three decades but only joined Mentor in 2007: "We wanted 24-hour access to expert external advice, to ensure that we were entirely compliant and up to date with legislation. We also wanted the indemnity that Mentor provides."

For the last 18 months, Omni has subscribed to Mentor's online learning programme. Implemented by Stafford, the training was seen as vital in order to help the company continue to grow successfully.

"We decided to get all our area and regional management teams to complete the online Mentor training courses, from EL [employment law] and HR to health and safety, setting them the target of doing four of the 'bite-size' modules each month."

When managers had completed the courses, they were presented with certificates at the company's quarterly meetings. All of which has gone down brilliantly, says Stafford.

"Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and we've now got all our other managers and some non-management colleagues from head office to do the courses, as well as our management teams in the hotels we service; that's around 100 people. Catherine [Watmore, Mentor consultant] then comes in at our quarterly area manager meetings to deliver additional courses, which have been equally well received."



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Photography: Jon Chelcom, Getty Images

MENTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Catherine Watmore, senior employment law and HR consultant, Mentor, discusses the impact of the training programmes recently undertaken by Omni Facilities Management.

"I've been working with Omni since February 2007 and they've grown significantly in that time. Two of the most common challenges faced by growing businesses are figuring out what to prioritise and developing the management's skills in order to drive the business forward. "The management team had no previous management training, nor were there any ways to measure performance. While this wasn't a concern originally, it became obvious that the deficiencies in management skills were holding the company back from driving performance

forward. It would impact on efficiency and affect the business's competitive edge if this was not addressed. "Omni Facilities Management wanted comprehensive in-house, face-to-face training programmes to help build and improve management skills. I attended each of its quarterly area manager meetings last year and they were very pleased with the training and asked for it to be continued throughout its 2016 meetings. "In addition to this, the company rolled out our Mentor e-learning courses to its staff – and they are very keen to recognise success within the business, regularly crediting those who complete module sets. By the end of 2015, 24 staff had completed a total of 765 modules and the management training programme is an ongoing project."

GET WITH THE PROGRAMME

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Omni's HR director, Rebecca Stafford, has implemented a training course for staff via Mentor's online learning programme