

PAUL MESSENGER APPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF SKILLS FOR LONDON AMBASSADOR NETWORK

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22 March 2010: Paul Messenger, Director of the Costa Coffee franchise Coffee Snobs Ltd, has been appointed Chairman of the *Skills for London Ambassador Network* and a member of the London Employer Accord Advisory Group.

The Skills for London Ambassador Network was set up by the Learning and Skills Council in April 2009 as part of the London Skills and Employment Board's (LSEB) strategy for skills in the capital. Its aim is to be the voice of employers helping to promote the importance of skills and training to the London economy. Bringing together over 30 London business and public sector leaders, including representatives from BAA, Wembley Stadium, Addison Lee, as well as smaller employers including Crussh and Fifteen restaurant, it is a group tasked with promoting skills and training to London employers.

Mayor of London and chair of the London Skills and Employment Board, Boris Johnson, said:

"Paul Messenger is just the person London needs to ensure that we continue to get the word out about the vital role that skills and training play in boosting the capital's economy. When we set up the London Employer Accord in 2008 its main aim was to work and engage with employers from all sectors in the capital. Paul and his fellow Skills for London Ambassadors have been doing great work in helping businesses identify their skills needs, and simplify the way they receive training. It's welcome news that he's now on board."

Paul Messenger, Chairman of the Skills for London Ambassador Network, said:

“The Capital is starting to take steps out of recession, but for many London businesses the challenges of the downturn are just as real as they were 12 months ago. That’s why skills and training are so vital. They’re not just nice to have; they’re an essential part of business survival. At my company, we’ve invested heavily in training which has been critical to its success. I’m keen for the Ambassador Network to play an important role in helping other businesses recognise the importance of skills and training, and also to help feed into the work of the London Employer Accord and LSEB.”

In his new role as Chairman of the Skills for London Ambassador Network, Paul Messenger will work closely with LSEB to feedback on the network’s experience of training and skills provision in the capital. In addition, he will work directly with the London Employer Accord, an LSEB employer-facing initiative, which helps employers gain easy access to employment, skills and business support provision.

The Skills for London Ambassador Network will now work alongside the London Employer Accord Advisory Group to champion and promote the services of the Accord, use them to address their own recruitment needs, and also act as a sounding board to new ideas and initiatives. The aim of both groups working together is to create a strong, united voice of business leaders that value the importance of skills and training, and who between them can promote and support not only development in the workplace, but also help other businesses become more aware and able to access the publicly funded support that can help their business and workforce grow.

Neville Cavendish, Director of The London Employer Accord said:

“By aligning the Skills for London Ambassador Network with the London Employer Accord Advisory Group we will be in a better position to help London businesses place training and skills at the heart of their organisations. We’re confident that Paul’s leadership in this area will be valuable and the combined insight from both groups will allow business

leaders in the capital to come together to support the LSEB in addressing the skills and employment challenges we face and make the system more demand led.”

Ends

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.

London Employer Accord:

The London Employer Accord ('The Accord') was established in April 2008 as a flagship project of the Mayor's London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB). The Accord is a joint venture between the London Development Agency; Department for Work and Pensions; and Jobcentre Plus, and is supported by the Learning and Skills Council. Its overarching aim is to work with significant employers in the capital, from the private, public and third sectors. The Accord tests models for an enhanced and more integrated service to meet their business support, recruitment, employment and skills needs, by working with the range of publicly funded delivery agencies and contracted training providers who support individuals into work and training. The Accord is also a key workstream of the London Employment and Skills Task Force (LEST), and is expected to deliver 5,000 jobs for disadvantaged Londoners in the run up to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



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