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Matrix ethos inspires university lecturer

The relationship between Staffordshire University and Matrix Fitness has come a long way since the Head of School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise, Dr Peter Jones first met MD, Jon Johnston.

What began as an initial 'tuxedo talk' at a black tie event has developed into a unique long-term strategic partnership and friendship.

Kitting out the university's Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre with the best Matrix equipment was only the start. Academics now provide testing for the Matrix Pro Cycling Team and Matrix sponsors the university's Elite Athlete programme.

More recently, Dr Jones visited the Johnson Health Tech offices and Matrix in China and Japan, meeting with senior management to learn about the challenges that they face.

Reflecting on the visit, Dr Jones said: "Staffordshire University is a global institution and in my role I am busy developing relationships, recruiting students and increasing our presence in East Asia.

"I recently visited some of the Matrix offices in Shanghai and Tokyo. We are trying to develop links in these regions so the meetings have been invaluable for not only understanding the local marketplace and economy, but also the challenges of being a global brand that operates in different cultures.

"For example, the UK market seems more diverse, with growth in the public sector, universities and hotels; in addition to gyms. In Japan, there is less gym use, whilst the growth for China is in increasing gym use."

Among those that Dr Jones met during the trip was Yasunaga, MD in Japan. Yasunaga has worked for Matrix for more than eight years, following more than thirty years with Toshiba.

Dr Jones was also impressed by the size of the Matrix factory at Shanghai – both the size of the operation and the production levels.

Dr Jones added: "There is consistency at Matrix, whether it be in Stoke-on-Trent or Shanghai, there is a global Matrix look.

"The Matrix approach to leadership and work is very tangible. The manufacturing techniques, consistency method, organisation, neatness and attention to detail are all very apparent. But more so is the focus on producing a high quality product whilst ensuring staff development.

"This 'Kaizen' approach, or continual improvement, is obvious whether speaking to Jon in the UK, or Yasunaga in Japan.

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Johnson Health Tech UK Ltd

PRESS RELEASE

"The UK education sector is a constant state of change. As an academic leader reaching out to East Asia there is so much I can learn from understanding Matrix.

"This includes the need to appreciate the local culture, to be commercial, to take a Total Quality Management approach using key data.

"The key values of the organisation resonated with me; consistency, quality, continual improvement and consistent development of staff. These are crucial factors that should be adopted by all UK Higher Education establishments."

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About Matrix Fitness

Matrix Fitness – the fastest-growing commercial fitness brand in the world - is the commercial division of Johnson Health Tech. Matrix is comprised of a complete range of premium, commercial-grade cardiovascular and strength-training equipment for health clubs and other fitness facilities.

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