



Whitco Catering & Bakery Equipment Ltd



Jeff Whitaker

Whitco announces, with deep sadness, that our CEO Jeff Whitaker died on Saturday January 27 after a short illness.

Jeff was a man for whom the word hospitality and its industry might have been invented. However, his first experience with catering was just a means to an end, He became a student at Hull Catering College, and later admitted: "I only trained in catering so that I could join the merchant navy and see the world."

His warmth and personality suited the catering industry perfectly. This, combined with vision, charisma, energy, an enormous appetite for hard work and a commitment to taking the long-term view ("Stick at it" was a favourite mantra) laid the foundation for the growth of the company that he founded with his wife Vita in 1995. His leadership and approach to management inspired trust among colleagues, employees, suppliers and customers. At the same time, his innovations fuelled the company's growth and changed industry practices for the better.

He knew how to extend hospitality to others and, not surprisingly, he enjoyed the company of friends, good food and knew his way around a fine wine list. His loyalty to friends and colleagues alike was boundless. This extended to acts of generosity that often went well beyond the call of duty.

He is remembered as both a gentle man and a gentleman possessed of a quiet dignity and a winning smile that seemed to enter the room just before he did.

He leaves a legacy of a loving family and a successful business that he built over more than 22 years.

Whitco will make an announcement concerning a service of remembrance in due course. In the meantime, our sincere thanks for the many messages of sympathy that we have received.

Tony Butler
Managing Director
Whitco Catering & Bakery Equipment Limited