
The more I want to get something done, the less I call it work.
Richard Bach

Happy International Women's Day, sisters!

What's New?

New guide launched for graduate level recruitment in the professions

Businesses will get a helping hand to ensure they reap the benefits of employing the best people at graduate level, with a new online professional recruitment guide launched recently. The guide aims to help employers in the professions look outside of their usual practices in recruiting staff, to make sure they are open and fair and that they are reaching the most talented people they can.

It is in the best interest of all employers, especially in the professions, to look as widely as possible when recruiting. Narrow searches could mean that they miss out on valuable talent and their business does not expand as it could.

The step by step guide shows employers how to:

- write job adverts and place them where they will have the maximum effect
- sift applications and screen suitable candidates
- choose the most appropriate way to assess applicants, and one which will enable them to showcase all their talents
- tell successful candidates they have got the job whilst letting unsuccessful candidates down gently

The Professional Recruitment Guide is available on the new-look website for the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills at: www.dius.gov.uk/professionalrecruitmentguide



Spotlight on...

The Mary Ward Centre



The Mary Ward Centre is London's Adult Education College with a difference. Large enough to sustain a dynamic, relevant range of courses yet small enough to be able to give a first rate personal service to its users. It deserves its reputation as being the friendly place to learn.

From art to reflexology, computer applications to confidence building, painting to public speaking, through to yoga you really will find something to mesh with your enthusiasms or practical needs. Many courses have certificates at the end of them, should you be looking to add to your qualifications. But there are also countless opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge and personal insights purely for the pleasure of so doing.

The courses are taught at all levels from introductory to advanced, and which are taught by experienced well-qualified tutors. Day, evening and weekend options of varying length help ensure a time convenient for your schedules.

For more information please visit <http://www.marywardcentre.ac.uk/Welcome/Welcome.asp>

On the couch with e-skills UK

e-skills UK and Microsoft bring excitement of IT to Diploma students

Around 200 Diploma in IT students from 25 schools were given an insight into working in IT when the students spent a day at Microsoft's London offices as part of an interactive event to show how exciting a career in IT can be.

Throughout the day, students heard from Microsoft employees who shared their experiences of working in IT and the importance of technology to the wider world. The students also had a chance to try out Microsoft's Surface technology and to see Microsoft's Deep Zoom and Photosynth in action.

As part of the event, the students were challenged to come up with the "next big idea" in technology, with suggestions ranging from a device for the kitchen that tells you what's in the cupboard, to a multifunctional travel gadget with GPS. Newham College from East London was runner up and the winning idea came from West Sussex school Steyning Grammar, whose next big thing in IT was the "eco-kube", a device aimed at lowering your carbon footprint by telling you if you're using too much water or gas, and providing advice about how to be more eco-friendly.

Karen Price, CEO of e-skills UK, who led the development of the Diploma in IT, said "This was a fantastic event and demonstrated how motivational the hands-on involvement of companies like Microsoft can be for young people. Giving IT Diploma students a chance to try out the latest technologies was very inspiring and showed them how what they are studying now applies to a real workplace environment.

"The continued decline in the number of students choosing IT-related A-levels and GCSEs highlights a serious issue for the UK. To compete in the technology intensive globalised economy, we need an inspiring curriculum in schools that attracts talented students into technology-related degrees and careers. We are proud to be working with leading employers to ensure that the Diploma in IT does just that." www.e-skills.com/diploma

Dates for the Diary

Put People First, 28th of March, Central London

On 28th March thousands will march through London as part of a global campaign to challenge the G20, ahead of their 2nd April summit on the global financial crisis. <http://www.putpeoplefirst.org.uk/>

Trade Unions Coping with the Economic Downturn

Saturday 4th April 2009 10am-3.30pm, Congress House, London
<http://www.tuc.org.uk/organisation/tuc-15879-f0.cfm?regional=7>

Number Crunching



Latest e-skills Bulletins outline the state of the labour market

Firstly, there is an **e-skills Bulletin**, the definitive source of information about changes in the demand/supply of ICT labour and skills in the UK. It covers the *ICT workforce* - the IT and/or telecommunications workforce in the ICT industry and across other sectors of industry.

Key findings for Q3.08 include:

- a continued decline in the number of both permanent and contract ICT positions on offer
- advertised rates of pay for ICT staff fell slightly over the Q2-Q3.08 period while the actual earnings reported by ICT staff rose a little during Q3
- as the number of ICT vacancies declined, so too did the employment package on offer with advertised rates for permanent and contract staff both falling by around 1% on average compared with the previous quarter
- the number of ICT staff working in the UK rose once again during Q3.08 to 1,059,000 people – the highest level recorded since the final quarter of 2006
- fewer ICT staff seeking additional or new jobs
- the percentage of ICT staff that stated they had received job-related education/training during the past 13 weeks fell once again during Q3 to 24% but over three quarters (77%) said they had been offered training over the same period.

To download the Bulletin, and subscribe to future issues, go to www.e-skills.com/bulletin

The other valuable source of information about changes in the demand/supply of Telecoms labour and skills in the UK, is the **Telecoms Bulletin**. The e-skills UK Telecoms Bulletin is a bi-annual publication, providing a summary of all the latest Telecoms data collected from Government and private sources. The Telecoms Bulletin *specifically* covers the *Telecommunications industry and workforce*. The current and past issues, covering the usual array of Telecoms related labour market information, including marketplace demand for telecoms professionals and trends relating to remuneration and training, are available to download from the e-skills UK website following registration.

For further information and to subscribe to the Bulletin (free-of-charge!), please go to www.e-skills.com/telecomsbulletin

Spread the Word

Alison is a FREE online learning site that provides high-quality self-paced interactive e-learning for basic skills. The courses include: touch-typing, Financial Literacy, a full suite of Health & Safety courses, and even free psychometric tests for potential employees. Even more exciting and relevant to our members are the upcoming courses in Enterprise and Business Skills, Leadership and Management Training, Language skills.

The courses are interactive and all of your learning is tracked to provide you with a lifelong learning record! With a mission to provide free online learning to anyone, anywhere, ALISON has registered learners from over two hundred countries and territories worldwide since its launch in April 2007. Take a look on www.alison.com.



Beyond Learning

Quick Reads

The Quick Reads initiative, now in its fourth year, is a major collaboration between authors, publishers, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the BBC and many more. Central to the government's Skills for Life Strategy, Quick Reads has successfully helped over 13,000 organisations to encourage their staff to benefit from the joys of reading. By ordering a Quick Reads Employers Pack (<http://www.niace.org.uk/quickreads/user/emppack.php>) employers have a unique opportunity to get involved and receive an extraordinary 50% discount on Quick Reads titles. On World Book Day, 5 March 2009, a brand-new range of Quick Reads books by bestselling authors and celebrities has been released.

Campaign for Learning launches new hands-on guide for line managers

Ever wondered how to make learning and development an integral part of your team's daily business? The 'Leading on Learning' guide will show you how to build a learning culture without the need for a huge investment in money and time. It looks at the ideal manager in terms of developing staff and gives you practical suggestions for planning, evaluating, promoting Skills for Life and overcoming some of the obstacles for learning. This useful guide also includes 'fast facts', 'space to reflect' and 'to do' lists to help you build a positive learning culture.

<http://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/cfl/assets/documents/Informationandfacts/Line%20Managers%20booklet.pdf>

Any Other Business

Concern over adult retraining courses

Those who have lost their jobs because of the recession and looking to re-skill are facing a decline in the number of available courses because of the government's policies, it has been claimed. University and College Union (UCU) general secretary Sally Hunt blamed a lack of funding commitment for the problem, which is becoming increasingly important as unemployment rises and the recession continues to bite. The UCU says rising charges and course cutbacks have resulted in two million learners' places being lost from further and adult education in England since 2005. To find out more go to: [http://www.politics.co.uk/news/opinion-former-index/education/concern-over-adult-retraining-courses-\\$1259724.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/news/opinion-former-index/education/concern-over-adult-retraining-courses-$1259724.htm).