

PART 1

Employer's Training Reference



Somerset
Skills & Learning

Providing skills & training for Businesses across Somerset

make your move

www.learnsomerset.co.uk

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USING TRAINING EFFECTIVELY – IT'S TIME TO MAKE YOUR MOVE WITH SS&L



Training can make a mediocre employee good, and a good person excellent. On the other hand, a person without training can be a brake on the business. Whether you are aiming for increased sales, more efficient production, better use of IT, or simply a reliable team able to solve its own problems, training is often the best solution. By taking a systematic approach, you can achieve an excellent return on your training investment.

As with any investment, it is more effective to target most of your training on the areas where you can reap the biggest, fastest and easiest rewards.

Is there an area of your business that is experiencing problems, or that is being held back in some way?

- Do you have a shortage of a particular set of skills, or a potential future shortage?
- Do you receive customer complaints? If so, what are the causes of these complaints?
- Is the performance of one part of your business slower, more expensive or less efficient than another?
- Are people or teams under-achieving?

Employees often need training when your business is changing

As your staff develop they may undertake roles which require additional skills. SS&L provide bespoke short courses and accredited training in team leading, management and business improvement techniques so that your organisation performs at optimum. Talk to our Employer Engagement Officer on 01278 426828 or email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk about your requirements.

Use training to safeguard the critical areas of your business. Many businesses rely on one person to complete a particular technical operation. It is vital to document the process and train one or two other employees / apprentices.

"The lads we have taken on from Somerset Skills & Learning, from work experience and continuing onto apprenticeships have stuck with us and become permanent members of the team. The co-operation and support we receive from Merv Williams is absolutely brilliant."

Ray Bown, Housing Maintenance, Taunton Deane Borough Council

A training needs analysis (TNA) is an effective way to identify any gap between the skills your business needs and those your employees have. It involves gathering information to identify areas where your employees could improve their performance. You can use employee surveys, management observations, customer comments, company meetings and inspections to collect this information. It can help you clarify your objectives in training your staff. This is invaluable for ensuring that money spent on training will help your business achieve its objectives.

We can either carry out the TNA for you or we may support you through the process. Talk to our Employer Engagement Officer on 01278 426828 or email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk for more information.

To carry out a TNA, you need to:

- Analyse your business goals and the skills required to meet these goals.
- Determine whether you are changing your products or business processes now, or in the future and what information or training employees will need to be effective in their job.
- Evaluate who you want to train and how best to train them. Evaluate the training already in place and decide what your company can and can't provide in the way of in-house training, funding and time.
- Establish how employees will best accept and integrate training and their preferred learning styles.
- It is crucial to assess skills gaps at all levels of the business. Seeking employee input can be particularly revealing as they are more likely to experience the day-to-day problems that arise when there is a skills gap. This makes them well placed to identify the skills and training they require in order to improve their performance.

Since 6 April 2010, most employees in businesses with 250 or more employees in England have the right to request time to train. They can request time to complete any training (accredited or unaccredited) that they believe will improve their working performance and the performance of your business. This legislation will be extended to all businesses in April 2011. You should consult all employees including senior management. Include yourself in this if you are an owner-manager. You may need to develop your entrepreneurial and technical skills as the business grows.

"The Blue School /Somerset Skills & Learning FEAST centre is highly thought of by the School Food Trust"

Prue Leith, TV Cook and Broadcaster

Having identified your training needs, you need to find out where to access the training. In addition to our vocational qualifications, we offer a range of short courses; on-line business support and legislative training; continuing professional development workshops for specific sector skills groups and skills for life training.

SKILLS FOR LIFE – THE BUSINESS CASE

- **Can your staff...**
- Read and understand health and safety information.
- Read information on how to assemble and store equipment.
- Write messages accurately.
- Communicate easily to customers and colleagues.
- Calculate measurements, ratios, percentages.
- **Do you want you employees to:**
- Be skilled enough to do their job now and in the future.
- To stay with you and value the place in which they work.
- Feel engaged and involved in the workplace.

What are the implications of poor literacy, language and numeracy skills on your workforce?

- Poor adherence to health and safety procedures.
- Inaccurate/poor quality paperwork e.g. health and safety documents, reports.
- Poor communication with customers and colleagues.
- Staff reluctant to take on extra tasks/ transfer skills and be responsive to the needs of the environment.
- High absenteeism and staff turnover.
- Staff do not benefit from training/ chance to develop their skills.
- Inability to read and understand written instructions.
- Poor team working skills.

Benefits of improving literacy, language and numeracy skills in the workplace

- Improved performance.
- Improved communication.
- Improved compliance with regulations.
- Improved customer relations.
- Improved quality assurance.
- Improved retention.
- Realising existing potential.
- Increased profits.

To find a course visit www.learnsomerset.co.uk or talk to our Employer Engagement Officer on 01823 446770 or email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk

- Work based Learning (WBL) is the generic title for the programmes SS&L deliver. They have been designed to meet the needs of the employer and the learner. WBL may sometimes be funded by the Government, either in full or part, or may be paid by the employer or learner.
- Certificates and Diplomas are awarded by a recognised examining body which details the skills achieved. The qualifications that the learner is aiming for will be stated on the learner's Individual Learning Plan.
- SS&L is currently working with over 450 employers delivering Work Based Learning to over 850 learners. A high proportion of our learners are in full-time employment.
- Each learner is allocated a named Training Officer/Assessor, who is responsible for the management of the programme. This person will also be the main point of contact for you if you have any queries. If the Training Officer/Assessor is unable to answer your queries, or you are not satisfied with the result, please contact the Programme Leader. If your query relates to customer service please contact the Employer Engagement Officer on 01278 426828 or email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk

"Bouncy Bear Childcare is passionate about supporting apprenticeships. In an industry where it is becoming increasingly difficult to get a position without expensive childcare qualifications, Apprenticeships can be the answer. Individuals who are interested in working with children can gain valuable experience and essential qualifications whilst building strong relationships with colleagues, children, families and employers. I would definitely recommend Apprenticeships to other businesses and individuals."

Sam Caddick, Manager, Bouncy Bear Childcare

Apprenticeships are the proven way to train your workforce. They can make your business more effective, productive and competitive by addressing skills gaps directly, even in uncertain economic times. With up-to-date technology skills, apprentices are motivated and have a keen fresh talent and are open to learning. Employers can mould apprentices to their own industry standards.

Apprentices learning with SS&L are part of your team, working mostly on-the-job with day release at one of our centres or at a local college. They are an investment with a lasting reward, such as improving staff retention, providing future managers and introducing innovation. Apprentices grow quickly and are a good return on investment. The Return on Investment (ROI) calculator has been designed to help you understand the returns you can possibly gain on investing in Apprenticeships. Visit <http://apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/ROI-Tool.aspx>

At Somerset Skills & Learning we undertake the recruitment process for you. We advertise your vacancy with the Apprenticeship Vacancy Service and our Recruitment Training Officers will screen the applicants to ensure that they have the skills to meet your person specification. We can give you the opportunity for an apprentice to work with you for up to four weeks before their employment starts. We continue to provide additional support during the first few weeks to ensure a smooth transition into Work-Based Learning for both the apprentice and the employer.

There are different levels of apprenticeships:

- **Apprenticeships (equivalent to five good GCSE passes).** Apprentices work towards Work-Based Learning qualifications on a level 2 framework, key skills / functional skills and a relevant knowledge-based qualification such as a Technical Certificate.
- **Advanced Apprenticeships (equivalent to two A-level passes).** Advanced Apprentices works towards Work-Based learning qualifications on a level 3 framework, key skills / functional skills and a relevant knowledge-based qualification such as a Technical Certificate.

Apprenticeship funding is available to support the cost of training. The size of the contribution varies depending on the framework and the age of the candidate. If the apprentice is aged 16 - 18 the training is fully funded; if they are 19+ you will receive up to 50%. Sometimes additional funding may be available and our Employer Engagement Officer will be pleased to advise what additional support may be available to your business. Telephone 01278 426828 or email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk.

The Apprenticeship Employers Badge can be displayed by businesses on their websites to highlight their commitment to Apprenticeships. In return, their logos will then be displayed on the Apprenticeships website.

The scheme has been developed in response to consumer demand. Recent research, commissioned by the National Apprenticeship Service, showed that 64% of consumers would use a register enabling them to choose a business that hires apprentices and over 80% of people are more likely to use a business if it offers Apprenticeships to young people.

To register for the Badge scheme go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Employers-Badge.aspx

MENTORING

- It is essential that each learner on a Work-Based learning programme has a mentor allocated to them to ensure they are successful in their qualification.
- The role of the mentor is to support candidates within the workplace with their qualification and act as a link with the training provider. A mentor can be the line manager or another member of staff.
- Somerset Skills & Learning provide mentoring / supporting staff training workshops. Please contact the Employer Engagement Officer on 01278 426828 or email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk for more information.

SUPPORTING

- You will need to provide encouragement and support throughout the training/assessment process. It is essential that you support off the job training and promote 100% attendance. Apprentices and sometimes other learners will be required to regularly attend a mandatory off-the-job training provision either at SS&L or a local college. The Training Officer/Assessor will provide you with a schedule of dates and times of required attendance. For a group of staff, the off the job training can be delivered in the workplace.

PROVIDING EXPERIENCE

- Learners wishing to gain a portfolio type award e.g. an NVQ will need to collect evidence from the workplace to prove their competence. You will need to provide access to relevant company paperwork that supports the evidence provided by the learner e.g. drawings, job sheets, manufacturers / work instructions, inspection reports, goods ordering / return paperwork, job satisfaction notes / letters, time sheets and safety data sheets. You will need to ensure that the learner gets the relevant experience at work to prove their competence. The Training Officer/ Assessor will explain this in detail when he/she meets with you.

LINE MANAGEMENT

- You will need to provide adequate and competent supervision using appropriately qualified staff who are familiar with the standards required.
- You will also need to monitor and review the learners performance in the workplace and contribute to the formal SS&L review process. You will act as a witness to the candidate's performance by completing witness records. These will provide valuable evidence on the consistency of the Candidate's performance.

SUPPORTING ASSESSMENT

- A qualified Assessor will be appointed by SS&L or the local college to assess evidence presented by the learner. The Assessor will manage the assessment process and will guide the employer, learner and their supervisor through the process. The Assessor will sign off the learner as competent when sufficient evidence has been provided. You will need to provide opportunity for assessment including observation by the Assessor. You will partake in regular reviews with the Candidate and the Assessor.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN EMPLOYER OF APPRENTICES?



- **You must give your apprentices an induction** into their role and provide on-the-job training.
- **You are also responsible for paying your apprentices' wages.** The minimum Apprenticeship wage is £2.50 per hour (as at 1st October 2010), to be paid for training off and on the job. The minimum Apprenticeship wage applies to Apprentices aged under 19 years and those aged 19+ on the first year of their programme. You can pay more if you choose from the beginning of the employment, or as increments on achievement. For guidelines on the National Minimum Wage please refer to the following website www.bis.gov.uk
- **You must provide a contract of employment** for the duration of the Apprenticeship. The rules and regulations that apply to all employees of your business will also apply to the Apprentice. It is part of the agreement with the Employer, that all Apprentices are given the relevant time out for off-the-job training. Please ensure that SS&L is aware of any changes to the apprentice's employment status during the training programme.
- **Employer Liability Insurance** to cover the learner for the duration of their contract of employment needs to be in place. Our SS&L Training Officer will check that a current Certificate of Employer Liability Insurance is displayed when they undertake the health and safety assessment of the workplace with you before recruiting a young Apprentice.
- **Sick Pay** - You need to make your apprentice aware of your sick pay scheme. Further information on statutory sick pay may be found at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/med3-fitnote-sample.pdf>
- **Parental Consent** If learners are under 18, permission will be required from a parent / guardian for some types of activities. Your SS&L Training Officer will be able to advise you on this (e.g. training involving staying away from home overnight or working / training after 9.00 pm.)

"At High Ham we have been delighted with our Apprentice. The day release at SS&L works well and it is great to have someone who is keen and eager to be involved in the life of the school. It has worked really well for our school and subject to funding would relish the opportunity to continue next year. "

Jane Rosser, *Head Teacher, High Ham Church of England Primary School*

KEEPING AHEAD OF THE GAME – WHAT'S NEW?

- SS&L Programme Teams provide information on changes to qualifications and industry standards. A quick way to keep informed of these changes is to sign up to our employer newsletters. Email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk with '**subscribe**' in the subject header. We arrange seminars and workshops throughout the year. These usually range from 2 – 4 hours. If there is a specific topic you would like us to cover, email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk with your request.

EMPLOYER INCENTIVES AND FUNDING

- Allocations for funding changes all the time and any information published is quickly out-of-date. Similarly employer incentive grants have short life spans and specific eligibility requirements. Our staff will advise you of what funding is available at the time. Those employers which have signed up to the Employers' Network get the first notification of new allocations of funding. To register email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk with '**subscribe**' in the subject head.
- If you have a specific funding enquiry talk to our Employer Engagement Officer on 01278 426828.

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Email busdevall@somerset.gov.uk

Visit www.learnsomerset.co.uk/

"I am very pleased with the courses that Zoe has done. The assessor and all staff that I have been in contact with are all very efficient. The work Zoe has done at SS&L has helped her greatly with her role at work. I would recommend SS&L to others."

Judy Cannings, *Manager, YMCA Pre-School*