

'APPRENTICE' SIR ALAN BACK ON SCREEN

New ad aims to boost the number of apprentices, as the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) searches for its next star.

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Sir Alan Sugar is back on screen this week spreading the message that 'Apprenticeships Make Things Happen'. The entrepreneur appears in the new advert to promote the Government campaign to boost the number of apprentices.

Apprenticeships, which are funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), form a key part of plans to upskill the nation's workforce, as they give people the opportunity to achieve nationally recognised qualifications while gaining practical experience in their chosen career.

In the advert, Sir Alan celebrates the calibre of apprentices and the contribution they make to business. He will also appear alongside Government Ministers at four Apprenticeship Seminars for employers.

Sir Alan's involvement comes at a time when the profile of the Apprenticeship programme is already high. In January Gordon Brown announced the funding of 35,000 extra Apprenticeship places in 2010 to strengthen the country's competitiveness and help beat the downturn. The LSC in the North West is also looking for its next Apprentice of the Year before the closing date of this year's Apprenticeship Awards on 27th February 2009.

Now in their sixth year, the awards are designed to celebrate the outstanding achievements of apprentices and their employers from across the region, and to recognise the business benefits of Apprenticeships.

Liz Davis, National Apprenticeship Service Project Director at the LSC in the North West said: "Sir Alan Sugar is such a household name and we're delighted to have his support. The hunt is now on to find the next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs, and the Apprenticeship Awards are designed to recognise and honour them.

"If you are an apprentice or you employ apprentices I urge you to get involved. There's still time to enter, and you could be our next Apprentice or Apprentice Employer of the Year."

To enter the Awards, or for more information, visit apprenticeships.org.uk/awards or call 0800 954 8896. Deadline for entries is 27 February 2009. Regional Apprenticeship Awards category winners will automatically be entered into the national Apprenticeship Awards. The winners' event will be held on 16th July 2009 at Old Billingsgate Market, Central London.

Ends

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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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