

Listening is the key

Last year Nigel Wright Recruitment and Durham Business School published a joint research report on Trust in the Workplace. The report concluded that building trust between employees and the organisation, employees and their managers and employees and their peers will have a positive impact on business. For example commitment and self-esteem is raised, stress is reduced - as is the inclination to quit or look for new opportunities - and overall, personal and organisational goals are more likely to be met.

According to Vicky Judson, Head of HR at DB Regio Tyne and Wear Ltd - winner of last year's CIPD North East Branch Employee Engagement Award – *'making sure people continually grow and develop is essential in today's difficult economic climate'*. DB Regio's winning strategy, which went on to receive national recognition at the CIPD People Management Awards 2011, was all about building bridges between employees and managers and between different disciplines such as engineers, train drivers and support services.

As Vicky explained *'My Metro was a one day event planned by the whole leadership team where employees could actually take part in scrutinising and creating the companies values, many of which were changed or updated after employee feedback. We had a big push on equality and diversity, members of the executive team did Q&As – it was basically all about listening to our employees and trying to make them an integral part of the organisation moving forward.'*

Trust according to Vicky is something which should be implicit in every employee interaction. *We're very focused on building trust by following up on our promises to employees.* One of the initiatives that came out of My Metro was the self suggestion scheme 'My Metro Idea', where staff can put forward improvement ideas and see them integrated into the business. *We firmly believe in applying different approaches to different problems and any solution that works best for staff will become part of how we operate.*

DB Regio, which operates trains and stations on the Tyne and Wear Metro on behalf of Nexus, has recently completed its annual staff survey. It is clear from the results that the employee engagement agenda at the business has had a positive effect. *The majority of our employees feel that they're having an impact on the wider organisation, 95% of employees understand how their work contributes to the goals of the company and 82% believe there is a good atmosphere between colleagues.*

My Metro 2012 is taking place later this year and the business is aiming for a fresh approach that will develop on the success of the last event.