

Investment in employee skills training is boost for East Midlands business

Expansion of trailblazing Train to Gain Service offers training for all

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Businesses across the East Midlands are set to benefit from a massive extension of the Train to Gain scheme which will offer bespoke skills brokerage and high quality responsive training to enable all employers to identify and meet their skills needs.

The doubling of funding in the Train to Gain Service is part of a massive investment programme announced this month by Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills John Denham, which will see more than £11 billion a year invested in education, employment and training.

Since its launch in August 2006, Train to Gain has helped more than 17,500 employees from over 3,000 organisations access training across the East Midlands. Just one call to the Train to Gain helpline gives employers access to an impartial and independent skills broker to help them identify their skills and other business needs, and source training from a range of available skills solutions to best meet those needs.

To enable every company to access appropriate training, the following major expansion to the Train to Gain Service has been announced:

- More funding will be offered for a broader range of skills. Part funding will now be available for those doing a second full Level 2 qualification and funding for Level 3 will be increased nationally. Skills for Life training will now be supported as a stand alone offer as well as part of a full Level 2 qualification;

- The funding cap to be lifted for the best providers, enabling them to do more business as their performance improves;
- A massive boost for SME management training – the budget has increased from £4 million per annum to £30 million per annum, which will support some 60,000 key directors and managers in around 42,000 companies over the next three years;
- The LSC’s National Employer Service will be expanded, with additional account managers to help more of the country’s largest national employers, while skills brokerage will also be extended to help provide even more companies with specialist support;
- By working closely with Jobcentre Plus through their Local Employment Partnerships, Train to Gain will support people who have been unemployed to secure employment with training and progression on to higher level skills;
- New compacts with each Sector Skills Council which will tailor Train to Gain to ensure it meets the skills needs of employers in each sector – and joint investment planning so that public and employer funds work together to boost skills and improve.

Skills Minister David Lammy commented:

“Lord Leitch’s report spoke of a partnership between the state, the employer and the individual. Today, in partnership with the business community and training providers, we set out our plans for the expansion of Train to Gain as a vehicle for creating a truly demand-led further education sector. To this end we have cut bureaucracy to make sure that those colleges and training organisations that can best meet employers’ needs are able to expand to meet demand.

“I am delighted to see that businesses are recognising the importance of skills and they are rising to the challenge by investing more in the skills of their workforce. We’ve listened to employers to ensure that this extended programme is even more effective in offering training when and where they need it. In particular, the increased investment in

developing the leadership and management capacity in our SMEs will build a sense of mission at the heart of our communities, making their companies more profitable”.

Tony Belmega, Skills Development Director - Train to Gain for LSC East Midlands added:

“Train to Gain has made a real positive impact to businesses across the East Midlands and the number of companies that have signed up and benefited from training has been really encouraging. From small companies with just one employee, like Ray Hamblin Ltd, mechanics in Gainsborough, to large businesses who employ thousands of staff, like Chubb Security Personnel Ltd in Northamptonshire, they’ve all been able to take advantage of the use of a specialised skills brokerage service and get advice and guidance on training.

“The massive enhancements to the service are going to be key to helping even more employers and training providers to work with us to raise the region’s skill levels. Things like additional funding, more money for SME management training and an increase in Skills Brokers is great news for East Midland’s businesses.

“Training plays a key role in improving business productivity and competitiveness and one in three businesses across the East Midlands are still not offering their staff training. I’d encourage all businesses to get in touch to find out about the new additions to the service and how they can benefit.”

To find out more about how Train to Gain can help, employers should call **0800 015 55 45** or visit **traintogain.gov.uk**. Alternatively, individuals and employers can access the information they need on skills via a dedicated phone line and website. The phone number is 0800 011 30 30 or website: lsc.gov.uk/inourhands

Businesses that have already benefitted from Train to Gain in the East Midlands include:

- Pearson Hydraulics Ltd, Lincoln, specialists in assembly and distribution, who got two employees started on a Customer Service NVQ Level 2. Two other employees have embarked on the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) NVQ Level 2.
- Rushden based company Humanware were able to recruit 18-year-old Ben Simons, giving him the chance to learn new skills whilst earning money and building a career. He will be taught a Modern Apprenticeship in Electronics Servicing and Repair at the Tresham Institute in Corby.
- Sharpe Systems, a computer Services and Solutions Company based at Westthorpe Business Park in Killmarsh, achieved 80% growth after receiving advice from a Train to Gain Skills Broker to join a mentoring scheme and receive marketing guidance through an external agency
- Melton Mowbray joinery manufacturer Jeld-Wen UK secured the skills of seven of its carpenters by gaining them places on the Construction Skills Certificate Scheme (CSSC) NVQ 2 in joinery.
- Radford and Hyson Green Neighbourhood Development Company (NDC) was able to source the best IT training courses available for almost half of its office-based workforce, which changed the way they work.

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Notes to Editors

Level 2 qualification is equivalent to 5 GCSEs A* - C

More investment in learning and skills:

A major investment programme announced by John Denham on 16th November includes a major expansion of apprenticeships, a right to basis skills training where needed and the provision of over 500,000 full Level 3 adult training places.

Train to Gain:

Train to Gain is a service from the Learning and Skills Council, helping businesses get the training they need to succeed. An important element of the Train to Gain Service is skills brokerage that offers free impartial advice, and helps find the best training solution from high quality and responsive training providers to meet business needs.

Train to Gain is important because skills shortages continue to have a negative impact on UK productivity and competitiveness in the face of fast-growing economies. Train to Gain aims to encourage

all businesses and individuals to value and realise the benefits that learning and skills can bring and to invest appropriately. It is expected that by the end of 2010, over 500,000 learners will have achieved a first full Level 2 qualification through Train to Gain.

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Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. It is responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. It has a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Its vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. It works nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

Media Enquiries

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