

Unilever IT Academy

SFI*Aplus* standard ensures best practice at IT Academy



Unilever





For a fast-evolving global organisation like Unilever, change is a fact of life, and exploiting IT effectively is one of the company's key weapons in the race for competitive advantage, believes the director of its IT Academy, Daryl Beck.

The company's intranet-hosted IT Careers Framework enables its 5,000 strong IT community to develop skills and capabilities which are based on industry best practice – the skills, training and development standard **SFIAPlus** from The Chartered Institute for IT.

Identifying future requirements

Daryl explains: 'The Framework enables our people to identify the skills and capabilities that would be required for any future role they would like to pursue. The development programmes should raise their skills level and lead to external accreditation as well as internal assessment.'

It was while looking at the skills and capabilities aligned to industry best practice that the Academy came across the Institute's IT skills, training and development standard, **SFIAPlus**.

SFIAPlus contains the SFIA (Skills Framework for the Information Age) framework of IT skills plus detailed training and development resources.

Beck says: 'The credibility of the Institute's badge – that label of industry best practice – meant that our Career Framework was easily accepted.'

Work on the Framework officially started in January 2006. A cross regional team identified ten "role families" from the 78 skills held in **SFIAPlus**. Role profiles were then created for each of the role families and aligned to a future IT function.

Employees are now able to access the profiles and assess their own IT skills against those required for either a potential or current role. They can then enrol onto a relevant development programme to enable them to reach the required skill level as well as gaining appropriate external accreditation.

Benefiting the business and individuals

Beck says: 'It's all about enabling Unilever to gain competitive advantage through IT. For this we need to ensure that we have an IT function with the necessary IT skills and capabilities based on industry best practice. For the members of the IT team it is about having the right qualifications, being professional and enabling the business to move forward.'

For further information contact the Institute on +44 (0)1793 417 747 or visit www.bcs.org/solutions

'In terms of relevant scope, and in terms of geographical uptake, we have found nothing similar to SFIAPlus'

Daryl Beck
Director of IT Academy