



## New Thinking. Leading.

### Business:

National online retailer

### Project Length:

Stage one - 30 days

### Leading Strategies Team Member:

Jo Pyman

In April 2015, the team at Leading Strategies were approached by a national online retailer to provide support with defining the future personnel requirements for its Norfolk based distribution centre.

An initial consultation meeting with the national HR Manager and a local Warehouse Assistant identified that the business had grown very quickly and therefore demand for staff to process orders had risen dramatically. The HR Manager admitted that the quality of new staff appeared to have decreased and staff retention was at its lowest ever point.

The Warehouse Assistant felt that work was generally processed in a chaotic way and that not all members of staff were contributing to the team effectively.

The Warehouse Assistant confirmed that in recent weeks, there had been a rise in incorrectly processed goods and returns to the warehouse had increased substantially.

### Key findings from the initial consultation:

- Internal recruitment processes had regularly been relaxed in order to ensure the distribution centre was adequately resourced
- New staff were allocated specific jobs on a piecemeal basis and were not adequately inducted into their role
- Staffing levels were higher than anticipated and personnel costs were rapidly rising, heavily impacting profit
- Day to day management of the centre had unofficially fallen to the original Warehouse Assistant, however this had not been officially communicated to him or the rest of the team.
- In general there was a great deal of uncertainty about the day to day operation and staff morale was particularly low.

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Following this meeting, the team at Leading Strategies devised a number of objectives and worked with the owner to help her implement them over the short term. They included:

-  Drafting a clear business plan with measurable objectives and milestones
-  Conducting a needs analysis to understand the resources that were genuinely required
-  Finalising a recruitment and resourcing budget for both permanent and temporary staff
-  Creating a distribution centre organisation structure
-  Clarifying staff roles and responsibilities through the creation of job descriptions
-  Devising KPI's for each job role in order to effectively measure performance
-  Reviewing the existing recruitment process and making recommendations for improvement
-  Devising a full suite of recruitment documentation, including tailored interview questions for each job type
-  Managing the recruitment process for a Warehouse Manager (incidentally the long serving Warehouse Assistant was promoted!)
-  Devising a simple but effective training and induction plan for new members of staff  
Setting up an in house bank of temporary staff
-  Creating an Agency Preferred Supplier List (PSL) to provide temporary staff in busier periods

These measures have already had a positive impact on the business with an increase in profitability and staff retention. Over the next few months we will be working with the business to develop their national personnel strategy as well as providing recruitment and management training to senior staff.

## Testimonial

*I am so pleased that I appointed Leading Strategies to help us get our business to a more stable position. Initially my senior team were very sceptical about inviting an external consultant into the business but I am thrilled to say that Jo was able to quickly win them over. The feedback I have received from the team has been great and importantly, I can already see the impact of the changes we have made to date. Although we only initially felt that the project would take a month, we have now engaged Leading Strategies to work with us over the next year to help continue driving our business forwards.*