

PRESS RELEASE

25 April 2016

For immediate use

Plymouth firms collaborate in training first

Four Plymouth manufacturers have joined forces in a ground-breaking staff training collaboration aimed at improving efficiency and reducing waste.

Metalwork engineers Alderman Tooling teamed up with Plympton neighbours MGB Engineering and Vortok International and Lee Mill-based Permaban to send 29 staff on the Level 2 Certificate in Business Improvement Techniques Lean training course.

The collaboration is a first for training provider Lean Education and Development (LEAD). LEAD Kaizen Coach Steve Grigg says: “It’s been a real departure for LEAD and, although logistics were a challenge to start with, running a course for multiple companies means smaller firms can get involved without losing too many staff to a programme.”

The idea to collaborate on training came from Aldermans’ managing director Karen Friendship. “Working together on this training course has been particularly special. Our staff have not just learnt about continuous improvement, problem-solving and workplace organisation, but they’ve benefitted from the knowledge and experiences of their colleagues in the other companies and they’ve forged lasting friendships.”

Vortok production supervisor Colleen Crews agrees: “It’s been really useful for our employees to do the training with other businesses because they’ve been able to see how different companies do things and share ideas and best practice. Staff have grown, not only in knowledge, but in confidence too.”

Mixed teams from all four companies developed a project in each company to improve business processes and reduce costs and waste.

The initiatives have resulted in thousands of pounds of cost savings to each company thanks to improvements in the way processes, space and people are deployed. Aldermans has even reclaimed valuable factory space, which is now being used for a new production line.

“We’re certainly benefitting from the training and the ethos of continuous improvement is flowing through the workforce and really improving our business,” comments Vortok International managing director Richard Robertson.

After a year of hard work including: intense classroom work, testing, assessments and physical labour, the employees reunited last week to be awarded their certificates.

At the ceremony, Alderman Tooling managing director Karen Friendship said: “This is a really special moment and the culmination of a year of hard work. The collaboration of four manufacturers has resulted in cross-company learning and lasting friendships. We didn’t want to let this moment pass without marking the occasion with the recognition it deserves.”

“Getting an outside training company in and involving other firms makes it a serious initiative and not just a company crusade,” says Vortok operations manager Darren Turner. “Having fresh eyes from other companies asking questions makes you think about what you’re doing and improves understanding down the supplier line,” he adds. “Everyone is involved and understands why we’re doing what we’re doing.”

Further training collaborations are already taking place and staff are already planning joint social activities to ensure the friendships developed through the training continue to flourish.

Ends

Notes:

Press release issued by:

SharpEdge Marketing – 07952 958952

on behalf of Alderman Tooling.

Alderman Tooling

Alderman Tooling is a family-run business and one of the South West's leading quality metalwork manufacturers.

Offering a tailored approach to metalwork products, its engineering, fabrication and tool-making capabilities allow it to take conceptual ideas through to full scale production.

Serving a variety of industry sectors, such as Transport & Automotive, Retail, Specialist Furniture, and Industrial, Aldermans produces a broad range of bespoke metalwork solutions for clients, ranging from local companies to international blue-chip organisations.

Further information can be found at www.aldermantooling.co.uk