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## **INDUSTRY VIEW: THE IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN EDUCATION**

**By Jack Davidson, operations director of Fisher Offshore**

It is common knowledge that prior to a person investing in an item, the majority will research the product first in an effort to ascertain exactly what it does before they part with their hard earned cash. Purchasing expensive goods without really knowing what they do and how you use them could be a costly move. Operate your business like this and the repercussions could be serious.

The energy sector is extremely fast moving, so much so that new technological advancements are discovered on a regular basis, resulting in a number of businesses investing heavily in an effort to remain at the forefront in terms of the equipment that they use. With this in mind, and to get as much out of the investment as possible, it's important that staff benefit from effective training so that businesses can begin to reap the rewards from its commitment to new technologies.

Educating employees in the efficient use of these new technologies is even more essential than perhaps the investment itself. A skilled workforce can contribute significantly to the streamlining of processes which can ultimately improve the experience for a client. A positive experience increases the likelihood of repeat custom and over a period of time will give you a competitive edge over your competitors.

An emphasis on staff education can also play an integral part in a business attracting and retaining the top talent that is on offer. Employees like to feel respected and appreciated and providing opportunities to enhance their personal development is a perfect method of allowing this to happen. Motivation plays a key part in the success of a company and will help contribute to an increased productivity within the workforce.

With these points in mind, at Fisher Offshore we have recently established a unique introductory pneumatic winch course at our Aberdeenshire facility in partnership with Ingersoll Rand. The programme aims to give offshore personnel valuable experience for working in the field, giving attendees an insight into the application, installation, testing, basic maintenance and trouble shooting of the Ingersoll Rand range of winches we supply. The uptake in the course has been pleasing with a range of Aberdeen based drilling contractors putting a number of employees forward to take part.

This training will not only improve processes offshore but will ensure ultimate safety when operating the equipment; another vital point when considering investing in the education of your workforce.

We've identified the need for education within our entire workplace and as a result offer a range of training including providing opportunities for further education, apprenticeships and various graduate leadership programmes.

The education of staff within the energy sector is imperative to the industry as a whole and I believe that companies need to continue to stress its importance. The benefits of developing a programme of training are vast and when coupled together with investment in new technology will undoubtedly stand a company in good stead for its future.

**ENDS**

