

Now's the time for the region's adults to polish up their skills!

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As part of Adult Learners' Week, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in the North West is encouraging more adults to gain a qualification and see what a difference it can make to their lives.

Adult Learners' Week, taking place from the 17 – 23 May 2008, encourages all adults to give learning a go. This is the seventeenth Adult Learners' Week which will set about engaging and inspiring people to pursue adult learning, making now an ideal time to access the wealth of available information and guidance on adult learning.

If you would like to progress in your career, why not ask your employer to find out what qualifications are available to you? After all improving your skills can only be of benefit to your employer too.

You may be eligible to study for a qualification such as an NVQ through the LSC's Train to Gain service. Train to Gain is managed and funded by the LSC and was introduced to help improve staff skills, including through subsidised training for employees over the age of 19 with low or no qualifications.

Teresa Smith, a former cleaner from the North West decided to see what taking a new qualification could do for her and within just 18 months has turned her entire career around.

A cleaner with more than 24 years experience, 40-year-old Teresa enjoyed her job and never expected to do anything else. When her line manager approached her about doing

an NVQ Level 2 qualification in Housekeeping, little did Teresa know that this would lead her into an exciting new career in under two years!

“I’d always liked the idea of studying,” Teresa comments, “but while my children were growing up there was never the time or the opportunity and later I lacked the confidence to believe I could do it. When my employer approached me about doing the NVQ Level 2 through Train to Gain I just thought ‘why not?’, but I would never have imagined how things would snowball from there.”

Teresa’s involvement with Train to Gain has brought her skills up to recognised standards, raised her confidence and also given her an interest in the training process and passing those skills on to others. So when an assessor’s job became available Teresa decided to apply.

“I had been a cleaner all my adult life,” Teresa explains, “and I was really proud of my job because it had not only provided an income while my children were growing up, but had helped ensure a pleasant working environment for people. Doing the NVQs made me realise just how valuable training could be and showed me that I could do more with my career than I’d thought possible in the past.”

“I would never have thought it possible that taking a qualification could have given me so much,” Teresa adds. “I’ve had to work hard but the rewards are fantastic and I love my role as an assessor. The only downside is that my fingers get numb from all the writing the job involves!”

John Korzeniewski, Regional Director for the LSC in the North West comments, “Teresa is a great example of the difference the right training can make to someone’s career and the consequent advantages for employers. It is never too late to learn and Adult Learners’ Week is the perfect time to get thinking about a taking a qualification, and where you would like your career to take you. Services such as Train to Gain are there to help adults just like Teresa gain a qualification and progress in their career.”

To find out more about how Train to Gain can help, visit lsc.gov.uk/inourhands
Alternatively, individuals can access information via a dedicated phone line 0800 011 30 30.

Ends

Notes to editors: 2008 is the seventeenth year of Adult Learners Week, which is taking place from 17 – 23 May 2008.

Photo caption: Teresa Smith at work as an assessor

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.

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