

## Overcoming challenges through training

*With a view to enabling its people to successfully overcome business challenges, Drive India Enterprise Solutions has strengthened its training and development programme, says Cynthia Rodrigues*

The logistics business is one that makes tremendous demands on its people. Any organisation that wishes to succeed in this business should be equipped to manage the challenges that emerge on a continuous basis.

Knowing that the right knowledge can help people resolve these challenges successfully, Drive India Enterprise Solutions (Diesl) has strengthened its training and development programme. Srikanth Rapaka, head, HR and admin, says, “The recent restructuring of our organisation, along with a clear objective to provide integrated logistics solutions to our customers, raised the need for sector specific functional training programmes.”

Having worked with customers in certain industries over the years, Diesl has succeeded in meeting customer expectations and it is now time to raise the bar. In this context, it is now necessary to gain expertise and add value to customer offerings. Mr Rapaka adds, “We realised the need for a training programme that would be aligned to the requirements and challenges of our focus sectors. The training programmes that we devised seek to achieve the goal of ensuring operational excellence across functions and at all levels of the company.”

Foremost among these efforts is the alliance with management institutes in Mumbai that offer specialisation in supply chain management and collaborate with Diesl to deploy Warehouse Operational Excellence trainings. These trainings focus on productivity management, inventory control, warehouse design, material handling, etc that are imperative for enhancing operational skills. The target audience for this training comprises zonal operation heads, area operation heads, warehouse in-charges, etc.

Lorraine Pereira, training in-charge, says, “The national operations heads and zonal business heads have been involved in sharing inputs with the faculty of the management institute to ensure that training content and delivery are aligned to our requirements. The learning is aligned to our focus sectors, namely, FMCG, FMCD, Retail, Hi Tech (IT and telecom) Engineering and Project Logistics.”

Nearly 100 operations personnel including warehouse in-charges of large warehouses and area operations heads, in batches of 25, are scheduled to attend this two-day workshop, to be held in four zones across the country. Ten of these participants will be further trained as trainers to deploy this programme internally across all zones to cover nearly 280 more employees. The company seeks to also extend this programme to the executives, supervisors, and other workforce who are contractual staff.

To ensure effectiveness, every training programme will be followed by tests to capture how much the trainees have imbibed. This is done through certain parameters against which the reporting manager gauges each person at the beginning of the training programme and two months after its completion. These details are shared with the participants, enabling them to work towards improving their learning.

The emphasis that the company places on training is seen in the efforts that the training and development team makes to discover people’s training needs and the best means to fulfil them. This

year the team held discussions with functional heads and zonal business heads in an attempt to get to know more about the specific training required by each function and the number of participants across India that would attend each training programme. Inputs from the Balanced Scorecard were also considered during the formulation of this training plan. This information was then used to organise training programmes, geared to people's needs, for that year.

This year, Diesl has introduced the concept of in-house training that serves as a platform for internal faculty to share knowledge across functions that is aligned to their current work role. The finance, commercial and legal training and the IR and compliance management training are two such trainings that have been conducted in-house and have received a positive response.

Functional subjects like compliance management have become an integral part of the training calendar. Mr Rapaka says, "This year we conducted a special programme called IR and compliance management to equip the warehouse in-charges with know-how on industrial relations, compliance and labour laws that include the documents, registers and certificates that need to be maintained, the kind of interaction required when an inspector visits the warehouse, etc." This programme was designed and deployed in-house, since the expertise was readily available within the company. Going forward, Diesl would like to introduce more such functional and operational training programmes.

Diesl also conducts in-house training on safety processes to be followed with reference to warehouse operations. Apart from these training programmes, employees can also approach their respective reporting managers with specific requests to attend external training conferences.

Diesl has also instituted training programmes to train its people in behavioural skills. These programmes, which are held across the zones, include topics such as communication, time management, people management, presentations skills, customer focus, etc.

The significance that the company attaches to its people and their growth is clearly visible in the packed training calendar that the training and development team has created for its employees. Armed with this learning, there is no doubt that Diesl will successfully counter all the challenges that it faces.