Using Standards to Improve Performance

A guide from Investors in People
Providing an opportunity for sharp focus, structure and analysis, standards are a powerful tool for improved performance and management excellence.
This guide sets out how to use people management standards to structure and drive high performance through people.

Who is this guide for?

- **Leaders** from any sector seeking a benchmark for their people management practices
- **Leaders** seeking to align their organisation’s objectives and people management strategies
- **HR managers** seeking guidance and support on strategies that deliver greater engagement
- **People** seeking to understand the impact of people management standards and Investors in People
Why use a people management standard?

Organisations of all sizes use standards to underpin their approaches to people management in order to maximise results. They provide:

Knowledge. People management standards offer leading knowledge and provide a structure for better people practices.

Focus. An assessment identifies strengths and weaknesses, bringing sharp focus to the areas that really matter. The Investors in People assessment process is based on direct feedback from your employees. It’s a thorough analysis of whether your people practices are working and where there is further potential for development.

Benchmarking. Standards are developed in partnership with world leading organisations. Assessment against the IIP Standard gives your organisation a clear benchmark for performance in relation to your industry peers.

What is a standard?

- A standard is an established way of doing something.
- Standards capture knowledge, effective practices and the latest thinking drawn from industry experts.
- Standards can be a very effective way to quickly improve practices, measure and benchmark performance, and gain accreditation to demonstrate excellence in a particular field or industry.

Investors in People is the standard for people management.

Since 1991, the Standard has been used by organisations to embed a philosophy of continuous improvement through management excellence. Adoption of the Investors in People approach is a commitment to increasing performance by engaging, developing and investing in your people.
Why Investors in People?

- **Access the latest management thinking.** Investors in People was the world’s first people management Standard. With over 20 years’ experience, we are leaders in the field. The sixth generation Standard has been developed in collaboration with over 1000 organisations, world-class academics and leading management thinkers, to define the characteristics of the organisations that continually outperform their peers. We have identified nine key indicators of the Outperformers and have designed the Standard around them.

- **Align your people to your organisation ambition.** The IIP Standard assesses your organisation in context. By putting your organisation ambition at the heart of the Standard, the information gathered through the online assessment and employee interviews provides insight into how your people management practices can drive performance in the areas that matter to you.

- **Map your journey through to high performance.** Underpinning the IIP framework is a four stage performance model. The performance model sets the structure for measurement against the nine indicators - from developed through to high performing - and provides a clear roadmap for continuous improvement.

- **Celebrate your success.** Across the world, IIP accreditation is the mark of an outstanding organisation, committed to high performance through people. Accreditation offers the chance to celebrate the achievements of your people.
The difference
Investors in People makes

**Improving Business Performance**
- Process streamlining
- Increased efficiency

71% of accredited employers indicated some business improvement in their organisation at least in part as a result of working towards IIP (Evaluation of Investors in People: Year 1, UKCES, 2012)

**Leadership & Management**
- Confident, clear and trusted leadership
- Strategic focus and alignment

68% of accredited organisations report an improved quality of leadership skills and 62% an improved quality of management policies (Evaluation of Investors in People: Year 2, UKCES, 2013)

**Profitability**
- Positive impact on the bottom line

60% of IIP organisations predict growth, compared to the UK average of 47% (Employer Perspectives Survey, UKCES, 2012)

**People**
- Positive impact on employee turnover
- Increased levels of employee engagement
- Higher levels of staff productivity
- Positive workplace culture

57% of accredited organisations report an increase in the ability of staff to do their jobs following accreditation (Evaluation of Investors in People: Year 1, UKCES, 2012)

54% of IIP organisations report an increased level of staff commitment and 48% increased staff productivity (Evaluation of Investors in People: Year 2, UKCES, 2013)

Whatever sector or industry your organisation operates in, organisations working with the IIP Standard report increased performance.
In good company

Investors in People has helped us determine performance across all the aspects of our business and has provided recommendations to help us to improve our performance through our people.
Charlotte Horton, Reputation Officer

We were going through massive change. We focused on our values and communication and achieved vital indicators within the IIP framework.
Fran Tindall, Senior Head of Employee Engagement

Investors in People ensures that we have an overview of how widely learning and development is happening in the organisation and adds weight to our internal priorities. It is a testament to our investment in people development and is a clear signpost to current and future employees.
Jost Wahlen, Head of Learning & Development

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Tips for getting the most out of standards

Continuous Improvement
Continuous improvement to drive performance should inform every decision. Organisations working with IIP have a thirst for development, improvement and experimentation, supported by a culture that encourages innovation.

Aim high
Championing the message of your organisation's ambition will help you to align everyone with the overall goals and objectives. An employee's understanding of this vision is key to engagement and improved capability.

Involve your people
We believe people are the engine of success for sustainable and profitable organisations. Engage your people in the assessment process, unlock their potential and you’ll reap the rewards.

Senior sponsorship
From the top to the bottom, everyone in the organisation needs to be involved in the journey. Identify champions and trusted leaders within your organisation to drive improvement and change.

How is the Investors in People Standard different?

“...The Investors in People framework recognises the importance of how each organisation’s unique context affects its strategic choices in people management.”

Professor Hope-Hailey
Dean of the University of Bath School of Management
Led the evaluation of the Sixth Generation Standard
Start your journey today

Download our Introduction to Investors in People to learn more.

Explore the Standard

9 indicators covering:
- Leading and inspiring people
- Living the organisation’s values and behaviours
- Empowering and involving people
- Managing performance
- Recognising and rewarding performance
- Structuring work
- Building capability
- Delivering continuous improvement
- Creating sustainable success

An overview of the assessment process

4 stages covering:
- **Discovery**
  Initial self assessment
- **Online assessment**
  Encourage your employees to have their say
- **Employee interviews**
  In depth exploration of the Standard’s key themes
- **Accreditation report**
  Understand your award level and benchmark your performance

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Begin your partnership with Investors in People by arranging a no-obligation consultation.

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