

DuPont invests in its European workforce with IBM.



Overview

■ The Challenge

– Restructure of Human Resources (HR) in Europe, streamline and standardise routine HR processes and improve HR effectiveness and efficiency

■ The Solution

– IBM Business Consulting Services
 – Project Management, technical solution development, support, installation and implementation
 – e-HR Transformation

■ The Benefit

– 15 percent HR cost reduction anticipated
 – Established a HR Shared Service Centre, supporting DuPont’s European organisation
 – Positioned to move to ‘self-service’ – supervisors and employees will be able to handle personnel processes and manage personal details on-line

The bullet-proof, figure-hugging, non-stick company

When it comes to scientific excellence, DuPont is in a league of its own.

Few companies can boast brands like Kevlar, Lycra, Nylon and Teflon. However, DuPont knows that as well as delivering the world’s most advanced technical offerings, its success depends upon the skills and commitment of its people. That’s why looking after staff is one of DuPont’s top priorities.

In keeping with its vision of a unified business approach that ‘goes further, thinks bigger and tries harder’, DuPont benchmarked the effectiveness and efficiency of its European HR operations. The company determined that each country having their own processes for managing people resulted in considerable duplication of resources. For example, every 60 employees had a dedicated HR person, whereas one to 100 is closer to

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– HR Operations Manager

industry best practice. DuPont’s main goal would be to improve this ratio to a more ‘business sustainable level’, while increasing the overall value of HR to the business units.

Delivering enhanced service

The HR Operations Manager, who is now the Manager of the newly created HR Service Centre for DuPont Europe, explained: “We operated 42 manufacturing and office locations. Each site had its own HR function, procedures and underlying infrastructure”. DuPont’s decision to centralise HR transaction execution for the operations in Europe set the scene for improved service consistency and reduce costs. For the implementation phase of their HR transformation, DuPont chose IBM and Mercer as supporting consultants.

IBM Business Consulting Services helped DuPont define the technology platform which would support the new HR model. Making the transition from having complete HR operations in each country to a single Europe-wide model was no easy task. It involved re-designing key process roles and responsibilities, and bringing the new organisational model into reality.

“This project is helping us to consolidate the work of hundreds of HR personnel across Europe in a new distribution of roles and responsibilities, and sets the scene to deliver best-practice operating efficiency”

– HR Operations Manager

Convincing track record

“We selected IBM because they demonstrated a convincing track record in the field of business transformation. IBM’s own shared services environment impressed us and we were keen to secure the potential cost reductions and process improvements of a similar approach,” said the HR Operations Manager. “In addition, IBM supported the migration from the legacy HR approach in the countries into a single European solution. This included co-ordinating complex rounds of testing, training and skills transfer at each phase of the project.”

“IBM helped us to move quickly along the learning curve in the introduction of the highly sophisticated HR technology and ensured that the UK, Netherlands, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Spain and Portugal were able to go-live in just six months,” said the HR Operations Manager. “A phenomenal achievement.”

Fifteen percent cost reduction

The rapid implementation was achieved because DuPont decided to perform the migration and alignment of existing country-specific processes into the new service centre in parallel. This innovative approach avoided the difficulties associated with change management prior to migration. “This project is helping us to consolidate the work of hundreds of HR personnel across Europe in a new distribution of roles and responsibilities, and sets the scene to deliver best-practice operating efficiency,” said the HR Operations Manager.

Although the project is still in the implementation phase, the first wave of countries has gone live. The next wave will see the completion of the project. “Once the transformation to a centralised HR function is complete, we expect to cut around 15 percent off our annual European HR costs,” said the HR Operations Manager.

The inclusion of a Shared Services Centre in DuPont’s new HR model has brought its HR strategy much closer to the needs of the business. With a single point of contact for employees and managers alike, DuPont’s HR services have become much more efficient and easier to use. In the future, DuPont plans to evolve to a self-service model, where employees and supervisors will find it even more convenient to manage their personnel affairs online.

For more information

To find out more about IBM Business Consulting Services contact your IBM sales representative or visit:

ibm.com/bcs/uk



IBM United Kingdom Limited

PO Box 41
North Harbour
Portsmouth
Hampshire
PO6 3AU
Tel: 0870 010 2503

ibm.com/bcs/uk

IBM Ireland Limited

Oldbrook House
24-32 Pembroke Road
Dublin 4
Tel: 1890 200 392

ibm.com/bcs/ie

IBM Nederland N.V.

Postbus 9999
1006 CE Amsterdam
Tel: 020 513 5151

ibm.com/bcs/nl

IBM South Africa Limited

Private Bag X9907
Sandhurst
2146
South Africa
Tel: 0860 700 777

ibm.com/bcs/za

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