



EXTERNAL MOBILITY

Organising Employees' Professional Repositioning

Following the transfer of one of its activities to a subsidiary, this group had to organise redeployment of almost 200 employees. Side by side with a new division of the company, all of BPI's French offices were mobilised to set up this vast social project.

► Context

SPECIAL DEPARTMENT

This globally known German group wanted to recentre its activities on the production of computer hardware.

When its maintenance activity was transferred to a subsidiary company that would eventually become an independent entity, the unions protested against the transfer of surplus personnel. All the actors therefore began a vast project that started with a redundancy programme affecting 476 employees and the creation of a new company division - the Personnel Development Agency (PDA). The task of this department was to support employee redeployment. The objective was zero redundancies.

There were 200 positions available in the new subsidiary and 70 employees were rapidly redeployed within the company with the help of the agency. This left **206 people** in the PDA who were to prepare for their professional development outside the enterprise over a 20 month period.

Employees who joined

- Average age : 43.
- Average length of service : 17 years.
- Profiles : Mainly maintenance technicians (NVO/BTEC/ HND level), a third in tertiary occupations (logistics and secretarial) and production.

Members kept their employee status for 20 months and continued to receive diminishing compensation that could not be less than 75% of their previous compensation. They spent at least 20 hours a week working on the project.

► Task

PROFESSIONALISM, CREATIVITY AND RECONVERSION

The first issue for the PDA/BPI team was to ensure that employees based all over the country had the same support as those based at the Paris site. In a company familiar with information technology, the Internet was the obvious solution. A dedicated site was created with two objectives - inform in real time and offer self-training tools.

Local support was offered from the 16 BPI national offices. Employees did not simply need to be redeployed, it was also necessary to organise their long-term professional repositioning. Long-term action required a strong dynamic to be created based on continuous needs analysis and permanent creativity.

Gateways were set up with companies interested in the employees' profiles, and transfer agreements enabling the organisation of trial periods, particularly attractive for SME, were also implemented. A careers survey carried out on the different branches of a profession in full development detected the risky career paths and those with high-potential for the future.

► Perspectives

FIRST UPDATE

"After 11 months, solutions had been found for 150 employees. 56 people were left, 40 of whom had arrived only five months before." The PDA manager found this «encouraging», as the success of the project was to be determined by whether or not the «100% result» objective was obtained.

From the consultants' point of view, this operation disseminated the remaining doubts - brutal separation is not a necessary evil to be transformed into a motor for change. At the cost of a real investment by the company and more gradual results, solid solutions are built and the difficult cases are taken into account - those which, in a more classic arrangement, would have remained in a context of failure.

The management and unions actively took part in the operation, and the labour relations in the company have been deeply improved as a consequence.

Advantages and risks of the PDA

«formula»

- Solid preparation that fixes development choices and enables reconversions to be organised.
- Those in vulnerable situations truly taken into account.
- Global administration of the redundancy programme giving an overview of the full cost of the operation.
- Significant investment by the company at zero cost to the State.
- Requires voluntarist management style and a strong dynamic.
- Risk that employees will not "get started" in their search.