



Implementing English as the core working language

Technoform Kunststoff Profile (TKP) is a German plastic fabrication company that designs and builds components for a wide range of industries. What began as a family business in 1969 TKP now serves customers worldwide, has more than 45 factories and sales offices, and employs more than 1,500 people.



The problem

With the prospect of an increasingly international workforce, TKP approached us to help them achieve their objective of establishing English as their core working language because they wanted the core communication within the business to be in English, and they wanted to achieve this within a 12-month period. In particular, TKP wanted their employees to use English for emails, meetings, and internal presentations.

They had previously tried to achieve this using only their in-house trainer but their attempt had been unsuccessful because the classes had focused on verbal language maintenance through group discussions in mixed ability groups. Although staff appreciated the opportunity of practising speaking, little progress had been made on improving written communications or on learning new vocabulary.

This time, TKP sought a more in-depth solution for implementing English as their main internal communication language, and they decided to start with a small initial test cohort of 27 members of staff from across multiple departments.

Our approach

To help TKP achieve their language goals, we recommended a minimum overall level of competency of B1 for all staff. We then conducted online non-verbal competence and oral communicative ability assessments to find out the level of the cohort.

We found that more than 80% of staff assessed had an overall competency score below our set benchmark. Also, we found there was a wide range of CEFT levels amongst staff; from A1 to C1 in the written skills test, and A2 to C1 in the oral skills test.

After carrying out a detailed needs assessment for each member of staff, we suggested a training package that could be tailored around the different working patterns of the various departments.

The solution

The London School of English made the following recommendations:

- Establishing a personal learning plan for each member of staff which would be reviewed as needed.
- A weekly 1-hour class divided into three groups based on level. Lessons will have equal focus on written and verbal skills.
- Structured remedial content during the group classes for employees testing below B1 which would focus on grammar and vocabulary.
- Individual lessons for staff with the lowest levels.
- Ongoing access to London School Online platform.
- Implementing a standardised English testing protocol for new job applicants
- 2-week immersive English courses in London for members of staff at a reduced rate.

Progress monitoring would be done using online assessments.

The results

These measures were well received and there was a collective commitment to achieving the goal throughout the company. The immersive courses in London for employees focused on:

- Speaking fluency
- Pronunciation
- Reading comprehension
- Listening comprehension
- Grammatical accuracy
- Vocabulary range

The average level for the first cohort of employees that came to Holland Park Gardens was B1/B2, and by the end of their training in London the average level was B2/C1.

At the start of the training, employees had an average confidence score of 4/10, which increased to 8/10 by the end of their courses.

“The best thing is that there are small classes, so everyone has enough time to talk.”

G. Köhler, Product Engineer, Germany

TKP employees continue to come to The London School of English for training.

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