

Case Study

Andy Ball: developing electricians at Leeds City Council

Andy Ball, a Mechanical and Electrical Services Manager, says his employer Leeds City Council is rolling out Electrician EngTech to its electricians and Technical Officers, to give them a "more professional outlook".



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Having achieved Engineering Technician (EngTech) and subsequently Incorporated Engineer (IEng) status himself, Andy sees this as a good move for the Council and its large electrical workforce and Engineers. "Electricians and Technical Officers who gain Electrician EngTech demonstrate that, as individuals, they have a level of competence that goes above and beyond the norm," he explains.

To achieve EngTech status, electricians have to prove they meet a standard set out by the UK regulatory body, the Engineering Council. Their skills, experience and commitment to the profession are measured against the standard by assessors who are also their peers.

A better work environment

Andy believes that, as well as improving the outlook and reputation of the Council's electricians, EngTech will have a positive impact in the workplace. "It breeds a better work environment," he says. "Those who are willing to apply for EngTech are looked up to by their colleagues, and it makes others think that they could get there too. "Employers are assured that those doing the work are willing to make the extra effort and take time to advance their careers."

Maintaining competence

Once electricians have achieved EngTech, they submit evidence of their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to the IET on an annual basis. This too, Andy says, strengthens the reputation of electricians and their employer.

"Maintaining competence is very important," he says. "The electrical industry moves so fast - if you don't keep up to speed with industry developments, technologies and regulations, you quickly fall by the wayside."

"Knowing that the workforce is constantly up to date with their competence reduces the risk to the business and the public."

Raising standards across the industry

Andy is keen to see EngTech adopted, not just by Leeds City Council, but by employers across the industry. "It would be great to bring everyone in line and raise standards across the board," he says. "The driver for encouraging EngTech is to bring up the quality of work across the industry." It will also have the added bonus of making recruitment easier. "If your candidate is EngTech, you will know that they have certifiable evidence of their qualifications and competence," says Andy.

"There will be competencies specific to the job missing of course, but there is a basic understanding of what they are capable of before they walk into the room."

Developing electricians

Andy has seen EngTech make a difference to his career. Since qualifying as an electrical engineer and achieving EngTech, he has become an Incorporated Engineer (IEng). "I now get more respect from colleagues – when I give an opinion, they take it on board," he says. "Electricians who achieve a professional status bring added value to themselves, as well as added value to the business."

Andy Ball joined the electrical industry in 1976 as an apprentice. He has since worked his way from an engineer on tools to Estimator, Contracts Manager and Operations Director, in the latter role running a business worth £17 million. In his current position at Leeds City Council, he manages 150 electricians through various contractors and is responsible for the compliance of 56,000 properties (including 116 tower blocks).

If you want to develop your workforce, improve the reputation of your business and raise standards in the industry, consider putting your employees forward for **Electrician EngTech**.

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