



# THE TIMES 100

## British Gas Services brief

### Introduction

British Gas is part of the Centrica Group. It is the UK's largest energy supplier. It operates in both the UK and Europe. British Gas Services (BGS) is part of the business. This part deals with installing and maintaining services, rather than gas supply. To deliver these services, BGS needs the right staff, with the right skills.

### Human Resource (HR)

One of the most important resources a business uses is the people they employ. These are called human resources. Human Resource Management (HRM) is the process that manages people in an organisation. Much of BGS work is in direct contact with the public. Customers expect top class service. Therefore its engineers need both technical skills and good people skills. BGS has a clear plan for acquiring and keeping this workforce. Its process is to recruit, select and train staff. It also works to retain staff, as this is cheaper than finding new people.

### Training

BGS has set up the British Gas Academy to provide training for its workforce. There are three main routes:

- an apprenticeship - this programme is carried out in training centres
- traineeships - provide a way for new recruits to learn about the gas industry and gain the skills they will need.
- technical training - this is for all engineers throughout their careers.

Training does not focus just on technical skills and knowledge. Most staff have direct contact with customers. It is important that they have good people skills like communication and problem-solving.

### Workforce planning

This process helps BGS to assess its current and future staffing needs. Managers forecast how much the market for gas will grow. This helps them decide how many engineers will be needed in the future. Demand is driven by two key sets of customers:

- those with service contracts
- those who call for assistance with one-off problems.

Demand for both these services has grown, so BGS has had to recruit more staff. Training is also vital to keep engineers updated on technical changes.

### Recruitment

BGS recruits from a wide variety of backgrounds. This reflects its diverse customer base. In particular, it is keen to recruit more women engineers. It has won awards for these efforts. Candidates need good qualifications and be able to show that they have people skills. BGS uses an online application form. This includes a questionnaire about what candidates value at work. The results are colour-coded. A red result suggests that the person may not fit with the company. Applicants with amber and green results are invited to interview.

### Selection

This takes place at the BGS assessment centre. There are three parts to the process:

- interview based on the online questionnaire
- role-play of customer service situations
- a manual dexterity test.



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The scores from all three are used to decide who is offered a job. By following this robust recruitment and selection process, BGS makes sure it gets the right staff.

## **Conclusion**

BGS needs to plan for its future staffing needs with care to ensure it always has the staff it needs. With its focus on training, customers can be sure that engineers have the right levels of skill to do the job.