

case study

Recruiting people that will change the face of an industry

Anyone who has ever renovated a home knows how quickly a construction job can go awry. A seemingly small problem can cascade into lengthy delays and cost overruns that leave various subcontractors all pointing the finger at one another, and the owner holding the baby.

Now imagine the same issues on a £3.5 billion scale and you have some idea of the challenges faced by leading airport operator BAA in the construction of Heathrow's new Terminal 5. Heathrow is Europe's busiest airport, and the Terminal 5 expansion is expected to bring an expected additional 30 million travellers through its gates each year.

During the development and build of the Terminal, BAA knew it could not afford the missed deadlines and cost overruns for which the construction industry is often criticised. So rather than simply play by the industry's rules, BAA set out to change them.

A new approach

"We knew we needed a different approach," said Janine Hayter, head of resourcing and development for Terminal 5. "Same old, same old wasn't good enough. We needed people who were willing to do things differently and go the extra mile to get the job done."

In short, BAA needed to establish a culture of personal responsibility. To do that, BAA called in Getfeedback*. A leading organisational development specialist, Getfeedback uses sophisticated evaluation tools to identify the right employee skill sets for the job and the right tools to manage them effectively.

In the case of Terminal 5, Getfeedback recognised several common mindsets that would reduce the effectiveness of the build project including: rigid, autocratic leadership styles, a silo mentality, and the tendency to blame others when problems inevitably arise. Getfeedback's evaluation tools enable BAA to find suitable employees who excel in a more innovative environment.

"The success of building a groundbreaking project like Terminal 5 hinges on finding and managing the right people," said Alison Gill, CEO of Getfeedback. "Staff selection and development is absolutely crucial to building a team atmosphere."

Keeping an eye on the ball

By establishing a culture of personal responsibility and developing an innovative partnership-based approach with suppliers, BAA is helping to change the face of the construction industry and paving the way for more effective projects in the future.

Investing in team development from the outset laid a solid foundation for Terminal 5 to be built effectively.

"Getfeedback's tools were a vital part of that process," said Hayter.