

A POLE APART

AFTER SEVEN MONTHS WORKING AS A WELDER IN THE UK, JACEK MIERZWA HAS BEEN OFFERED A PERMANENT POSITION. *CM* QUIZZED HIM ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HERE AND HIS NATIVE POLAND. 'I WANT MORE OVERTIME,' HE SAYS

Are you working harder here or in Poland?

The work here is easier, because here many of the things I had to do in Poland manually are done here with machines. In Poland I did them for myself and I worked a lot and very hard. Here I am only given 10-15 hours overtime. I would prefer something like 20-30.

What did your induction consist of?

Health and Safety, Fire Awareness Training, Site Safety, General Dangers and Hazards, Hazardous Materials, Personal Protective Equipment, Mechanical Equipment Training.

So how does this induction differ from what you have in Poland?

It is in English.

Do you feel safer working on sites over here?

I wouldn't say I feel safer here.

But is health and safety taken more seriously in this country?

Yes. In Poland the managers turn a blind eye. I remember I tried to lift something heavy without the lift (using only my hands). Five men were running towards me shouting, "Don't!"

Have you learnt anything new here?

One thing I know is how much easier the work is if you have sophisticated machines.

Is the quality control superior or inferior here?

The final quality of the product we produce here is very high but I could not say that the Polish

products were worse. Personally, I prefer the design and look of Polish products.

There must be some other things about UK sites that you don't like so much...

My English colleagues take so many tea breaks while I just do my job. This is isn't good because we are paid the same for this time. But maybe it should be like that.

Go on, then Jacek. Tell us how much you get

At the moment £7.78 per hour and £9.08 overtime, but from May I will earn 20% more.

Thanks to Eastern European recruitment agency CES. View their website at www.CEstaffing.co.uk



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