

## RICOH UK PRODUCTS LIMITED

### JOINT WINNER OF THE 2004 BRITISH QUALITY FOUNDATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR CSR

Best practice in:  
Quality Management

Sector:

Manufacturing

Size of firm:

650 employees

Location:

Shropshire

Website: [www.rioh.co.uk](http://www.rioh.co.uk)

Implementation of the EFQM Excellence Model has enabled Ricoh UK Products Limited to achieve major quantifiable improvements in performance throughout the organisation

#### OBJECTIVES

Ricoh UK Products Limited (RPL), a subsidiary of Ricoh Company of Japan, manufactures plain paper copiers and related service parts. In 1992, after a period of rapid growth, it entered a period of consolidation with the aim of improving the performance of the strong business base it had built. The first step towards this was to introduce ISO 9002. "We required a wider definition of quality management responsibilities in order to promote a more decentralised quality management approach", says Rob Jackson, Business Excellence and Quality Manager. "The ultimate goal of ISO 9002 certification, which we achieved in 1992, was to reduce corporate risk and improve quality."

"This enabled us to achieve a great deal, but we wanted to go further. We identified that implementation of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model, in addition to ISO 9002, would help us to build on what we had achieved through ISO 9002. In particular our aim was to use it to help us to challenge practices, pursue stretch goals, benchmark our performance against other organisations and provide a source of inspiration. We also needed to move to a more locally led management team from the existing predominantly Japanese led team, and our aim was to use the model to help us to identify what we needed to do to achieve this."

#### SOLUTION

RPL introduced the Excellence Model in 1999. It was implemented in stages throughout the business, starting with senior management, then key specialists within the organisation and finally other employees. "If we had done it all at once we would not have realised the benefits because senior management would not have

developed the degree of understanding necessary to promote a companywide take up.”

## RESULTS

“We have achieved all of the objectives that we set out to achieve through the use of the model. With regard to the transition to a local management team for example, it enabled us to identify the areas in which the local management team did not have sufficient knowledge and expertise and we were then able to address these issues and identify who could take on the various roles and responsibilities required.”

“The model has enabled us to develop a better understanding of our business. Whilst the managers had a very clear understanding of their own functional areas, the model has helped clarify the impacts of individual departments on the overall performance of the business. This has helped us to make improvements in end to end processes which could not be realised by separate improvements to the functions which make up the process.”

“Improving customer service is our number one priority. All our staff throughout the organisation now know that this means lead time and inventory levels. The model has enabled us to identify this as a priority issue and to identify what needs to be done to make sure that it is achieved. Our order fulfilment lead time reduced from 12 weeks in 1999 to 3 weeks in 2003 and the percentage of satisfied customers has risen from 75% in 2000 to 90% in 2004.”

“One of the most important benefits of the model has been the impact it has had on improving the performance and satisfaction of our employees. Our employees are our biggest asset and improvements in this area have a direct effect on our performance in all areas of the business. When we first measured employee satisfaction in 1999 only 46% of employees were satisfied and only 23% felt that their jobs were secure. Without the use of the model we would not have identified the extent of this problem and would not therefore have addressed it. Now 79% of our employees are satisfied and 79% feel that their jobs are secure.”

## CHALLENGES

“Before implementing the model we needed to get buy-in from all areas of the business. Decisions had to be made with regard to issues such as which quality system or model to adopt and how it should be implemented. By involving people from across the business in the decision making process we were able to identify an approach that was best for us and to gain commitment to that approach from across the organisation. Without that degree of commitment we would have achieved much less.”

## THE LAST WORD

“The Excellence Model provides a vehicle for aligning our whole organisation, including every employee, towards a common stakeholder driven business aim. Our employees know who the stakeholders are and each employee knows what they need to do to influence the results. They can see how what they do contributes to the overall aims of the business. We are all aligned behind a common goal.”

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ROB JACKSON – BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AND QUALITY MANAGER

- Case Study Produced April 2005 -