

Case Study

Bentley Motors is an authentic British motor company dedicated to the design, engineering and crafting of the world's most respected high performance cars. The company has gone from strength to strength in recent years, achieving a record sales figure of just over 10,000 cars in 2007.

Bentley employs approximately 4,000 people worldwide. Their success is directly attributable to the skill and passion of the team at their headquarters in Crewe, Cheshire. Apprenticeships form a key pillar of their recruitment and training programmes to ensure that this skill level is sustained.

“Recruiting apprentices enables Bentley Motors to meet our skills needs in critical areas. It allows us to select the right people and develop them in a way that meets the needs of both the company and the apprentice.”

Christine Gaskell Member of the Board, Personnel

Recruitment and retention

The Apprenticeship Programme is vital in ensuring that Bentley Motors have the skilled and flexible workforce required to compete in a competitive global marketplace. Apprentices are fundamental to the continued development of the key skills at Bentley. On average, Bentley recruits 14 advanced apprentices each year across a variety of disciplines and over the past 5 years the turnover of apprentices was only 15%.

Career development

The Apprenticeship Programme develops the key skills needed for the automotive industry. In addition the company develops the interpersonal skills of each apprentice through a mixture of workshops and projects.

All apprentices are expected to undertake community activities by raising money for local charities or working in local schools to raise aspirations and encourage students to consider a career at Bentley. Undertaking the Apprenticeship scheme allows Bentley to develop the individuals to maximise their potential for their future careers.

Business benefit

Due to the unique level of design and craftsmanship and the increasing use of complex technology used in their products, Bentley needs a highly qualified and motivated workforce. They believe that their Apprenticeship scheme delivers all of this and more.

Occasionally, it is necessary to recruit specialist skills within key areas. These roles cost the business approximately £7000 per annum above the skilled rate because of the need to attract these specialised skills. Ensuring that they develop apprentices in these positions will save costs and also build talent for the future.

Future development and growth

Bentley is committed to developing their Apprenticeship Programme so that it continues to match the requirements of young people and the business. Intensive training is given by the company's training provider on a block release basis to complete the NVQ2. This then allows more time, internally, to deliver skills training in more specialised areas such as leather trimming, woodwork, body and paint.

I knew from an early age that I wanted to work with cars and my Apprenticeship at Bentley Motors has given me the opportunity to fulfil this



Charlotte Gough
Bentley Motors

passion – working on the development of fantastic products such as the Bentley Mulsanne and the New Continental GT has been a brilliant opportunity.