

Smart Cookies



Bruno Bernacchi, a chartered waste manager, is national compliance manager for Mitie. He is responsible for putting his own workforce through waste and resources training, as well as delivering training to others through Mitie's certified Waste Smart Centre. We asked him what he saw as the main benefits of having a waste educated workforce...

Whether you work in a waste management company, or not; whether you work in the waste and resources department of a company, or not, it is becoming increasingly important to understand more about the waste that you and your business creates. It might be because you need to advise customers and suppliers on best practice, or at least the practice you'd like them to adopt to in their dealings with you. Or it might be because you need, or want, to make better use of your company's waste... whatever that may be.

Bruno Bernacchi is responsible for ensuring that when Mitie takes on a new contract, its staff understand the relevance of waste legislation and the importance of correctly managing any waste collected from the facilities it oversees, and he knows the importance.

"We feel it is essential that our staff and clients are kept abreast of the changes and developments in what is a very dynamic and evolving industry," he explained. "This can be enhanced by investing in the training of ALL our staff to ensure that they are a well-informed and capable workforce."

When asked if he'd seen any tangible benefits or differences from having put people through basic waste training, such as CIWM's Waste Smart certificate, he added: "One of the most common observations is that many of the trainees were not aware of the true cost that waste can generate, as well as the impact that it can have on the environment.

"Another benefit from attending the course is that the delegates can return to their place of work with a different attitude to the way that they treat their waste, and we've seen and heard that they advise others on the benefits of what they have learned. This is also true of many of the clients that attend our training courses; they also become more aware of the financial and environmental impact that the waste their processes and operations generate can have on their businesses."

The reasons for taking such training seem obvious then... greater knowledge, potential knowledge sharing opportunities and, ultimately, better performance in terms of waste and resource management. Anything else?

"All staff that work for the company are advised to attend the

training courses as part of their CPD and, more important is the fact that they are advising clients on how to correctly treat the wastes that they produce, that they should be well-informed on the current legislative requirements that demand this.

"There are also many staff and clients that attend who are new to the waste management industry and they see the training courses as an excellent way to become familiar with the current trends and developments within the industry. Throughout the Waste Smart course, for example – and in many training situations – you'll find that as a result of the wide range of different backgrounds that everyone comes from, interesting debates will emerge and examples of real-life experiences will be given, making it an ideal setting for uncovering actual solutions to real problems, not just hypothetical answers."

For Bruno, it's important that he has members of his own staff taking a training course at the same time as a client. "I have observed that there is a higher degree of interaction between our staff and the attending clients, with both becoming aware of each other's roles in the services they deliver and receive," he explained. "It is also a chance for them to put a face to a voice they have been speaking to over the term of the contracts." And, of course, the same applies for any situation where several companies, or teams, have to work together.

We've already touched on the benefits of having a "waste trained" workforce, but what about the extra advantages it can bring? Increasingly, are companies looking to work with like-minded suppliers and customers? Does demonstrating your own "green credentials" matter?

"In today's world it is becoming the 'norm' for organisations to want to promote the fact that they are fully committed to environmental policies, strategies and standards. The knock-on effect resulting from any breach of the regulations or legislation to a company can be massive, as the public are now far more aware of the effect that waste production is having on the environment if not addressed properly." Bad PR can have a huge effect and make the difference between a contract win or failure.

Ultimately, according to Bruno, it pays to be waste smart when it comes to training... right the way across your business and beyond. **CIWM**

CIWM's Waste Smart Certificate is delivered

- through CIWM's centre network: wastesmart.ciwm.co.uk
- directly, on an in-company basis: call 01604 823341
- on-line: www.ciwm.co.uk/ciwmhub

