

## Have You Made A Difference Through Skills?

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As the New Year dawns, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) begins its search for London's top Apprentices, employers, learners and training providers.

The LSC is seeking entries for the *Skills for London Awards 2009* from employers and individuals whose LSC funded training has helped transform their business and tackle skills shortages.

Employers of all sizes and sectors of industry, successfully using LSC funded training, are encouraged to apply. We also want to hear from individuals whose new and improved skills have made a real difference to the organisation they work for, going beyond expectations and delivering measurable benefits.

The award winners will be announced at a ceremony at the Natural History Museum on 4 June 2009. Closing date for entries is 27 February 2008, so don't hesitate to get your entries in. Full details and entry forms can be found on [www.skillsforlondon.org](http://www.skillsforlondon.org).

David Hughes, LSC Regional Director for London, recognises how important training is during the challenging economic times ahead:

"Never have skills and training been more important and we are encouraging employers to realise the benefits training can bring, such as making existing staff more efficient and able to take on additional responsibilities. This is why the government is investing a

record £4.5 billion in further education and skills for 2009/10 and London's Mayor has skills as a major factor in his Economic Recovery Action Plan.

"The *Skills for London Awards* provide us with the opportunity to recognise the outstanding contribution individuals and businesses are making to raise skills levels, improve productivity and competitiveness through programmes such as Train to Gain and Apprenticeships."

There are 14 awards in total, split into two broad categories: -

### **Apprenticeship categories**

- Employer of the Year:  
micro employer (between 1-9 employees), small employer (10-49 employees),  
medium employer (49-249 employees), large employer (250-4999 employees),  
macro employer (over 5000 employees)
- Apprentice of the Year
- Advanced Apprentice of the Year
- Young Apprentice of the Year

### **Skills Awards categories**

- Train to Gain Employer of the Year:  
small employer (less than 49 employees), medium employer (49-249 employees),  
large employer (over 250 employees)
- Train to Gain Learner of the Year
- Skills for Life
- Provider of the Year

Finalists in the Apprenticeship categories will automatically be entered into the national apprenticeship awards.

Last year's winner of the Medium Employer Apprenticeship Award 2008, Brian Woodcraft, Managing Director of Axima Building Services based in Docklands, said:

"This prize is hugely important and I feel very proud. We put a lot of time and effort into our training programmes, particularly Apprenticeships but also other training for older staff. We have to bring skilled people through the industry, we like to think that we bring through some of the best and ultimately it reflects on our bottom line because we have some of the best skilled tradesmen in the industry."

- Ends -

### **Media Enquiries**

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### **Notes to editors**

#### **Learning and Skills Council:**

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our 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. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

#### **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 (equivalent to 5 GCSEs A\* - C). For more information visit <http://www.traintogain.gov.uk/>

### **Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships are nationally designed training programmes for those who have already left full time education or are already in employment. They provide a combination of on and off-the-job training whilst being paid. There are two levels of Apprenticeships: the Apprenticeship and the Advanced Apprenticeship which typically take between one and three years to complete.

Apprenticeships are intended to provide an integrated programme of learning leading to the acquisition and application of the skills, knowledge and understanding required by employers. The completion of an Apprenticeship framework shows both current and potential employers that the holder has achieved competence in the skills covered by the Apprenticeship, has demonstrated the knowledge required by the Apprenticeship and has attained the level of transferable skills required by all Apprenticeships.

The content of each Apprenticeship is designed by Sector Skills Councils, Sector Bodies and their employers in accordance with the design principles of the Apprenticeship Blueprint. The Blueprint provides the specification for Apprenticeships and will be used by Sector Skills Councils to design and revise Apprenticeship frameworks.

For more information visit <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>