

Foster Wheeler champions business benefits of BCS group membership scheme



In 2006, Foster Wheeler became the first organisation to implement the BCS group membership scheme for its IT staff. Since then, the inaugural scheme's continuing popularity reflects the success of the engineering giant's professional development strategy.

'So often, IT people's skills are not recognised,' says Divisional Director ICT, Keith Lucas, 'but BCS membership is helping to change this at Foster Wheeler by demonstrating the professionalism of the whole department and the integrity of every individual member of IT staff.'



FOSTER WHEELER

'We promote our group membership very loudly to clients; it's aligned with our core values and helps us demonstrate our commitment to quality.'

Keith Lucas, Divisional Director ICT

THE SITUATION

Foster Wheeler is a global engineering and construction company and power equipment supplier. The UK business unit has IT teams in the UK, India and South Africa. In 2006 they implemented the first ever BCS group membership scheme for their IT staff.

The scheme enables organisations to award BCS membership as a staff benefit for eligible employees, and to work closely with BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, to promote professional standards within their IT workforce.

Foster Wheeler now boasts a 95% take up in membership within their UK team, with ten employees having achieved Chartered IT Professional (CITP) status – the benchmark of IT excellence. They have a further 18 BCS members in their team in India.

'As an organisation we are highly focused on quality so it's crucial our IT function is aligned with the standards body for the industry,' says Divisional Director ICT, Keith Lucas. 'There's no better way to corroborate and demonstrate this than through BCS membership for our IT employees.'

THE BENEFITS

'These are challenging times for business and individuals, so it's more important than ever that we keep our team's skills updated,' explains Keith. 'Our people are our most important asset and the key to our success.'

Foster Wheeler invests heavily in both technical and soft skills improvements for individuals across the whole business and, as a leading engineering company, is committed to raising the number of Chartered professionals it employs in all disciplines.

'BCS membership is a natural step for our dedicated IT staff and we actively encourage them to work towards Chartered IT Professional (CITP) status.'

CITP is awarded by the Institute to practitioners who demonstrate they are performing at the highest levels of professionalism and competence in IT. 'It's a challenging process,' says Keith, 'and it helps us build in rigour to our career development process.'

'The new CPD recording tool (Personal Development Plan) from BCS is a welcome initiative that helps our team keep track of their personal objectives,' Keith tells us. The CPD portal forms a part of the BCS membership package, together with information, tools and networking to support members' development.

AT A GLANCE

- Over 90% take up within UK IT team
- 10 Chartered IT Professionals
- IT function aligned with industry standards body
- Demonstrates professionalism and integrity of IT staff
- Raises profile of team to a vital part of operations
- Demonstrates to clients our focus on quality
- CPD portal supports skills development

'Our participation in the BCS group scheme reinforces our organisation's commitment to professional standards and to working to an industry code of conduct. We promote our group membership continually to clients as a further demonstration of the company ethos for quality; it's aligned with our core values of Integrity, Accountability, High Performance, Valuing People and Teamwork.'