

Apprenticeships – The Winning Combination

Apprenticeships were taken up by over 500,000 individuals and their respective employers in 2011-12. Evidence indeed, of the winning combination of earning and learning for the Apprentice. For the business, it's all about 'growing your own', and winning with the help of an experienced training provider.

Three quarters of employers (surveyed by Populus research 2012) believe that despite the economic crisis, Apprentices are more important than ever to their businesses.

Skills Minister, Matthew Hancock, recently said: "More must be done to ensure that Apprenticeships are more rigorous, higher quality and more employer focused. We are introducing tougher standards, including a stipulation that all Apprenticeships must last a minimum of 12 months." All good news for everyone we feel.

EYR is delighted to be working with several sponsors this year who are actively involved with the Apprenticeship agenda. This includes studio hosts Sussex Downs College who support a wide range of Apprenticeships including; accounting, childcare, construction, motor vehicle and hospitality. For further information log onto www.sussexdowns.ac.uk/apprentice and look out for details on Job Shop, which helps you, find full, part time, work experience and volunteering opportunities.

Paul Mitchell, speaking on behalf of EYR sponsor, Apprenticeships in Sussex, said: "Apprenticeships help to match the aspirations of young people with those of local businesses. While working and getting paid, Apprenticeships provide the training and support to help young people to get the skills that they need to be successful at work while helping local businesses grow the next generation of their workforce. www.apprenticeships-in-sussex.com signposts employers and would be Apprentices to the training organisations that can help them to make their Apprenticeship aspirations a reality." Do take a moment to check out this helpful site.

There is also lots of information for both the employer and potential Apprentice on the National Apprenticeship Service website at www.apprenticeships.org.uk that includes details of the 250 different types of Apprenticeship 'frameworks' covering over 1400 job roles, training subsidies and currently, a special grant for new employers taking Apprentices. Vacancies can be posted free on both this and the Sussex site.

Caffyns PLC is a name well known in Sussex and another generous sponsor of EYR. They recently celebrated receiving a special award for their Apprenticeship programme. Sarah Caffyn, tells us that: "We have recently won a prestigious apprenticeship award when the Company beat hundreds of entries to become the South East Apprenticeship Employer of the Year 2012 in the large employer category. This is fantastic recognition of our long-standing commitment to nurturing bright and enthusiastic apprentices and guiding them to full-time employment within the Caffyns group. As a company, we have a long tradition of training and developing our people and this award shows we are as dedicated

to engaging our staff as ever before. Apprentices play a hugely important role within Caffyns; our apprentices today are our leaders of tomorrow.

“Dominic Herbert, who decided vocational training was his preferred route over university, and who is taking a Parts Apprenticeship at Caffyns Ashford site, says: “I chose an apprenticeship because I wanted to learn new skills. I was privileged to be offered a place at Caffyns, who share my passion of striving to reach the next level of my career. They treat me as a valuable member of the team.”

Sponsoring EYR for a second year, Mears Group, led by Managing Director Gary Lester, have also played a leading role in local apprenticeship promotion including the very successful ‘100 Apprentices in 100 Days’ campaign in 2011 championed by Stephen Lloyd MP.

There can be no doubt that Apprenticeships really are a winning formula that make good business sense and provide the pathway to individual career progression.