

**INVESTOR IN PEOPLE
CASE STUDY:
SKERN LODGE**



SKERN LODGE SAILS TO SUCCESS THROUGH STAFF INVESTMENT

An outdoor activities centre with a difference, Skern Lodge offers schools, businesses and the public a comprehensive range of sports coupled with the highest professional tuition.



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The educational adventure complex, which has operated since 1976 in Appledore, North Devon, where the River Torridge meets the Atlantic, is ideally located for outdoor pursuits such as surfing, abseiling, archery, high ropes courses and kayaking.

Investors in People (IiP) discovered committed, dedicated and knowledgeable staff who were led by a supportive management team keen on developing its workforce.

By adopting these IiP principles, Skern Lodge has created a happy working environment in which staff feel empowered to make decisions and clearly contribute to the group's business strategy and aims.

The centre's renowned reputation as a leading sector employer is supported by its staff retention rates. On average instructors working in this type of post are expected to stay six to twelve months or one or two seasons, at Skern the average length of employment is three to four years.

As well as developing its own in-house training programme to ensure staff reach a competent level, it also advocates a summary skills matrix which goes a long way towards providing a clear personal development programme for individuals.

There are opportunities for instructors to be course directors, which provides real stretch and skills building, while staff are encouraged and supported through external training and learning. One staff member was even supported through an MBA.

Operational manager Barry Kaufman-Hill attributed the success of the centre to the staff.

"The IiP has proved a useful and important tool in the continued success story of Skern Lodge. The accreditation has helped guide us in the right direction on a whole range of issues such as management strategies, staff development and business growth," he said.

"We will continue to work within the framework of IiP to ensure we get important feedback on our management style and delivery."

Skern Lodge excelled in its approach to business, leadership style and communications strategies.

Staff commented: "There's no management and workers. They treat everyone the same." "I've never looked back since I came here. It's a fantastic place to work." "Some of my friends moan when they have got to go to work. I don't think of it as work. I think of it as socialising. It's professional but fun."

Background information

Investors in People is all about recognising that people are at the heart of organisations. Getting the best out of staff has a direct impact on the success of organisations.

The Investors in People accreditation helps organisations identify and implement proven methods to help staff achieve organisational objectives. Thousands of organisations across the South West continue to recognise the value delivered by Investing in People today.

Quality South West are the Investors in People Assessment & Recognition Centre for the South West. Contact our Advisory Team on (01452) 413641 to find out more.