

# How **H.J. Heinz** benefited by outsourcing flexible staff management

To meet seasonal fluctuations in consumer demand, the food manufacturers, H.J. Heinz need a flexible workforce of anything up to 500 temporary staff at their Kitt Green site, Wigan. They used to source this themselves but it was a huge job to select and retain the right quality of people. As it became increasingly demanding, Heinz sought a professional partner for the task. They appointed Manpower in 1991 and have worked with them continuously since.

By working with Manpower, Heinz have:

- freed up their HR management time for more core activities
- achieved a reliable supply of the right quality staff
- guaranteed the availability of emergency staff at short notice
- ensured productivity through high retention levels

# I CAN

...and I have

# Meeting the challenge

## The challenge

H.J. Heinz has one of Europe's largest and most advanced food manufacturing plants at Kitt Green, in Wigan. To operate cost-effectively while satisfying fluctuating consumer demand, they need to complement their permanent headcount with a flexible workforce. This can range at any time from a handful of people, up to 500. "Recruiting and managing such a resource is really a full-time job," Factory Manager, Mark Jones, said. "We were handling it in-house but the logistics were making disproportionate demands on our HR team – especially on those occasions when we needed 50 or 60 more staff at a few days' notice. It was clear we had to find another way."

## The solution

The solution was to have a managed service contract with a professional company. Heinz chose Manpower from the tender shortlist because their proposal was tailored so well to the key issues.

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Manpower promised increased efficiency, constant availability of excellent staff, and high retention levels to ensure continuity. They assess and train staff, providing a full induction and Food Hygiene course.

Most importantly, they identify people with a positive attitude to productive and flexible working.

## The benefits

Heinz saw gains straight away when they outsourced to Manpower in 1991. Manpower put a management team on-site that dramatically

reduced Heinz's administrative

man-hours. Heinz were able to switch their HR focus immediately from resource logistics to strategic issues, and the partnership has become closer, delivering further benefits every year since then.

"We used to be dependent on a host of individuals,"

Mark Jones said, "but now we have a genuine team of skills that

"Manpower help to keep our training costs low and our productivity and quality high."

are continuously at hand. Manpower have created a flexible workforce that we can call on to work in a variety of roles at different times of the year – sometimes with only an hour's notice. And these are highly reliable people. Staff turnover on site is only 1.2%, against an SLA of 3%."

It clearly helps with retention that the flexible staff have exact pay parity with the permanent Heinz workforce; but Heinz believe another critical factor is the way Manpower select the right people and manage them.

In Mark Jones's words, "Manpower give us continuity that helps to keep our training costs low and our productivity and quality high".

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