

## UNLOCK YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

### *Key to surviving the recession*

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The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) North East is advising people in the region they need to develop their transferrable skills if they want to protect themselves in difficult economic times.

At a time when employers are announcing redundancies and restructuring on a regular basis, it is the people with transferable skills who are best able to find a new position or adapt to a different role with the same employer.

Recent research conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, and based on responses from employers and employment experts, has pinpointed the *five transferable skills* valued most by employers:

1. **Communication - IT and literacy:** communicating clearly through word processing tools, spreadsheets and using the internet
2. **Self-management:** accepting responsibility for your actions, managing your own time, and demonstrating readiness to improve on the job
3. **Team working:** respecting others, co-operating within a team, contributing to discussions
4. **Business and consumer awareness:** understanding the motivators that drive business success, and the importance of customer satisfaction
5. **Problem solving:** applying creative thinking to solve day-to-day problems

Developing these transferable skills may not only help you to keep your job, but could also increase your chances of successfully moving into a brand new field.

Certain industries historically fare better during times of recession, including the public sector, teaching, IT, HR and accounting \*, and the skills set listed above is needed to work in these sectors.

In the North East a Skills and Employment Response Group has been set-up, involving the 4 key bodies from the region – the LSC North East, One North East, Jobcentre Plus and Business and Enterprise North East – who together will ensure all businesses and individuals in the region are aware of the range of support available to them during the economic down turn. For individuals, the nextstep service is the first port of call for those in work but at risk or worried about possible redundancy, or who are looking to change jobs and update skills.

The nextstep service exists to offer independent, impartial advice to support individuals in planning their next career move. The service can be used to analyse customer needs and access information on alternative job options, advice on job search, CV's, interview technique, information and advice on education, training and learning options, specific labour market advice, FE and HE advice linked to job or career change and information on advancement and progression in work. The service is free and based in the region.

Recent research by the Learning and Skills Council shows that more than 80% of people feel more happy and confident after learning a new skill, and more than

85% feel more creative and prepared to try new things once they have started a course. <sup>1</sup>

Chris Roberts, regional director, LSC North East said: “Transferrable skills have the potential to unlock new career opportunities or strengthen an employee’s value in their workplace, whether it be in their current job or in a new position, as their employer may have to make organisational changes to remain competitive in the current economic climate.

“As well as teaching new skills, starting a course can also be a real confidence booster. There is plenty of easily accessible help and advice available for those interested in brushing up on their knowledge and skills.”

Chris Banks, Chairman of the LSC, says that learning new skills is crucial to weathering the current economic climate, irrespective of your personal situation: “Learning new, transferable skills can lead to a refreshing career change, but it’s also important to realise that employees with these transferable skills are often seen as the biggest assets to employers. A small investment in learning new skills will make you better prepared to tackle any eventuality, particularly in a tough economy.”

To contact the nextstep service, call 0800 0277 944.

**Ends**

**Notes to Editos**

\*Sourced from the Institute of Employment Studies (IES)

**Real help for business and people now**

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<sup>1</sup> National Learner Satisfaction Survey 2007: pp 18-19

Helping people and businesses to access the range of support that's now available to them in the region is vital during this difficult economic climate. Key partners in the region including the LSC, One North East, Jobcentre Plus, Government Office for the North East (GONE) and Business Enterprise North East have come together to co-ordinate a clear and robust response by the region-wide government agencies to the economic downturn around employment and skills.

### **Who to Contact**

There are three key contact numbers for anyone wanting information, advice or assistance:

- Businesses wanting advice and to find out about the support available should call Business Link on 0845 600 9006 or visit [www.businesslink.gov.uk/northeast](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/northeast)
- People who are in work, but may be at risk of, or worried about redundancy and wanting advice on changing jobs or gaining new skills should call nextstep on 0800 027 7944 or visit [www.nextstepnortheast.org.uk](http://www.nextstepnortheast.org.uk)
- Individuals who have been made redundant or who are out of work should call Jobcentre Plus on 0845 606 0234 or visit [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

A new website is also available which will act as a signposting site to the three key contacts above, visit [www.realhelpnortheast.co.uk](http://www.realhelpnortheast.co.uk)

### **Next step**

nextstep is the name of the LSC's core careers advice programme for adults across England. It is an impartial free service delivered by qualified Information, Advice and Guidance advisers. From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008 the Prime Contractor for nextstep in the North East is CfBT Education Trust.

Effective Careers information and Advice promotes the benefits of learning, helps individuals to address and overcome the barriers to learning, and supports individuals in making realistic and well informed choices about learning and work.

Contact the Regional Telephone Access Point based in Bishop Auckland  
0800 027 7944 8am – 8pm Mon- Fri

### **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.

The LSC offers a host of support services to help those who are already in the workforce, or are about to enter the workforce, to gain the skills they need to succeed, secure their future or grow their income. For example, you could receive the Adult Learning Grant (ALG) for your decided course, a grant designed as a helping hand for adults thinking about learning but worried about the financial barriers standing in their way. ALG provides low income adult learners with up to £30 a week to help with the extra costs of learning. Since the grant became available, over 43,000 people have received ALG. You could also access training at work through the LSC's flagship programme for employers, Train to Gain.

**Media contact:**

Laura Tiplady, Regional Press Officer, 0191 492 6355, email: [laura.tiplady@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:laura.tiplady@lsc.gov.uk)

**ENDS**

**Editor's notes:**

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.

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