

England goes mad for training

More and more employers find training the key to success

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More than 15,000 employers are now using Train to Gain, the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC's) new service, offering expert advice and sourcing training for businesses. Demand for the service has soared, with an eight-fold increase in the number of employers that have started training since the service was rolled-out across England in August. These latest figures underline the increasing popularity of the service and demonstrate that it is really working for business.

The Leitch Report on the UK's long term skills needs, which was published last week, acknowledged the contribution that Train to Gain is making in equipping English workers with the skills required to make them competitive on a global scale.

Skills shortages in the UK continue to have a crippling effect on the economy. More than a third of adults in the UK do not have a basic school qualification, five million adults do not have any qualifications at all and according to the Learning and Skills Council, illiteracy and innumeracy alone is costing the nation £10bn in lost revenue.

David Way, National Director of Skills at the LSC said:

“Train to Gain is playing an instrumental role in tackling this crisis head-on by providing employers with expert advice on how and where to train staff to increase productivity. Employers told us this is what they need to succeed and Train to Gain is now helping more than 50,000 employees to get qualifications.

“Train to Gain is all about listening to employers and it is delivering - 89% of employers who have used it, tell us they are satisfied with the service. It has been piloted over the past four years across the country and we’re confident that we’ve built a robust service that is here to stay.”

Businesses are finding Train to Gain a real help. Nightingale Roofing & Building Services was set up by brothers Markus and Maurice Micklewright in 2003 and they are delighted with the benefits Train to Gain has brought to their business. Thanks to specialist training the company has won £400,000 worth of work which it would not have had otherwise.

Markus said:

“Train to Gain has been invaluable. The advice and support that the Skills Broker has given us and the funding she has sourced have enabled us to deliver some excellent projects.

“We would not have the level of business we have if we hadn’t put training first and attended the courses. Our employees appreciate that we are investing in them and as a result they are committed, motivated and very loyal. They will all go that extra mile. Training is the starting point for success. The more skills you acquire, the better you get.”

Train to Gain uptake is split across sectors as follows: Health and Care businesses have led the way in taking up the service with 22 per cent of leads. Manufacturing firms and wholesale and retail have the second highest take up with 14 per cent share of leads, followed by Business Services (11 per cent), Construction (8 per cent) and Hotels and Restaurants (7 per cent).

Train to Gain focuses on employers that need most help with training their staff. Fifty-five per cent of those involved have never worked with training providers or invested in the development of their workforce before and 95 per cent of employers involved in Train to Gain have fewer than 50 employees. The service is designed to help businesses get the

most out of their existing staff: Thirteen per cent of learners are aged 19-24, 70 per cent are aged 25-49 and 17 per cent are over 50.

With £1 billion committed to Train to Gain until 2010 in this year's Budget (subject to the 2007-8 spending review), the service is forecast to benefit 33,000 employers in 2006-2007, rising to 53,000 employers in 2007-2008 and in successive years to 2010.

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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 planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on Train to Gain, call 08000 15 55 45 or visit: traintogain.gov.uk

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