

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT... RECRUITING YOUR EMPLOYEES ONTO YOUR PROGRAMME



The way you recruit your employees is important. They may be sensitive about being asked to take part. Publicity and recruitment onto your programme are crucial. Here are some things to consider. Seek your ITO's input too.

Choose a suitable programme name

Many employers don't use explicit literacy terminology (literacy, reading, maths and communication) in case it puts employees off. But remember that no matter what terms are used, once your employees are on the programme they'll quickly recognise this is what's being taught. Whatever you call your programme, be positive about its value to your employees and be clear about what it's expected to teach them.

Work out who should attend your programme

Businesses that have run literacy programmes say getting the selection of participants 'right' involves not only knowing who has the need, but also knowing what roles in the business will benefit most from improving literacy skills, and who is motivated to commit to a programme. Work with your training provider and supervisors to identify the 'right' employees to target.

Make it clear your programme is voluntary

It's always better when employees volunteer to take part in your programme and can recognise the benefits of participation. Even with proactive techniques like shoulder-tapping, make it clear your employees can say no.

Shoulder-tapping is the most effective recruitment technique

A direct approach by your supervisor, or trainer, who understands the sensitivities and has a good, trusting relationship with your employees, is probably the best way of encouraging your employees to take part.

EMPLOYERS TALK ABOUT RECRUITING THEIR EMPLOYEES ONTO THEIR PROGRAMMES

WE ASKED FOR FEEDBACK ABOUT HOW EMPLOYERS RECRUITED THEIR EMPLOYEES ONTO THEIR PROGRAMMES. HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID.



We advertised the Steps programme at our two business sites in Auckland using posters and sold the programme as training that would develop employees' careers, confidence, work opportunities and the skills and knowledge they'll use in everyday life.

~ NEW ZEALAND POST

We wanted employees to see it was free (in monetary terms), voluntary and for people keen to improve their reading, writing, communication and problem-solving skills. But it also required commitment on their part, too. They had to do half the course in work time (on full pay) and the other half in their own time (unpaid), which meant they needed to come in before or after their shift and/or on their days off.

~ RYMAN HEALTHCARE

We found that the initial presentation of the programme to staff is really important. A lot of time was spent talking to people one-on-one. The face-to-face channels were critical. but we reinforced them with other communication initiatives. For example, the programme was discussed at morning and afternoon teas, staff were Emailed, and letters sent out.

~ SPOTLESS SERVICES



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Use multiple strategies to publicise your programme

Multiple strategies increase the likelihood of good understanding about your programme. Here are some promotional ideas other employers have used:

- > notices in with payslips
- > posters on noticeboards
- > individual emails or letters
- > printed publicity sheets distributed to individual employees
- > announcements at work events (eg team meetings, BBQs)
- > including information about your programme in your other training courses.

Your training provider can help publicise your programme

You and your training provider should discuss the role each of you will play in publicising your programme. External training providers can be seen as neutral and less threatening. They often build up a rapport with your employees during the initial needs analysis stage and can promote your programme to them.

Decide on confidentiality of results

Ensure you make it clear how results from your training will be shared. You'll want to share feedback on improvements with your supervisors and managers. However with any training or development, there are issues of confidentiality around individual results and employees need to be assured of this confidentiality.

Use Learning Reps

The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (CTU) runs a Learning Reps programme. Learning Reps are your employees who've been trained to take the lead in promoting workplace learning and building learning cultures in your workplace. If you don't already have Learning Reps, the CTU can work with your union to provide free training resources and support. And in the meantime, you can get your employee representatives involved. Go to www.learningreps.org.nz for more information.

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We started out with a very low-key, business as usual approach. We didn't have a big launch, for example. Adult literacy issues are sensitive in themselves, plus we had a recession going on and swine 'flu, causing a general reduction in spending. We kept saying to ourselves: 'We are great at hospitality, yet we need to be better at the basics of business'. That's where the name came from: Business Basics.

~ MILLENNIUM HOTELS AND RESORTS

We decided to steer clear of any negative connotations that can come from the word 'literacy' and have prefixed all our literacy modules with the title Communicate Effectively (followed by the level of the module concerned). The approach works well. The New Zealand Army is all about communication and communicating effectively - so the words have been quite specifically chosen. By using the word 'effectively', we want to show that the learning modules will add value.

~ NEW ZEALAND ARMY



For more information visit: www.skillshighway.govt.nz

