

# APPRENTICESHIP

# ANSWERS

A GUIDE FOR TRAINING  
PROVIDERS AND FURTHER  
EDUCATION COLLEGES

HELPING YOU TO HELP  
EMPLOYERS REALISE THE  
VALUE OF APPRENTICESHIPS





## INTRODUCTION

In your role talking to employers, you may have noticed common questions and reservations about Apprenticeships. This booklet draws together employers' frequently asked questions, equipping you with the answers to help employers realise their value.

It's also the latest stage of support in Million Extra: our mission to help ensure a million people start an Apprenticeship by Summer 2013. Discover how you can play your part at [www.million-extra.co.uk](http://www.million-extra.co.uk).

## DEFINING THE VALUE OF APPRENTICESHIPS

We begin with the single most important question:

**“WHAT IS THE VALUE OF AN APPRENTICESHIP IN MY BUSINESS?”**

This is an immensely broad question, and here we use it to encompass other questions and objections you may be faced with:

1. ARE APPRENTICESHIPS RELEVANT?
2. WHY SHOULD I COMMIT?
3. WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS BENEFITS?
4. WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS?

This booklet will help you answer these in a concise way, helping employers buy into Apprenticeships. You'll also find a checklist to help you structure your meetings with employers, from researching a lead through to preparing for the meeting.

# 1. ARE APPRENTICESHIPS RELEVANT?

Apprenticeships offer breadth, depth of learning and a flexible approach that can easily fulfil employers' needs. Our job is to help them realise their relevance.

## “ARE THERE APPRENTICES RELEVANT TO MY BUSINESS?”

Yes. There is a perception that Apprenticeships only cover such industries as engineering and hairdressing. In reality, City & Guilds has over 300 Apprenticeships,

covering roles in management, retail, creative and engineering. So, there is an apprentice for most businesses – just see the case studies at [www.million-extra.co.uk](http://www.million-extra.co.uk).

## “HOW MANY APPRENTICES CAN WE HIRE?”

There's no limit. Flexible learning and the diversity of qualifications mean that apprentices can fill employers' skills gaps while minimising day-to-day business

disruption. There are also a huge number of keen apprentices in every field, and hiring one can be far more cost-effective than traditional recruitment.

## “DO APPRENTICESHIPS CHANGE OVER TIME, OR IS IT ONE SIZE FITS ALL?”

Because no two learners or businesses are the same, Apprenticeships are flexible. Apprentices can work with their employer and training centre to choose modules that

are relevant to their role. As their role changes, their learning can adapt to suit – as does centres' support for employers' changing needs.

**“APPRENTICESHIPS ARE NICHE AND FOCUSED - THEY DON'T SUIT THE FLEXIBILITY OF OUR BUSINESS.”**

City & Guilds qualifications are designed for the flexible needs of the modern business – in any industry, public or private sector.

Each apprentice also has customised learning to give them a rounded education, including English, Mathematics and ICT.



## KEY FACTS

**300+** APPRENTICESHIPS OFFERED BY CITY & GUILDS

“Nimlok offers Apprenticeship opportunities across its entire business – from electrical installation, print finishing, and welding and fabrication, to marketing, customer service and IT.”

**Diane Walton – HR Manager, Nimlok**

*Listen to Diane's views on Apprenticeships in our DVD interview.*

## 2. WHY SHOULD I COMMIT?

Apprenticeships are valued by many employers, due to the sustainable skills and lasting benefits they bring to businesses.

### “WHAT ABOUT OTHER QUALIFICATIONS? WHAT ADVANTAGE WILL AN APPRENTICESHIP GIVE US?”

Businesses are the best judges of the right qualifications for their industry – and many use internal or specialist training. However, the broad skills developed by Apprenticeships create long-term benefits, including productive, motivated staff that 77% of employers agree improve competitiveness\*.

Plus, Apprenticeships can work alongside specialist qualifications to build lasting skills that 89% of employers agree are vital to their future\*\*. But the main benefit is that Apprenticeships seamlessly combine theory and practice – meaning that apprentices apply what they learn on the job.

### “THE TRAINING IS LENGTHY AND DISRUPTIVE. I CAN’T AFFORD TO RELEASE SOMEONE A DAY A WEEK.”

Apprenticeships are largely taken in the workplace, minimising day-to-day disruption. Whilst any training may reduce short-term

productivity, many employers agree that the long-term benefits far outweigh this. Also, financial incentives are available.



### “APPRENTICESHIPS ARE COMPLICATED AND A HUGE COMMITMENT – I WOULDN’T KNOW WHERE TO START.”

Training centres offer support from hiring through to completion. All training is fully managed by centres, so all an employer commits to is allowing the time to train. Otherwise, an apprentice can be treated

like any employee, with lower recruitment and salary costs. Plus, employers’ commitment is often reciprocated through apprentices’ loyalty, which positively impacts on the business.

## KEY FACTS

**89%** OF EMPLOYERS SEE APPRENTICES AS VITAL TO THEIR FUTURE\*\*

**77%** BELIEVE APPRENTICESHIPS IMPROVE LONG-TERM COMPETITIVENESS\*\*\*

**THE ENTIRE PROCESS IS SUPPORTED THROUGHOUT BY TRAINING CENTRES**

\* For more information on the terms and conditions, visit National Apprenticeship Service, [www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Steps-to-make-it-happen/Incentive.aspx](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Steps-to-make-it-happen/Incentive.aspx) (2011).

\*\* City & Guilds Skills Economy research (2011).

\*\*\* National Apprenticeship Service/Populus employer survey (2008).

### 3. WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS BENEFITS?

Research shows that Apprenticeships deliver many benefits: the right skills, increased productivity, and a more motivated, satisfied and loyal workforce.

#### “WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN APPRENTICESHIP IS OVER?”

Many employers continue an apprentice’s development, whether on the job or through further training. Whichever the case, they get a trained, committed and motivated worker that knows the business.

Indeed, 88% of employers attribute a more motivated workforce to Apprenticeships, whilst 80% have seen long-term increases in productivity\*.



#### “WHAT IF I TRAIN AN APPRENTICE AND THEN THEY LEAVE?”

Qualified apprentices show greater commitment and loyalty to their employer, whilst the investment also attracts new talent – to the extent that 80% of employers

report reduced staff turnover\*, while 57% say that apprentices go on to management within their company\*\*.

#### “WE ALREADY DO TRAINING – IT’S FINE.”

No matter how good it is, no internal training can satisfy the National Occupational Standards: the benchmark for improving business performance.

Apprenticeships do. Plus, they can complement internal training, benefitting businesses as much as learners.

#### “WE’VE HAD EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG EMPLOYEES NOT PULLING THEIR WEIGHT.”

Some experiences of lazy or absent staff have led to unfair stereotypes of young workers. It’s vital that these don’t get in the way – after all, there are bad workers in

every age group. Apprenticeships can be held up as examples of motivated, eager-to-learn employees who are committed to their employer and career.

### KEY FACTS

**80%** OF EMPLOYERS CLAIM APPRENTICESHIPS BOOST PRODUCTIVITY\*

**88%** AGREE THAT APPRENTICES ARE MORE SATISFIED AND MOTIVATED\*

**80%** REPORT REDUCED STAFF TURNOVER AND INCREASED LOYALTY\*

“Develop a culture of Apprenticeships and you will attract enthusiastic and talented new recruits, as well as motivate and retain your experienced staff members.”

Mark Kite – Head of Contracts & Development, Barchester Healthcare

\* National Apprenticeship Service/Populus employer survey (2009).

\*\* National Apprenticeship Service/Populus employer survey (2008).

## 4. WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS?

As businesspeople, employers want the facts about how much an Apprenticeship will cost. They're often surprised by how little that is.

### “WHAT INCENTIVES ARE AVAILABLE?”

Financial support is mainly about saving money: typically, training centres receive Government funding, which reduces the cost for employers. 16-18 year-old learners can get 100% of their training paid for, with older apprentices also receiving support. Regarding direct incentives, a £1,500 Small Employer Incentive is available for

businesses of up to 250 people that are new to Apprenticeships. Also, an incentive of £2,275 is available from April for hiring unemployed 18-24 year-olds\* for a period of 6 months. Coupled with the fact that Apprenticeships can be more cost-effective than hiring regular staff, any business can save money.



### “WHAT ARE THE LONG-TERM BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIPS TO MY ROI?”

We've already seen how Apprenticeships create a motivated, satisfied and productive workforce, improving competitiveness. But the real return is from customers: according to research, 81% of consumers

prefer businesses that employ apprentices\*\*, which directly benefits sales. This effect on the bottom line grows over time, as reputations are cemented.

### “OUR BUSINESS COULDN'T AFFORD AN APPRENTICESHIP.”

The long-term savings of Apprenticeships outweigh any outlay. Countless small businesses have cut advertising and recruitment costs by training apprentices over the long-term. Also, as apprentices learn largely within the workplace,

the cost of out-of-office cover is minimal. Finally, many employers have said how their apprentices get up to speed quicker than graduates, saving on training and boosting productivity.

## KEY FACTS

**£1.4BN**

IS BEING INVESTED IN APPRENTICESHIPS BY THE GOVERNMENT

**81%**

OF CONSUMERS FAVOUR BUSINESSES THAT HIRE APPRENTICES

**£1,500**

SMALL EMPLOYER INCENTIVE FOR SMES NEW TO APPRENTICESHIPS

“We find it really cost-effective to support Apprenticeships within our business, especially when you consider the advantages it brings in productivity and staff development.”

Jo Neal – Business Development Manager, Exako UK Ltd

\* National Apprenticeship Service, [www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Steps-to-make-it-happen/Incentive.aspx](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Steps-to-make-it-happen/Incentive.aspx) (2011).

\*\* National Apprenticeship Service, [www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/The-Basics.aspx](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/The-Basics.aspx) (2011).

# EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST

We know how intensive it is to prepare for every employer meeting. To make things easier, we present a simple set of refreshers to help you through the process, from researching a lead through to preparing for a meeting.

## 1. Thoroughly research the prospective employer

- What are their business activities, products and services?
- What is their history?
- How big is the company?
- What are their key current and future challenges?
- What are their skills shortages?
- What recruitment policies and issues do they have?
- What is their current training provision (internal & external)?

## 2. Research the wider industry

- Who are their competitors?
- What are the industry's key challenges?
- How are Apprenticeships used in the industry?
  - For examples, see the case studies at [www.million-extra.co.uk](http://www.million-extra.co.uk)
- What are their competitors' recruitment and training policies?

## 3. Identify relevant Apprenticeship packages at [www.cityandguilds.com](http://www.cityandguilds.com)

- What advantages will these Apprenticeships bring to the business?
- Are they affordable, or is funding available?

## 4. Round up the evidence to back up your pitch

- What relevant case studies can you use?
  - A good place to start is the case studies at [www.million-extra.co.uk](http://www.million-extra.co.uk)
- What statistics or key facts will back up your argument?
  - These are always available at [www.million-extra.co.uk](http://www.million-extra.co.uk)

## 5. Have everything ready for the meeting

- Do you have all relevant documents?
- Do you know the role/level of the person(s) you are meeting?
- Can you answer any questions or objections – without using jargon or acronyms?

Find out more on how to play your part at [www.million-extra.co.uk](http://www.million-extra.co.uk)

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