

20,000 EMPLOYERS MAKE THE SKILLS PLEDGE IN FIRST TWO YEARS
PLEASURE BEACH RESORT LATEST EMPLOYER TO MAKE THE SKILLS PLEDGE

A major milestone for skills investment in England has been reached, as the number of employers making the Skills Pledge hits 20,000. Over 7 million people are now benefiting from new training opportunities and a culture change in the workplace, as a result of their employers' public commitment to develop the skills of their employees.

By supporting organisations to identify and address skills needs and prioritise training, the Skills Pledge, which is managed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), helps to boost workforce confidence, productivity and business success, benefiting employees and employers alike.

The Minister for Further Education and Skills at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Kevin Brennan, said:

“I congratulate Pleasure Beach Resort for making this commitment to improving the skills of its workers by signing the Skills Pledge. It’s encouraging to see 20,000 employers signing up to the pledge businesses are committed to the training of their staff.

“Investing in skills is vital for businesses to ensure they are well placed to succeed when the economy improves. The Government continues to make it easier for businesses to help their employees improve their skills as well as boosting confidence and productivity.”

“It’s encouraging to see the 20,000 employer barrier broken - the Skills Pledge is now helping those organisations to invest in training, increase efficiency and improve customer service. Although many organisations are affected by the current economic environment, employers clearly recognise the importance of continuing to commit resources to training and skills.”

Investing in skills and training has also been linked to reduced absenteeism, improved staff recruitment and retention, and reputational benefits. In fact, research from *People and the Bottom Line** shows that if a business increases its investment in training by around just 10 per cent, this will result in an increase in gross profit per employee of up to £1,568.

Employees at Blackpool's Pleasure Beach Resort join the millions of workers who have benefitted from the Skills Pledge, with the resort now fully committed to investing in the skills of its employees. The company already offered a huge variety of training to its 200 core staff and 800 seasonal staff, but wanted to formalise and develop its training courses by making the Skills Pledge.

Pamela Roberts, Head of Human Resources, said: "Pleasure Beach Resort is proud to be the 20,000th employer to make the Skills Pledge and we're keen to put our new plans to train staff into practice. We have a long history as one of Britain's top tourist attractions and, while we've always been committed to training, making the Skills Pledge reinforces this. It's a great way to ensure we have a fully trained team in place to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for our visitors to experience everything Pleasure Beach Resort has to offer."

Organisations large and small from across the country have made the Skills Pledge. Sainsbury's, BT, B&Q and Vodafone have made the Skills Pledge, along with smaller firms including JK Roofing in Chingford, Safe & Sound Training Ltd in Wiltshire and Brittons Catering in Birmingham. Employers can find out more information about making the Skills Pledge by calling **0800 015 55 45** or visiting **lsc.gov.uk/skillspledge**.

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Notes to Editors

* **Source:** People & the Bottom Line, P. Tamkin, M Cowling, W Hunt (2008)

Skills Pledge

The Skills Pledge is a public commitment made by the leader of an organisation confirming that they will develop the skills of their employees, including all of those lacking basic skills or a first full Level 2 qualification.

It is a promise that, through training, they will work to boost the productivity and efficiency of their organisation and realise the potential of their employees by developing their basic skills and working towards relevant, valuable qualifications. Level 2 is the minimum standard, however as understanding skills needs and priorities is the key to an organisation's success, employers are encouraged to upskill their people to the level required by their industry and their specific organisational needs.

A full list of organisations that have made the Skills Pledge can be found on the Skills Pledge website at lsc.gov.uk/skillspledge.

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.