

PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH WEST LOOK TO TRAINING AS GOING GETS TOUGH

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A new survey*, conducted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), has found three-quarters of workers in the South West (75%) acknowledge there is room for improvement in their skill levels and are willing to seek advice about improving their skill base in the New Year.

And the current financial climate – which has seen several retail giants experience major crises – also does not appear to have had the demoralising effect on workforces that many experts expected, with many people in the South West indicating it has encouraged them to rethink their career paths in a positive way.

In fact, the current economic downturn has prompted two-thirds of workers to consider learning a new skill as they feel it will help make them feel happier and improve their career prospects (62%).

Nearly half of those surveyed (43%) in the South West also believe an increase in their skills levels or training would help safeguard their current careers. Only 21 per cent of workers thought a complete change of career or retraining would be necessary.

Interestingly the top three skills respondents felt they could do with learning or refreshing were communication, IT and literacy (34%); problem solving (25%); and business and customer awareness (23%). A quarter of respondents (27%) added they felt that an individual's skills competency was the number one ingredient to job security.

Skills Minister Lord Young said: "It is more important than ever that people have the opportunity to improve their skills to help them in the workplace. We are investing over £4

billion in further education and skills this year alone and Government is committed to making sure that everyone has the opportunity to gain new skills. I would encourage everyone who wants to maximise their skills to take full advantage of this investment.”

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Note to Editors:

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Notes to Editors:

The survey also revealed the jobs Brits would like to do if they had the chance in the current climate. The Top 10 careers in the South West were:

1. Travel Writer (18%)
2. Test Driver (13%)
- 3= Zookeeper (12%)
- 3= Taste Tester (12%)
- 5= Garden Designer (9%)
- 5= School Teacher (9%)
- 7= Florist (8%)
- 7= Run fishing trips in the Caribbean (8%)
9. Costume Designer (7%)
10. Scuba Diving Instructor (6%)

* Survey completed by OnePoll on behalf of the LSC 27.11.08

LSC

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. For more information visit:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/westofengland>