

Apprenticeship

Week

Campaign

Toolkit

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Section 1

Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to the Apprenticeship Week campaign toolkit. This toolkit is designed to give you all the information you need about Apprenticeship Week 2010. We want as many partners as possible to get involved in the Week so the pack also contains practical advice and ideas to help you run your own events and communications activity.

If you have any further queries on Apprenticeship Week after reading through the toolkit then please contact a Marketing and Communications Manager at the National Apprenticeship Service, all the contact details are on the final page of the toolkit.



Simon Waugh, Chief Executive
The National Apprenticeship Service

Background

The National Apprenticeship Service

In January 2008 the Government's strategy for building the future of Apprenticeships in England was announced by the Prime Minister. Within this was the formation of a National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), which came into full effect in April 2009.

The NAS has end to end responsibility for Apprenticeships in England. It supports, funds and coordinates the delivery of Apprenticeships throughout England and has been designed to increase the number of Apprenticeship opportunities and provide a dedicated, responsive service for both employers and learners. This involves simplifying the process of recruiting an apprentice through Apprenticeship vacancies, an online web-based matching system.

Apprenticeships bring considerable value to organisations, employers, individuals and the economy. Businesses across the country are now increasingly realising the enormous benefits that Apprenticeships create, not only in terms of a highly skilled workforce but also by boosting productivity and staff retention. Research shows they are an optimal way of training, developing and skilling people for the future, helping businesses to secure a supply of people with the skills and qualities they need and which are often not available on the external job market.

Section 2

Overview of

Apprenticeship Week

Recent Apprenticeships Marketing Campaigns



Make Things Happen Campaign

In February 2009, a major marketing campaign spearheaded by Sir Alan Sugar was launched including national TV, radio, press and online advertising. The campaign was employer focused with the main objective to stimulate employers to take on apprentices. So far this has been hugely successful, from February – September 2009 NAS received over 17,000 phone and web enquiries from interested employers.

Good for Business Campaign

In October NAS launched the 'Good for Business' campaign. The campaign ran during October and November 2009 and continues in January and February 2010. The objective of the campaign is to increase the number of Apprenticeships available, in particular to those aged 16-18. We are again focusing our marketing and communication efforts on employers to engage and explain the business benefits that apprentices can bring to an organisation. Employers in both the public and private sectors are being targeted.

The theme, Good for Business has been tested with groups of employers who liked the style and directness of the messaging and design. National and regional press and radio advertising is being used alongside PR, digital and direct marketing.



What is Apprenticeship Week?

In 2010, the third Apprenticeship Week will take place between the 1 and 5 February. This is the week when all eyes are on Apprenticeships and it's all about raising the profile of Apprenticeships amongst employers, learners, parents, stakeholders and the media.

The objectives for Apprenticeship Week are:

- To bring to life positive messages about Apprenticeships.
- To engage employers with the advantages of employing and supporting apprentices in their workplace.
- To create noise around Apprenticeships with the wider public.
- To highlight the range of Apprenticeships available in different sectors and progression routes.
- To highlight the increased number and range of Apprenticeships available in both the private and public sector.

We will be targeting:

- Employers: Those already engaged with Apprenticeships (who we can persuade to take on more in their non-core areas), lapsed and non-engaged employers.
- Young people and their parents: To raise the general reputation of Apprenticeships to highlight their value as an entry route into a successful career.

At a national level we are working on a programme for the Week, building on the success of Apprenticeship Week 2009. People involved in Apprenticeships across the country are encouraged to carry out their own communications activity to help promote the Week and its aims. This includes learning providers, employers and Sector Skills Councils from every sector and industry.

Apprenticeship Week 2009 Highlights

Events

- Secretaries of State Ed Balls and John Denham along with Sir Alan Sugar hosted a seminar in London on the benefits of Apprenticeships for 400 businesses.
- Apprentices 'made-over' residents at a Willow View Care Home, Stockton with the challenge '10 years younger' provided by Middlesbrough College.
- Furness College in the North West held an apprentice auction where apprentices were auctioned in aid of Comic Relief.
- LSC Yorkshire and the Humber hosted an Apprenticeship Speed Dating event at Leeds Corn Exchange.
- Regions and stakeholders up and down the country ran events aimed at encouraging employers to take on more apprentices:
- The LSC East Midlands had an Apprenticeships stand at a Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce Showcase event in Derby.
- An employer lunch was hosted by Luton Borough Council.
- A joint employer event was organised with the London LSC and City & Guilds.
- An employer seminar took place at the North East Business Fair on Recruitment and Retention showcasing the benefits of taking on apprentices.
- A business breakfast was held at Bentley Motors in Crewe.
- Two business breakfasts in the South East took place in Slough and Crawley.
- Private and public employer business breakfasts were held in Wellington, Devon, Bristol and Somerset.
- Habia organised road shows to launch Apprenticeship Week, Apprentice Skills Team and the Apprenticeship Mini site in London, Birmingham, the Midlands and Manchester.
- Employer workshops and events were hosted by Construction Skills, Creative & Cultural Skills, Habia, Improve, Lantra, Lifelong Learning UK, Management and Standards Centre, MetSkill, People 1st, Skills for Justice, Skills for Security and SkillsActive.





Media Work

- 121,000 visitors to apprenticeships.org.uk, the highest recorded figure for one week.
- Over 600 pieces of national, regional and trade coverage.
- Very strong national and regional broadcast presence including pieces on Sky News, BBC Breakfast, BBC Working Lunch, Channel M, BBC Spotlight, BBC Look North, BBC Radio London, BBC Radio Nottingham, BBC Radio Lincolnshire, BBC Radio Leeds, BBC Radio Gloucester, BBC Radio Newcastle, BBC East Mids Today, BBC Radio Derby, BBC Radio Leicester, BBC Radio Northants, BBC Radio Notts, BBC Radio 2, Radio 5 Live, Radio 1 Xtra, LBC.
- Gordon Brown announced a commitment to 21,000 new public sector Apprenticeships on the Monday to launch the Week.
- John Denham MP took to the sofa on BBC Breakfast to dispel the myths surrounding Apprenticeships.
- Skills Minister Lord Young and NAS Chief Executive Simon Waugh gave a series of radio interviews to promote the message that Apprenticeships improve businesses' productivity.
- MPs across the country including Lord Young, Gillian Merron, Tom Levitt, Mark Todd, Gordon Marsden, David Evennett, Douglas Hogg, Maria Eagle, Angela Eagle, Malcolm Wicks, Joan Ryan, Bill Etherington and Joe Benton, Phil Willis, Richard Caborn, George Howarth, Natascha Engle and Hugo Swire went back to the floor to learn from the brightest and the best apprentices in a range of industry sectors.
- Lord Young and Simon Waugh participated in a WebTV chat with employer Dave Walsh from BT.
- Journalists from the South East, East Midlands and a national journalist were challenged to take a masterclass in Apprenticeships.
- 50 performing arts students from Exeter College in the South West dressed as Alan Sugar and paraded through the town to raise awareness of Apprenticeships.
- Skillsfast-UK held a photo call in Leicester and Manchester for the fashion and textiles Pod showcasing apprentices' skills.

Conferences

- A TUC conference organised by the Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network took place with speaker David Way encouraging businesses to employ apprentices.
- A North West Apprenticeship Summit took place in Cumbria.
- A public sector employer event took place in the West Midlands.
- An event for the top retail employers was hosted by Skillsmart Retail with guest speaker Theo Paphitis from Dragons' Den fame.
- A Science Employers' Apprentices Summit was hosted by Cogent.



NAS Activities 1-5 February 2010

The NAS will be carrying out its own PR activity around the Week, with a different focus for each day. Below are the key themes for each day.

Timeline and activities

Monday: 'Competitive advantage'

Activity will be focused on making a compelling case to employers that investing in Apprenticeships now will deliver a strategic advantage as the economy continues to recover. We will issue a hard news press release to national and trade media based on commissioned research from an academic and/or management consultant showing businesses that invested in skills at the bottom of the recession are now benefiting on the bottom line.

Tuesday: 'Benefiting directly'

Activity will focus on business and public sector leaders going 'back to the floor' to experience a day in the life of an apprentice in their sector. This activity was very successful last year with MPs and Lord Young, but we would like to really expand it in 2010 to show the huge range of Apprenticeship frameworks available.

The 'back to the floor' activity will be supported by public sector work around agenda-setting media features and regional public sector employer 'conversion' events.

Wednesday: 'Ambition'

To raise the profile of Apprenticeships and awareness of the different sectors they cover, we will coordinate a day where apprentices from across the country come to London to shadow key business and political figures.

Thursday: 'Apprenticeships driving business'

To showcase the diverse range of 21st Century Apprenticeships through first-hand experiences, we will invite TV news journalists and national/regional newspaper feature writers to spend a day in the life of an apprentice, working alongside an apprentice. The features will look at more unusual and visual lines of work.

We are also working with a conference organiser to hold a conference titled: Apprenticeships Driving Business. The conference will explain the business benefits of Apprenticeships – both to providers (why they should be offering them to employers and within their own organisation) and to employers (why they should be offering them to young people).

Friday: 'Community A Team'

This day will focus on the community benefits of Apprenticeships and show the tangible achievements of apprentices. We will work closely with regional teams on apprentice 'makeover challenges'. The activity will launch on the Monday and culminate on Friday; and see groups of apprentices using their expertise and skills to support local communities. Regional TV broadcasters and newspaper journalists will be invited to take part in the challenges and will be given updates on the activity throughout the Week.

The Hub

As well as carrying out PR activity around the Week, NAS will be creating a 'hub' of resources that can be used by other parties who want to promote Apprenticeships.

The hub will include:

- **PR 'collateral'** – This will include an image library, case study database, FAQs and myth-busting documents.
- **Research** – NAS has a range of research that can be used to strengthen stories around Apprenticeship Week. This includes research on the business benefits of hiring an apprentice and statistics about the consumer demand for firms that support young people.
- **Supporter tools** – So everyone involved in Apprenticeship Week knows what's going on around the country, NAS will produce an online calendar, a national map of events, an E-bulletin and a Twitter feed.

All the Hub information will be available on apprenticeships.org.uk

How can I get involved?

This toolkit is a great starting point if you want to get involved in Apprenticeship Week 2010. It should give you ideas about events and activities that you can organise and promote as part of the Week, as well as handy tips to get the media interested and reach a wider audience.

Working with the NAS teams

Apprenticeship Marketing and Communication teams would love to hear from you and find out what you are planning for Apprenticeship Week. You can contact the Apprenticeship Regional Manager in your area and have a chat with them about your ideas. They will be able to let you know what else is happening in the area, as well as letting the national team know about your activities. Details will then be placed on a central Apprenticeship Week calendar and support can be given where possible.

Who is the Apprenticeships Manager in my region?

Please see the contacts page at the back of this toolkit to find out who your Regional Manager is and how best to contact them.

Section 3

Media and Events:

Tips and Ideas

Planning events around the Week

The basics

Why run an event?

Holding an event is a great way to attract the attention of employers, get media coverage and get the message behind Apprenticeship Week out to as many people as possible.

Where do I start?

This toolkit aims to give you everything you need to plan, manage and promote your event for Apprenticeship Week. So whether you've run events before or this is your first time, you should find what you need to get started here.

Event ideas

Here are some ideas for events that will help you to engage employers in the Week, both through direct involvement and media coverage.

Employer reception

Getting employers to come along to a reception is a great way of telling them more about the Apprenticeships programme and what it has to offer them. However, they are busy people so you need to make sure they'll see the benefits of attending your event. To get them along, you could:

- Invite local opinion formers and decisions makers who employers may want to meet such as a local MP or key business leader.
- Have an interesting speaker at your event who is respected in the business community.
- Offer free advice on how businesses can address their training and resourcing needs – this would enable you to present information about the benefits of hiring an apprentice alongside other useful information.
- Think about the best time to hold your event. The middle of the day isn't ideal as your target audience is likely to be hard at work so breakfast and early evening events tend to work best.

Showcasing apprentices' skills

Apprentices have a range of great skills they can offer to the community as well as the workplace, so why not stage an activity to showcase these skills and show employers who don't have an apprentice what they're missing? These 'showcases' can be promoted in the local media. You could:

- Get a group of apprentice accountants to assist a charity or arts organisation with fundraising initiatives and administration support.
- Arrange for teacher support apprentices to run homework 'hints and tips' classes with parents in the local community.
- Invite local businessmen to a dinner where the food is prepared and served by a group of hospitality apprentices.
- Arrange for trade apprentices (builders, decorators, carpenters and gardeners) to decorate a shelter for homeless people.
- Get hospitality apprentices to takeover a soup kitchen and serve up gourmet food.
- Run a 'get-fit' course with sport apprentices for the local community, including school children and the elderly.
- Arrange for hair and beauty apprentices to visit a residential home to give makeovers to the residents.
- Get a group of marketing apprentices to re-design the website/ newsletter for a local charity.

Job swap

You could arrange for an apprentice to swap jobs with a more senior person for a day to highlight the range of skills they possess and the value they can add to an organisation. For example, a healthcare apprentice could swap jobs with the CEO of a Primary Care Trust for a day, or an animal care apprentice could swap with the manager of a zoo. The apprentice would show what they can do in a more senior role, and it would enable the senior person to experience the challenges and rigorous training an apprentice goes through.

You could invite a local or trade journalist to attend the job swap day and interview the parties involved.

MP visit

Arranging for your local MP to see apprentices in action can be an easy way to get media coverage. Make sure there's something happening on the day of the visit that the MP can observe or get involved in and invite relevant journalists to accompany them.

Getting people involved

Getting people involved in your event is key to its success. It's important to think about ways of creating excitement and making your Apprenticeship Week event something people will want to support.

Engaging employers

Attracting the interest of businesses that don't currently offer Apprenticeships is a 'must' but this can be difficult as business people are often very time limited. It's therefore important to tell employers what's in it for them if they come to your event; for example, the opportunity to network or the chance to get free advice on addressing training needs.

To get this information out to employers, you could write a letter or email. You may also want to contact local organisations and membership bodies that work with employers, such as your local Chamber of Commerce. They may have channels such as a newsletter or website that you can use to tell people about your event.

Engaging schools

Inviting schools to your event is a great way of ensuring that people attend and reaches young people, one of your target audiences.

You may already have links with schools in your local community. If so, it's a good idea to call your contacts and make them aware of your event. Depending on plans for your event, you could arrange for a group of young people to come along as a class.

If you don't currently have links with local schools, you can still get in touch with them to let them know what you are doing and how they can get involved.

Engaging MPs and celebrities

In order to create an extra buzz around your event, you may wish to invite a local celebrity or MP. This person could be asked to take part in photographs or media interviews too.

Whoever you invite to attend, it's important that you think about what you want them to do and give them a specific role to perform on the day. Let them know about your plans up front so they can see you have thought about how they can help support your event.

You can find out who your local MP is by visiting www.theyworkforyou.com. Send a letter or email to their constituency office, asking them to attend your event.

Once you have the contact details for the celebrity you want to invite or their agent, send a letter or email asking them to come along and follow this up with a phone call. Some celebrities may charge money for personal appearances so, if you have no budget for this, make it clear in your letter/email. Think about people with a personal connection or story to tell in relation to Apprenticeships – they will be more likely to support you.

Getting media coverage

How can your event generate media coverage?

Local media provide excellent opportunities for you to promote Apprenticeship Week and help get people along to your event. The media will only cover stories that are interesting to their audience, so we have put together some hints and tips to help you get your media relations spot on.

What makes a good story?

Human interest is key so remember the journalistic maxim: 'news is people'.

Think about the most unusual aspect of your event – is it a first for your area or are you putting on a unique activity?

Is there anyone 'high-profile' attending that could get journalists interested?

Targeting the media

There should be three stages to promoting your event in the local media:

1. Letting people know your event is happening and encouraging them to attend
2. Inviting the media to your event
3. Telling people how the day went

The first thing you should do is identify who your local media are. Local media includes newspapers, magazines, radio and TV that focus on your local area. Don't forget the free weekly newspapers that are dropped through letterboxes as these are guaranteed to have a wide reach within the community.

Call your local newspaper and ask for the news editor (you will find their details in the newspaper or online). They will tell you who the best person is for you to speak to – perhaps a reporter who writes the 'what's on' section in your paper or a general reporter who covers your local area. Do the same with local radio and TV and build up a list of the best contacts.

Explain what your event entails, when it is being held and who will be attending and highlight any great photo opportunities. Find out when journalists' deadlines are and how far in advance they need information. It is a good idea to put this information into a table so you can keep track of who you need to contact and when.

Writing a press release

What is a press release?

A press release, or news release, is a written form of communication directed at the media to announce a new product, development or event – something that is considered newsworthy. It is usually emailed to a reporter or editor at a newspaper, magazine, radio or TV station and is used to get the journalist interested in developing the story.

How to construct a press release

There is no hard and fast rule for producing the perfect press release, however brevity is key. Your aim is to demonstrate that you have an interesting story, the journalist can then contact you if further detail is required.

Remember that journalists may receive hundreds of press releases everyday, so make your heading and first paragraph eye-catching and punchy – this can make all the difference between acceptance and rejection of a story. To do this, try to include the answers to the five Ws (who, what, where, when and why) within your first paragraph – BUT keep it short and concise – it should be 30 words or less.

The second paragraph should expand on detail from the first and include times, dates and locations. You should use at least one quote in your press release from someone involved in the event to add some emotion to what you're saying, rather than just hard facts. The rest of the press release should give additional background details.

At the bottom of the release you should include an editor's note: basic facts such as information on NAS, plus some contact details for further information e.g. email address, telephone number and out-of-hours number if possible.

See the template and example press releases within this toolkit to help you put your own media materials together.

How to send your release

Ask the journalists how they prefer to be emailed releases i.e. as an attachment or pasted into the body of the email. Put the headline in the 'subject' box so the journalist can immediately see what the story is.

After you have sent your press release to the media, it is always a good idea to follow this up with a call to your contacts to check they have received it and ask if they need any further information.

Inviting the media to your event

Will your local media come along to your event to take photographs and interview employers and apprentices? Send an invitation to the journalist, plus the photodesk if appropriate, and follow it up with a call to see if they can attend.

Remember that if you've got a journalist coming along to your event you need to make sure there will be plenty of people around for them to talk to. Arrange to have visitors there when you're expecting the journalist, so that there is a busy atmosphere.

To help you when inviting local media, we have produced a template that you can fill in plus an example invitation for reference. Both are provided within this toolkit.

If media cannot attend your event, don't be disheartened as they may still cover it so it is still important that you send them a post-event press release.

Selecting and briefing spokespeople

Both broadcast and print media will be looking for interesting people to interview. These may be apprentices, employers or someone from your organisation.

Once you have chosen a spokesperson, it is important to brief them. You may want to produce a short document that sets out the background to your event or story and some key points you want them to cover. If your spokesperson is someone who hasn't had any previous experience of media interviews, you could have a practice run through with them to check they are comfortable and that they are getting your key messages across.

Telling people how the day went

After your event, you should send out a press release to the local media describing what happened. This is your chance to share your success and get messages about Apprenticeship Week out to a wider audience than just those people who attended on the day.

You may also wish to add quotes from an employer and apprentice who attended to bring the press release to life, perhaps about how useful they found it and if they plan to come back to find out more. Do make sure any quotes you write have been seen and approved by the person you're quoting.

When distributing it to local newspapers, also remember to send out any photographs you have from the event.

Photography for the media

Inviting newspaper photographers – hints and tips

Consider timings. Most local newspaper photographers will only work during evenings around once or twice a week. Taking pictures outside after daylight is also technically difficult.

Newspaper photographers often have their days fully booked with appointments. It is crucial you keep to any appointment that you have arranged.

If you have arranged for a newspaper photographer to visit your event, remember that they are the professionals, so be open to their ideas.

Taking your own pictures – hints and tips

The best images depict some form of action so try to photograph people doing something; for example, apprentices making over a community centre as part of a showcase event.

The media do not like pictures of big groups. They want their audience to see everyone in the image clearly, so pictures featuring more than 10 people will stand less of a chance of being published than a smaller group shot.

If you are taking pictures yourself, zoom in as much as you can on the subject matter and have as little background as possible.

Make sure you can see the face of everyone in your photo and avoid capturing the backs of people's heads.

Try to make your pictures look as natural as possible and avoid obviously posed shots.

Photos should be accompanied by captions giving the names of everyone in the picture and the purpose of the event, or they might be rejected.

Technical information

Whether you are arranging an opportunity for the local media or taking your own photographs, there are a few things to consider:

Local media usually prefer digital images rather than prints, but check in advance with your journalist contact before you send your pictures.

If you are taking the pictures yourself on a digital camera, set it to the highest resolution setting.

For newspapers and magazines, photos need to be at least 1800 x 1200 pixels, however 2400 x 1600 pixels is preferred. You will need to use at least a three megapixel camera. Images for websites may not need to be as high definition.

Save your pictures as jpeg (filename.jpg) or tif files (filename.tif). These are the two main types of images used by newspapers and magazines.

Legal issues and consent

There is an understandable anxiety surrounding the use of images of children and young people in newspapers. If you are arranging an event, you are responsible for obtaining written consent from the parents of any children photographed (either by yourself or the media) who are under the age of 16. This also applies to the filming of children for television.

Case studies

What are case studies and why use them?

Case studies are real life examples that put a face to a news story or announcement. They make a story appeal to a journalist and, in turn, to the reader as well as adding credibility. When speaking to journalists they will often ask if you have a case study to go with a specific story, so it is important to think about this and who may be appropriate. Case studies can sometimes make the difference between securing coverage and having your story ignored.

Sourcing and using case studies

Case studies are a great way to bring an apprentice story to life and will increase interest from the media. The simplest way to source case studies is to take advantage of existing relationships and ask if apprentices/employers/teachers/providers would be able to help with media relations to promote Apprenticeships. Remember this will also benefit them as it offers the chance for them to promote their organisation.

What is expected from case studies?

Initially it is best if you interview the case study to get all the necessary facts and information about them. Think about what makes that person interesting and relevant to your particular story or announcement. Next you should write up your interview and send it to the case study to check they are happy with the information and that all of the details are correct. You may then wish to draft up a short version that you can send to journalists if requested.

Always check what your case study is happy to do. They may be happy for you to write up their story and send it to the journalist, but they may not be happy to speak to the media directly. The journalist may want to talk to your case study directly to flesh out their story, so check your case study would be happy to do this before sending out their contact details.

If you have pictures of your case study, let the journalist know as this always adds to the story.

Key points to remember:

- Always check your case study is happy to feature in the media.
- Show them the information you are sending to the journalist to check they are happy.
- Don't add their contact details to the information you send to the journalist unless they have agreed that this is OK.

Briefing case studies

If your case study is going to speak directly to a journalist, it is a good idea to brief them first. As well as their story, write down three key messages you want the case study to bring out as part of their interview with the journalist. For example:

There are a wide range of Apprenticeships available at [INSERT COLLEGE].

Apprenticeships can be taken at different levels and over different periods of time.

To find out more about Apprenticeships at [INSERT COLLEGE], call [INSERT CONTACT] to speak to a member of the admissions team.

The interview

Confirm the time, length and details of the interview with the case study and the journalist. If possible, make sure the journalist can call the case study at a convenient time so the interview is not rushed or missed.

Confirm who is calling who, at what time and on what number. Let both the case study and the journalist know to contact you if they cannot make the arranged interview or if there are any problems. After the interview, call the case study to check it went well and call the journalist to check they have got all the information they need.

'Thank yous' and maintaining relationships

Case studies take time out of their busy lives to help and conduct an interview with media for you, so it is always important to thank them in some way. It is a good idea to keep them updated as to when the coverage may be appearing and send them a complimentary copy of the newspaper or magazine if possible. If you thank them and keep them up to date then they will be more likely to assist you as a case study in the future. They may also be a link to other case studies you can approach to help with activity.

Template Press Release

[INSERT DATE]

[INSERT HEADLINE – BOLD]

First paragraph – choose the most interesting and newsworthy aspect of your story and insert it here. (That an Apprenticeship event is happening at your college/organisation).

Second paragraph – Develop your story and add more of the 'five Ws' – What, Where, Why, When and Who. (Make sure you give the key facts about your Apprenticeship event here).

Third paragraph – further context and final points on the story.(Flesh out the details of your event here).

Quote – Attribute the quote and then provide a few lines to summarise the story (Add a quote from a spokesperson such as apprentice/employer/event organiser).

– ENDS –

Contact details – Add your name and number so people can call to find out more.

Notes to editors:

Apprenticeship Week

Apprenticeship Week (1 – 5 February 2010) is organised by the National Apprenticeship Service and is an opportunity for employers, providers, learners and stakeholders to showcase Apprenticeships. In addition to a national programme of events, there are regional and local events taking place across the country.

(Include more regional and local information if appropriate).

To find out more information on Apprenticeship Week visit apprenticeships.org.uk

(Your organisation)

(This is an opportunity to include some more detail about your organisation with relation to Apprenticeships. It allows the journalist to gain more information, without having to use space in the body of the press release).

Example Press Release (Page 1)

3 February, 2010

MP meets talented Manchester apprentices

Joe Bloggs MP visited a team of young apprentices at a travel agency in Manchester yesterday to learn how they have helped boost productivity and turnover for the company.

The six apprentices started at Travellers Are Us just over two years ago and have since increased productivity at the company by around 15%. At his visit on Tuesday, the MP learned what Apprenticeship programmes entail and put himself in the apprentices' 'shoes' as he booked a holiday for a lucky customer.

Joe Bloggs said: "These talented young individuals have really done Manchester proud. Not only have they successfully managed to boost productivity for this small enterprise, but they have done so in the middle of a recession at a time when many consumers are booking fewer holidays.

"I was delighted to meet the team involved and to learn how businesses of all sectors can benefit from investing in apprentices."

CEO of Travellers Are Us, Jane Smith said: "Travellers Are Us are always keen to take on the best talent for our business and we've certainly found over the years that apprentices deliver a top quality service.

"Apprenticeships can also help with staff loyalty and commitment, a reduction in recruitment costs and lower staff turnover, so I would urge businesses that don't employ apprentices to take note and find out more about what hiring a young person can do for them."

To find out how Apprenticeships can benefit your business visit apprenticeships.org.uk.

– ENDS –

For more information, interview opportunities or apprenticeship case studies contact Jane Doe on 01234 567 890

Example Press Release (Page 2)

Notes to editors:

1. National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

The NAS was announced in January 2008 and officially launched in April 2009. Reporting to the Departments for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the service will drive forward the Government's ambition for Apprenticeships. The service aims to bring about a significant growth in the number of employers offering Apprenticeships.

The NAS takes total responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships that includes: Employer Services; Learner Services; and a web-based vacancy matching system. This online system enables individuals to search and apply for live vacancies and allows employers, and their training providers to advertise their vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants.

The service has ultimate accountability for the national delivery of targets and co-ordination of the funding for Apprenticeship places. It acts to overcome barriers to the growth of the programme and assumes responsibility for promoting Apprenticeships and their value to employers, learners and the country as a whole.

2. 2,000 adults in England were interviewed between 7- 9 October 2009 by YouGov. The three question survey asked consumers about their purchasing decisions with regards to businesses taking on apprentices. The results displayed:

81% of people would be more likely or would consider using a company who takes on apprentices.

94% think it is important that companies support young people by taking on apprentices in the recession.

YouGov plc is a professional research and consulting organisation, pioneering the use of the Internet and information technology to collect high quality, in-depth data for market research and stakeholder consultation.

3. Travellers Are Us is a leading Manchester travel organisation for students and young people and specialise in great student travel deals and inspirational ideas.

<http://www.travellersareus.co.uk>

Template Media Invitation

[INSERT DATE]

Apprenticeship Week 2010 – Event at [INSERT LOCATION]

Media are invited to attend the Apprenticeship Week 2010 event at [INSERT LOCATION], which will celebrate the advantages of taking on apprentices and encourage local employers to get involved in the Apprenticeship scheme.

[DETAILS OF WHAT YOUR EVENT WILL INVOLVE]

Event details:

Date: [INSERT DATE]

Time: [INSERT START AND FINISH TIMES]

Address: [INSERT FULL ADDRESS]

Media opportunities:

[INSERT DETAILS OF PEOPLE THE MEDIA CAN PHOTOGRAPH AND/OR INTERVIEW AT YOUR EVENT]

For more information, to confirm attendance or arrange interviews please contact:
[CONTACT DETAILS]

Notes to editors:

Apprenticeship Week

Apprenticeship Week (1 – 5 February 2010) is organised by the National Apprenticeship Service and is an opportunity for employers, providers, learners and stakeholders to showcase Apprenticeships. In addition to a national programme of events, there are regional and local events taking place across the country.

(Include more regional and local information if appropriate)

To find out more information on Apprenticeship Week visit apprenticeships.org.uk

(Your organisation)

(This is an opportunity to include some more detail about your organisation with relation to Apprenticeships. It allows the journalist to gain more information, without having to use space in the body of the press release).

Template Employer Letter

[YOUR ADDRESS]

[DATE]

Dear [INSERT EMPLOYER]

I am contacting you on behalf of the [ORGANISATION] as I am organising an event for the local community on [DATE] and would really like you to attend.

The event is part of Apprenticeship Week 2010 and will celebrate the advantages of getting involved in the Apprenticeship scheme. The event will provide you with the opportunity to discover how apprentices can help:

- create a productive workplace;
- make your business stand out from others;
- deliver a lower staff turnover;
- reduce recruitment and training costs.

The event we are running is one of hundreds that will be held all around the country and will involve [INCLUDE BRIEF DETAILS OF YOUR EVENT].

Please RSVP to [EMAIL ADDRESS] or if you would like more information about the event Apprenticeships in general, please contact [CONTACT DETAILS].

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours [FAITHFULLY/SINCERELY]

[NAME]

[POSITION]

Example Web Copy – Event

Apprenticeship Week 2010

National Apprenticeship Week will take place from Monday 1 February to Friday 5 February. It will celebrate the talent and skills of apprentices from across the UK and see apprentices, employers, providers and wider stakeholders showcase the benefits of Apprenticeship programmes and the value apprentices bring to the organisations they work for.

National and regional activities will be taking place throughout the Week and each day will have a different focus. Following the success of Apprenticeship Week 2009, activities this year will include agenda-setting media features, employer events, job swaps, breakfast briefings and apprentice challenges.

Event at [INSERT LOCATION]

To celebrate Apprenticeship Week 2010, [ORGANISATION] will be holding [NAME AND BRIEF OVERVIEW OF EVENT].

The event will take place on [ENTER DATE, TIME AND EXTRA DETAILS].

[ENTER DETAILS OF WHAT YOU WANT PEOPLE TO DO - SUCH AS ATTEND THE EVENT]

For more information and details on how to get involved contact [ENTER CONTACT DETAILS].

Section 4

Additional

Information

'Good for Business' Key Messages

Overview of Apprenticeships

Apprentices are employees who earn a wage and work alongside experienced staff in businesses to gain job-specific skills. Off the job, usually on a day-release basis, apprentices receive training to work towards nationally recognised qualifications.

Apprenticeships can take between one and four years to complete depending on the level of Apprenticeship, the apprentices' ability and the industry sector.

There are over 190 types of Apprenticeships that are suitable for hundreds of job roles.

Key messages from YouGov research (October 2009):

- Over 80% of people are more likely to use a business if it offers Apprenticeships to young people.
- 94% think it is important that companies support young people by taking on apprentices in the recession.

Key statistics from Populus research (February 2009):

- 81% of businesses agree that apprentices make their work place more productive.
- Apprentices provide the skilled workers we need for the future (82% employers agree).
- Apprenticeships mean lower recruitment costs (67% employers agree).

Key statistic from the Institute for Employment Research, 'Net benefit to Employer Investment in Apprenticeship Training' (November 2008):

- On average an apprentice pays back your investment after 2.5 years

Key messages from 'Good for Business' research:

- Apprentices bring new ideas into your company.
- Apprentices inject new life blood into a company.
- Apprenticeships demonstrate your company's commitment to training.
- Apprentices can be moulded into your ideal employee.

Apprenticeship myths... and the reality

Myth

Response

A 16-18 year old will not have the maturity to cope and contribute.

Obviously, it depends on the individual. Some of our apprentices are perfectly mature enough to perform to a high professional standard alongside much older colleagues. However, as with any training scheme, careers guidance and support is very important.

My business needs skills that fall outside the traditional sectors
/ Apprenticeships are in areas like trades and construction
/ Only in traditional crafts.

Apprenticeships are not just offered in traditional sectors. There are more than 190 types of Apprenticeships covering hundreds of job roles ranging from accountancy to textiles, engineering to veterinary nursing, business admin to construction.

Most businesses will have skills needs that could be filled by apprentices.

Apprenticeships are only for recruiting new staff. Current employees couldn't do one.

Current employees can do an Apprenticeship and if they are aged between 16-18 their training will be fully funded by the Government.

I don't want to train someone up for them to leave and benefit someone else's business.

The statistics show this is not so. 83% of employers rely on their Apprenticeships programme to provide the skilled workers that they need for the future. 80% said that Apprenticeship programmes reduced staff turnover. So, it seems that Apprenticeship programmes produce staff loyalty and satisfaction (Feb 2008 Populus research).

My existing and older staff may see doing an Apprenticeship as only for young people and not appropriate for them.

Apprenticeships are in fact open to all age groups (post 16) and they can be beneficial career wise even for an employee with years of experience. Government funding will provide 100% of training costs for 16-18 year old apprentices, and up to 50% of training for apprentices aged 19+.

An apprentice will soak up an inordinate amount of my time and costs and is likely to be not very productive.

Not so. Research carried out by Populus in January 2009 found that 80% of employers agree that apprentices make their workplace more productive. However, an investment in time is necessary in order to get the most out of your apprentices.

Myth

Response

Apprenticeships are for people who are not academic / failed at school / university drop outs / People who don't want to go to university.

No. Lots of people prefer to undertake vocational training as opposed to academic studies. And Apprenticeships result in nationally recognised qualifications too.

Apprentices won't earn as much long-term as those who take university route.

The average apprentice earns £170 per week, which works out at £8,840 annually. Considering that university students may graduate with debts and need to find a job, the earn while you learn Apprenticeships route has several advantages.

Career progression is excellent for apprentices, and over the course of their careers those with a level 3 Apprenticeship earn on average £100,000 more than those without.

[A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Apprenticeships and Other Vocational Qualifications, University of Sheffield, 2007].

Apprenticeships are a thing of the past.

They have been around for centuries: Leonardo da Vinci was an apprentice! Since 1996/97 there have been more than 2 million Apprenticeship starts.

With the launch of the NAS in April 2009, there is more structure and support available for Apprenticeship programmes.

There is too much red tape.

With the launch of the NAS in January 2009, there is now a vast support network for employers wishing to take on apprentices. Once contact has been established with the NAS and a geographical location ascertained, a regional employer co-ordinator will be in touch to review potential providers and frameworks and discuss opportunities with the employers. The Apprenticeship vacancies system will then help (with information from the employee) find suitable candidates. There is already a large database of interested individuals, so the process is fairly streamlined and aimed at ease of use for employers.

Useful Contacts

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