

THE EARWIG

UPDATES FROM WEST BERKSHIRE TRAINING CONSORTIUM

Dear Members

Before the apprentice recruitment season gets underway I'm taking some annual hence why this June edition of The Earwig is both earlier and shorter than usual. Speaking of the apprentice recruitment cycle, this edition unveils our 2018 Top Apprentice Recruitment Event on 28 June. Many of our longstanding members have successfully filled their annual apprentice needs through previous Top Apprentice Recruitment Events. This edition also explores our code of conduct for apprentices when they are training and support for apprentices facing mental health challenges. Naturally you'll also find dates of upcoming half and one-day workshops. These workshops, which are free to WBTC Members, fill up really quickly so early booking is essential.



Matt Garvey
Matt Garvey, Managing Director

TOP APPRENTICE RECRUITMENT DAY

Recruiting apprentices is all about timing. There is a recruitment season that coincides with school and college leavers finishing their GCSE or A Level exams. At WBTC our experience tells us that the strongest applicants begin looking for apprenticeships in late June and early July. They want to secure the right job with the right employer and then go off and enjoy the summer holidays.

Since 2013 we have seen greater numbers of A Level leavers apply for apprenticeships through WBTC. So timing is everything for employers who want to recruit the very best apprentices. Our Top Apprentice Recruitment Day, which we started in 2013, has as a simple proposition. Employers pledge their vacancies to WBTC. We then hand pick applicants to attend our invite-only Top Apprentice Recruitment Day on Thursday 28 June 2018. At this day applicants undertake assessments for:

- **Team work skills**
- **Problem solving skills**
- **Interview skills**
- **Vocational awareness**

Throughout the assessment day, the 50 or so applicants are under the careful gaze of our assessors. We're ensuring that they meet the high standards of employers and we're beginning the process of matching them to the pledged vacancies.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR EMPLOYERS?

Employers who have pledged their vacancies get exclusive access to a rich and varied number of high quality apprentice applicants. Our Top Apprentice Recruitment Day is early in the recruitment cycle so our employers keep one step ahead of their competitors in this tough recruitment market.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR THE APPLICANTS?

Every pledged employer guarantees to interview the shortlist of applicants that we send. This means that every participant in our Top Apprentice Recruitment Day is guaranteed at least one interview.



WHAT'S THE OUTCOME?

Typically we match 40-50 applicants to the pledged vacancies each time we run our Top Apprentice Recruitment Day. It is a highly effective way for employers to attract motivated applicants. Many will appoint their apprentices in July with a view to actually starting in September so everyone's happy.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Email Rachel Eaves on rachel@wbtc-uk.com or email her colleague Maria Wallin on maria@wbtc-uk.com or visit the pledge page on our website by [clicking here](#).

LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

It has been my displeasure to witness some disruptive, discourteous and downright disgusting behaviour by a small minority of learners attending training at WBTC recently. WBTC is paid by employers to provide a professional and inclusive place of learning for all apprentices. In the same way, an apprentice's wage on a training day is being paid for by the employer. In the eyes of WBTC and employers, a day of training is no different than a day at work.

I'll take this opportunity to alert all of our members to our learner code of conduct.

- Treat people how you would like to be treated - this includes learners, staff and visitors. This means: showing mutual respect and tolerance to everyone, and bullying of any kind is not tolerated.
- Respect classroom equipment and surroundings including the Memorial Garden.
- Only use phones for job offers or emergencies. Put them on silent and away. If you need to take an urgent call, ask the tutor and take it outside the classroom so that you do not disrupt the session.
- Learners are to wear appropriate clothing.
- Swearing at staff or other learners is unacceptable and repeated casual use of swearing and offensive language is unacceptable.
- IT must only be used according to the tutor's instructions. No games, social messaging or YouTube without permission.
- No alcohol or drugs anywhere on the premises. Anyone attending under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be suspended from the programme with immediate effect.
- Energy drinks are not to be consumed on the premises. Food to be consumed at break-time only.
- Learners are expected to attend and engage in all timetabled sessions.
- Learners are expected to call in if they cannot attend or expect to be late. Poor attendance and persistent lateness can lead to further action including withdrawal from programme.

APPRENTICES REPRESENT THEIR EMPLOYER

First of all, any apprentice attending our training is being paid by their employer. Consequently they are representing their employer in front of WBTC staff and other apprentices. Bad behaviour reflects poorly on the employer. As an employer myself I would be mortified to see a member of my staff giving WBTC a bad name. Employers have a much



greater influence on apprentices than WBTC staff. I therefore ask employers to reinforce the high expectations we have of apprentices both on and off work premises.

LATENESS

Tutors have the discretion to send apprentices home who are late. Apprentices rocking up 10 minutes or more late without having pre-warned WBTC i.e. doctor appointment, or similar can be refused admission to their class. An apprentice being late for their training is no different than being late for work.

EXCLUSION FROM CLASS

Behaviour that includes, but not restricted to

- Swearing
- Littering
- Spitting
- Preventing other learners from studying
- Hostile or aggressive comments or actions

Will result in the learner being sent out of the class. All apprentices, sent out of WBTC under these circumstances are expected to return to work because they are being paid by their employer.

IT IS A MINORITY?

I'm pleased that the vast majority of apprentices are diligent, polite and hardworking. However, it takes a small minority to spoil it for everyone else. I'll work in partnership with employers to ensure that any apprentice who breaches our code of conduct is appropriately engaged to improve their behaviour in training sessions.

APPRENTICE EXTRA CARD

NUS Apprentice Extra provides discounts in-store and online at your favourite brands to help your hard earned cash go a little further. This discount card has been created by the National Union of Students (NUS), and so the money raised selling the discount card helps fund the National Society for Apprentices, which will serve to represent apprentices' needs and those of all vocational learners.

For just £11 for 12 months, you get discounts from the likes of ASOS, The Co-op, Amazon, Dominos, Alton Towers, New Look and much more!

To apply for the Apprentice Extra card visit <https://www.apprenticeextra.co.uk/> and you'll need to put in West Berkshire Training Consortium as your apprentice provider.



SAFEGUARDING & PREVENT DUTY MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AMONG APPRENTICES

Ask many practitioners in apprenticeships and they'll remark on increased occurrences of mental health issues among apprentices. Partly this is down to a greater awareness of mental health and the ability of educators and employers to identify symptoms. Partly this is down to greater pressures among young people in a modern digital society where unrealistic expectations can heap pressure on developing teenagers. Either way, it is essential that employers and apprentices feel supported when mental health issues impact upon work and learning.

At WBTC we have safeguarding officers trained to support learners and one of them, Natalie is also trained in Mental Health First Aid. You can find details [here](#). Remploy also have a free service specifically for apprentices experiencing mental health problems.

SUPPORTING APPRENTICES SERVICE FROM REMPLOY

One in ten young people experience a mental health problem. There is a free service available to any apprentice who is experiencing mental health difficulties at work. Delivered by Remploy and funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, it complements any existing occupational health service you have.

Delivered by trained professionals with expertise in mental health in the workplace. Their specialist advisors provide:

- Emotional wellbeing support and advice for six months
- Advice on simple workplace adjustments
- Successful coping strategies
- A step-by-step support plan.

Get in touch today on 0300 456 8210 to speak to one of their friendly advisors, or send them an email, apprentices@remploy.co.uk.

To be eligible for this service, individuals need to be in an apprenticeship (attending work or signed off) and have a mental health condition (diagnosed or undiagnosed) that has resulted in workplace absence or is causing difficulties to remain in work.

Click here to read about how Harry Hobbs and William Smith benefited from using Remploy.

You can also download their information leaflets by clicking each link:

- Employer leaflet
- Individual's leaflet

If you would like any advice and guidance then contact me via martyn@wbtc-uk.com



HEALTH & SAFETY NEWS

HOW MANY TOILETS SHOULD A WORKPLACE HAVE?

At the risk of plumbing new depths of editorial content this month we explore rules around toilets and washing facilities in the workplace. Here is some guidance from the Health & Safety Executive on how many toilets a workplace should have.

The relevant legislation is the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Regulation 20, Sanitary conveniences, states:

1. Suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences shall be provided at readily accessible places.
2. Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), sanitary conveniences shall not be suitable unless -
 - a. the rooms containing them are adequately ventilated and lit;
 - b. they and the rooms containing them are kept in a clean and orderly condition; and
 - c. separate rooms containing conveniences are provided for men and women except where and so far as each convenience is in a separate room the door of which is capable of being secured from inside.

The Approved code of practice goes on to give minimum numbers of facilities:

(The number of people at work shown in column 1 refers to the maximum number likely to be in the workplace at any one time)
Number of toilets and washbasins for mixed use (or women only):



More detailed advice on this topic and other welfare issues can be found by [clicking this link](#).

No. of people at work	No. of toilets	No. of washbasins
1 - 5	1	1
6 - 25	2	2
26 - 50	3	3
51 - 75	4	4
76 - 100	5	5

WORKSHOPS, COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

Most of the training workshops below are free of charge to WBTC members which means apprentices, work place mentors or any of your staff can attend. To book, please use the email address against each event. Spaces go fast so please let us know ASAP if you wish to make a reservation.

We operate a £35 no-show fee for anyone who doesn't attend without notice on any 'free of charge' course. This will be invoiced care of the employer. WBTC have enhanced the confirmation process as follows

- We'll confirm your attendance by email and send a meeting request that you can import to your outlook or webmail calendar.
- We'll confirm your space with your employer and remind you prior to the event.

JUNE

EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Bad customer service can destroy the reputation of any organisation. This session explores how all staff can make a positive impression on their customers and raise the effectiveness of the whole organisation. It will explore topics such as professional image, dealing with problems, body language and helping angry and confused customers. This session is particularly useful for customer facing staff who interact face-to-face with clients.

Venue: WBTC
Date: Friday 22nd June
09:30 - 16:00
Contact: maria@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **FREE for WBTC Members**
£100 for Non Members



JULY

TIME MANAGEMENT

Do you ever feel there aren't enough hours in the day? Do you cope well with distractions or do you wish you could find yourself in a quiet room so that you can get on with work? This session explores ways in which our time is stolen or lost and how we can win it back to become more effective. It will explore the difference between important and urgent and delegates will be able to identify those scenarios that waste time.

Venue: WBTC
Date: Friday 6th July - 09:30 - 12:30
Contact: maria@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **FREE for WBTC members** £100 for non members

BRITISH SAFETY COUNCIL LEVEL 2 AWARD - HEALTH & SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

This popular one day course is ideal for health and safety purposes and equips delegates with the skills and confidence in the workplace. Full details are on [this link](#).

Venue: WBTC
Date: Friday 20th July
09:30 - 16:00
Contact: maria@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **FREE for WBTC members**
£149 for non members



AUGUST

FIND SOLUTIONS TO DIFFICULT SOLUTIONS

This is a unit from the NCFE Award in Skills & Behaviours in the Working Environment and this session explores problem solving, negotiation and outcomes. Most difficult situations involve other people, balancing their competing needs with those of the team or business. This session therefore is great for team leaders as well as team members.

Venue: WBTC
Date: Friday 24th August
09:30 - 16:00
Contact: maria@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **FREE for WBTC members**
£100 for non members



SEPTEMBER

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Avoid those death-by-PowerPoint sessions where a presenter drones on and learn to wow and engage your audience. This session will equip you with the confidence to create eye catching, ear catching and involving presentations that capture your audience. It will explore audience engagement, projecting your voice and using presentation aids in a sparing but innovative way.

Venue: WBTC
Time: 09:30 - 16:00
Date: Friday 21st September
Contact: maria@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **FREE for WBTC members** £100 for non members



FIRST AID CERTIFICATE

This qualifications equips staff with the skills to be a nominated 'First Aider'. This is an incredibly useful skill to help keep customers and staff safe from accidents to illness. It is a very popular course so early booking is essential.

Venue: WBTC
Time: 09:30 - 16:00
Date: Friday 28th September
Contact: maria@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **FREE for WBTC members** £149 for non members



WBTC

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