

How apprentices can add value to your business.

Thousands of employers across the UK are benefitting from apprenticeships as a way to recruit new staff and retain or upskill existing staff of all ages and levels of experience, in a wide variety of roles.

Here are some benefits to hiring an apprentice for your business:

A breath of fresh air

Injecting some new talent can add a whole new dimension to your workplace, bringing with it a fresh perspective and new ideas. This in turn can excite existing employees and spark a boost in overall business productivity.

Increased productivity

Employing an apprentice is a highly cost effective way to increase your workforce. Studies have shown that over 80% of businesses that employed apprentices found their productivity had increased as a result.

Aid staff retention

As well as helping you to gain the right kind of skills you need for your business, employing an apprentice can also aid staff retention, providing you with skilled staff for the future.

Tailored to your business

Apprenticeships can be tailored to specific job roles, making them flexible to the needs of your business. The added advantage is that you will effectively train a new employee to think and act in the interests of your business from day one, knowing that they haven't already picked up any bad practice from elsewhere.

Read on to find out how three of our staff members have built rewarding and successful careers with apprenticeships.

Samantha Slack

Head of Operations



In April 2008, I was working unsociable hours in a Sales Integration role I didn't enjoy and spending far too long away from my young son. I was on the look out for a more rewarding career when I visited the Busy Bees Burton on Trent open day as a potential parent and found out they had vacancies for unqualified staff.

My experience within childcare was limited to a short time in a nursery when I had left school a few years previously. Keen to develop my knowledge and skills in this area, I joined Busy Bees Burton on Trent in June 2008, along with my son, and started my Childcare Level 2 apprenticeship. During my qualification, I also completed my Level 1 Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT.

After my Level 2, I was eager to progress further. I signed up to the Childcare Level 3 qualification with Level 2 Functional Skills in English, Math and ICT. I'd found a way to learn whilst working and still being a mum. The balance of work-based learning suited every part of my life!

Whilst completing my Childcare Level 3, an opportunity arose to apply for an Assistant Room Manager Position. This gave me my first taste of leadership. I'd found my calling. I soon progressed to Room Manager and continued my leadership journey with a Management Level 3 apprenticeship.

To progress my leadership ambitions, I completed a TAQA (Assessor's award) privately. In 2016, I became a Training Officer with Busy Bees Education and Training. Here, I was able to use everything I had learnt and deliver this back to others starting their own apprenticeship journey.

Leadership remained my true calling and, over time, my caseload shifted from a combination of Management and Early Years to just Management.

It was not long before the learning bug hit me again. I completed my Education and Training Level 3 and Internal Quality Assurance Qualification Level 4. With this extended knowledge, I moved into an Area Team Leader position, directly line managing other Training Officers and quality assuring their work.

In January 2020, following my successful competition of my Management Level 5 and Operations Departmental Manager Level 5, and a recent company restructure, I was offered the position of Education and Quality Manager. While retaining line manager responsibility, I could now extend my focus to the quality of what was being delivered. Calling on my past experience, I was able to support the wider organisation, instilling good practice and project managing key areas of development.

In September 2020, I applied to university to complete my Bsc Business & Management (HONS). In my wildest dreams, I never thought this would be something in my future. I was accepted, and in October 2020, I was asked to step to Head of Operations, now a permanent position.

My apprenticeship journey led me to where I am today. The practicality of work-based learning allowed me to develop my skillset and consistently work on areas to further enhance and refine. I now directly and indirectly line manage 40 staff who deliver a variety of qualifications, apprenticeships, and standards within the care sector across England and Scotland to over 480 settings. The distance I have travelled and enjoy sharing with others is down to that first step I took on my first apprenticeship in 2008.

Samantha's career progression



Gemma Green

Area Team Leader



I first started with Busy Bees in 2013 as a bank member of staff after completing my level 3 BTEC Diploma in Childhood studies at Sixth form. I worked as a Qualified Early Years Practitioner while completing my BA Hons Childhood Study at my local university. Within my final year of university I was promoted to Room manager.

To develop my management skills further I completed my level 5 Leadership and management apprenticeship, this allowed me to develop my skills, knowledge and behaviours when being a manager and I was able to learn on the job. This allowed me to have support from my development coach to see how I could improve my practice with the knowledge and skills I was gaining.

When I completed the Level 5 Leadership and management I transferred over to the training team, as a Development Coach for Early Years, and soon up skilling to deliver management and residential Childcare.

As a Development Coach I am now completing my Level 5 Education and Teaching Apprenticeship to further support my role as a Development Coach and now as a temporary ATL.

Gemma's career progression

Early Years
Practitioner



Room
Manager



Development
Coach



Area Team
Leader

Becky Walker

Regional Trainer/Tutor



My career in the childcare sector began back in 1999 when I started my BTEC Diploma in childcare at College, there I developed the knowledge I needed to work with children.

Whilst at college I started a placement at a local nursery which is part of the Busy Bees family, I was working alongside others learning all the skills I needed to be a great early years practitioner. Once I finished my Diploma 2 years later, I started working at the nursery part time and loved every minute of it.

Whilst working in the nursery I developed my knowledge by attending relevant training, such as safeguarding, First Aid, all about specific frameworks (such as the EYFS) and all of these were delivered by the company's training team.

As I progressed through the years I became a full-time member of the team and progressed through different roles, from being the room manager of a 32-place baby room to eventually becoming the Assistant Manager of the whole nursery. As I progressed through these roles I did various training and completed my Level 5 in Management with Busy Bees Education and Training.

I was also responsible for development of the staff team, looking at courses they needed to attend to aid their professional development. Through the variety of short courses and qualifications available to them, I saw the benefits that these courses had, not just for inspiring the practitioner to be the best they can be, but also the benefits for the children's development, as practitioners were able to provide new, exciting activities and environments which aided this.

As the years progressed my passion for the development of the team lead me to become a regional trainer for the training team with Busy Bees in 2017. I wanted to use my 16 years of knowledge and experience to inspire others within the childcare sector.

Whilst with the training team they have supported me to continue to develop my professional development by helping me achieve my Level 3 Education and Training qualification, as well as continuing my passion for Makaton. I was able to attend my Makaton Tutor Training which I now deliver the different levels of the Makaton program to learners who would find it beneficial in support other people's communication skills.

Therefore, when I get up every day, it's not just a job I do, but my career!

Becky's career progression

Early Years
Practitioner



Room
Manager



Assistant
Manager



Regional
Trainer

Interested in upskilling your staff team or taking on an apprentice?

Contact us today:

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