

10 reasons why you should employ an Apprentice

Apprentices are good for your business!

Research indicates that apprenticeships boost productivity so more and more employers are choosing to grow their business by employing apprentices. The introduction of All Age Apprenticeships has increased the labour pool available to employers across the economy and in doing so, also increase opportunities for a greater range of people. Offering someone an apprenticeship gives your business the chance to play an active role in creating your future workforce and developing future skills that they need to help your business grow.

Likewise, for someone, an apprenticeship is a viable and beneficial option for them to progress quickly in working life and provide them with a steppingstone to a brighter future.

Here are our 10 reasons why you should employ an apprentice.

1. Fill your skills gap

With construction companies concerned about skills gaps, especially in the specialist construction sectors, apprenticeships are one way for companies to match available talent with the specific skills they need.

Training an individual from scratch allows you to develop the perfect candidate for the job that they will be completing, without any previous experience affecting the job operation. This therefore produces an employee tailored to your business position.

Offer work experience opportunities to school leavers during school holidays and this will give you the chance to identify potential future apprentices.

2. Benefit from fresh thinking

Apprentices can bring fresh thinking, new ideas and spark dynamic change for your business. They can bring new and more up to date skills that can help how your business works. Whilst you are teaching them the skills needed, it is important not to forget that they are able to contribute to production and help you meet your deadlines.

Many modern qualifications and training courses are designed with the help of employers so an apprentice will develop the skills and knowledge needed in your workplace.

3. Boost retention and commitment

Employees feel more valued which leads to increased staff morale, loyalty, commitment and retention. Apprentices who are employed from day one are entitled to the same benefits as your existing employees. This makes them feel part of the team from the start of their apprenticeship leading to a more contented employee!

4. Reduce recruitment costs

The training an apprentice receives can persuade them to remain loyal to their employer, especially if there are clear opportunities for promotion, thus reducing your recruitment costs.

5. Free up existing staff time

You need your current team focused on growing the business and not spending time on tasks that would suit an apprentice learning the ropes. By employing an apprentice you can free up time for your existing employees to focus on the more skilled aspects of the job.



6. Improve health & safety & reduced absenteeism

All apprenticeships include an element of health and safety training, therefore reducing the risk of injuries on site and absenteeism due to injury.

7. Help with training costs

Additional funding is available to construction companies employing apprentices, up to **£6,500** from CITB NI and up to **£1,500** employer incentive from the Department for the Economy. The total potential funding is **£8,000**. Find out further information on the funding available at <https://bit.ly/3hUlkCV> or log onto the 'Apprenticeship Grants' section on the CITB NI website at www.citbni.org.uk

8. Help the local economy

By hiring an apprentice, you are helping to reduce unemployment and build a workforce for the future. As well as this, research shows that clients who discover you employ apprentices are often impressed by the fact that you are devoted to helping young people. This could mean that clients would rather do business with companies that can demonstrate a sense of social responsibility over firms that do not.

Employing apprentices allows you to promote them in case studies on your digital and social media streams and demonstrates what a good employer you are and your commitment to your workforce.

9. Free advertising to fill your apprentice opportunity

Connect to Success NI is a free online portal developed by the Department for the Economy that enables employers to promote and advertise apprenticeship and school work experience opportunities. Check it out at <https://bit.ly/2Y6dWwe>

10. Support network

You will have access to a support network to help you obtain the funding available, provide you with guidance on apprenticeship qualifications and how to retain apprentices once you have recruited them.

Support Organisations include:

CITB NI www.citbni.org.uk

NIDirect www.nidirect.gov.uk

Apprenticeship training providers can help you with the entire process: recruiting an apprentice, customising a training programme, accessing funding, and much more, so get in contact with them today.

Log on to <https://bit.ly/2LkscyD> to download the list of apprenticeship training providers.

By investing in apprenticeships, you help build Northern Ireland's reputation as a region of highly skilled workers. Providing relevant training can help avoid skills shortages and increase productivity. As an employer and business professional you can reap a range of business benefits. A motivated and loyal workforce will help prepare your business for future challenges. It is widely held that employers can use apprenticeship programmes to identify the leaders and managers of the future.

Of course, if you train apprentices they might leave, but it is much worse if you don't train them and they stay.

For further information and guidance on employing an apprentice download the CITB NI 'A Guide to Construction Apprenticeships for Employers' at <https://www.citbni.org.uk/Careers/Employers.aspx>

Decided you want to take on an apprentice? What to do next:

- Contact your local training provider.
- Recruit your apprentice.
- Register the apprentice onto the Apprenticeship programme at the chosen training provider.
- Submit a CITB NI Grant Application Form online.



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All information correct at time of print, check links for updates.