

PRESS RELEASE

A TRULY SCRUMPTIOUS PARTNERSHIP BOOSTS HIGH PEAK COMPANY PROFITS

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Renowned Derbyshire sweet manufacturer Swizzels Matlow Ltd are helping their staff to love their jobs having trained over two thirds of the firm's 600 employees, with help from The University of Derby Buxton and Train to Gain, a service funded by the Learning and Skills Council to help businesses succeed.

The New Mills based company, who produce cult favourites including Lovehearts, Rainbow Drops, Drumstick Lollies and Palma Violets, have now trained 450 of the firm's employees to NVQ Level 2 in Food and Drink and have found staff are staying put, helping increase the Company profits by approximately £60,000 a year.

Tony Salt, Training & Development Manger of Swizzels Matlow, said:

"Staff training has proved to be extremely valuable for our company and I can't understand why any company wouldn't want to train their staff to the highest level possible. Since our training programme started we have seen a dramatic reduction in the staff turnover resulting in an increase in both productivity and efficiency; in financial terms, this has helped to boost Company profits by about £60,000 a year.

"It's not eaten into our production time either as the training is so flexible, essential for a business like ours.

"The University of Derby Buxton provide an excellent course and that is key to us - the funding helps us but it isn't our priority.

"The course gives staff the chance to learn about safe working practices and the specific safety standards for the industry. Then they get the chance to do optional units relevant to their role which they'll choose with their tutor."

Beverley Warhurst, an employee at Swizzels Matlow who has undertaken an NVQ Level 2 in Food and Drink said:

"It is great to be able to get training for the job we do on a daily basis and get a qualification for our skills. It really helps to improve your confidence and skills. The company has always encouraged its staff to learn new skills and push themselves".

The University of Derby Buxton are contracted to deliver training under the Train to Gain service which is supported by LSC funding.

Chris Morrison, Business Development Coordinator at The University of Derby Buxton, said:

"The fact that Swizzels Matlow are running out of people to train is great news for the company, although not necessarily for us! It shows that training really empowers staff and makes them feel more knowledgeable and so much happier in their roles.

"We've done an awful lot with Swizzels Matlow to make the training under the Train to Gain service work for them, meeting with managers of the organisation on a monthly basis- initially to tailor the course to the company's specific needs and then later as the course has developed to make the training work around the shift patterns, which

could be in the middle of the night or over weekends, and offer the flexibility to keep the production line running.

“Plus Tony has acted as an ambassador for the NVQ and since we’ve been working with Swizzels Matlow we’ve signed up a further six people from other organisations for the course.”

Peter Brammall, Derbyshire Area Director, LSC said:

“It’s great news that the company and the university have been able to work together to get such great results. And it really shows that training doesn’t have to interfere with the day to day running of the business, but rather that it can help businesses out, adding value and helping them save money in the long run. All companies across the East Midlands can access the Train to Gain service.

“Developing skills across the county is vital if we are to increase productivity, support advances in enterprise and innovation and improve our economic well being.”

“Train to Gain offers a great opportunity for local businesses to embrace the chance to tackle skills shortages and receive high quality training.”

For more information on Train to Gain telephone 0845 057 1817, text TRAIN to 64446, register at www.iwanttotrain.com or visit www.traintogain.gov.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. Photographs are available. Contact Helen Clarke at GNN or download from www.gnn.gov.uk

2. Train to Gain is a new service run by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).
Train to Gain aims to improve productivity and competitiveness by making sure employees have the right skills to do the right job through: an organisational needs analysis, by making recommendations on the most relevant training and providing best value for money.
3. The brokerage service for Train to Gain in the East Midlands is provided under contract to the LSC, by East Midlands Business Ltd (EMB); a joint venture partnership formed by Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Chambers of Commerce.
4. The government commissioned report into skills published by Lord Leitch in December 2006 called for a radical overhaul in adult training and warned that the UK's skill base was lower than many international competitors.
5. Swizzels Matlow Ltd, Carlton House, Albion Road, New Mills, High Peak, Derbyshire SK22 3HA.

**ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL BY
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