

## Recruitment and retention of staff

### **Good employment practices to help recruit and retain employees- *ideas for employers to consider.***

*NB- we recognise not all of the following will be possible/ realistic in the workplace / smaller businesses, but we hope this document may prove useful and provide food for thought for employers- we also recognise many are a two way ideal....*

Increasingly prospective employees evaluate not only the job they are considering applying for, but the working conditions, support and additional benefits offered by the employer. Many staff also look to see how the business approaches supporting their local community and challenges of net zero. Employees are important to your business and recruiting someone is just the beginning of the journey.

The following information explores some of the different employment practices and packages you might like to consider putting in place to help recruit and retain staff within your business.

*National and local surveys suggest that a good employer is one who:*

- *is honest and straightforward*
- *offers good pay and benefits*
- *offers a good working environment*
- *properly meet their legal obligations*
- *share resulting benefits when times are good*
- *offer training and career progression*
- *offers a solid induction programme*
- *cares about the well-being of their staff*

### **Employees require:**

- **Secure work:** To manage their budgets and plan for their future, employees need to have regular hours and predictable shifts. Research shows that employees rate a steady reliable income just as important as the level of take-home pay which then increases productivity and loyalty towards employers. [Living Hours | Living Wage Foundation](#)
- **A solid induction programme:** having clear objectives around what they are expected to achieve in the role and how they will be reviewed and measured is key. Ideally new employees will be partnered with a 'buddy' to settle them in.

## Employees seek:

- **Flexible working:** Flexible working is a way of working that suits an employee's needs and promotes a positive work life balance.

*For example:*

- flexible start and finish times
- working from home
- job share
- part time compressed hours (working full time hours but over fewer days)
- opportunity of being offered a split role- sharing a full-time role between 2 part-time jobs.
- annualised hours (the employee has to work a certain number of hours over the year but they have some flexibility about when they work. There are sometimes 'core hours' which the employee regularly works each week, and they work the rest of their hours flexibly or when there's extra demand at work.
- increasingly people value being judged by what they achieve rather than by hours sat at a desk- clearly this is not possible in all roles.
- phased retirement (default retirement has been phased out and older workers can chose when they want to retire. This means they can reduce their hours and work part time)

More information can be found at [Timewise - Flexible Working Consultancy](#) and [Flexibility in the workplace | Acas. Acas guide to flexible working and work-life balance | Acas](#)

- **Hybrid working:** a mixture of workplace/office-based working and remote working, either from home or another office hub. There are many benefits to hybrid working with employees reporting a better work-life balance, more leisure time (from not having to commute) and improved job satisfaction. In turn, this can improve employee retention and reduce business costs for your organisation. [Hybrid working- mental health tips | Mind, the mental health charity - help for mental health problems.](#) [Hybrid working | Acas](#)
- **A Living Wage- as minimum-** This is voluntarily paid by over 70000 UK businesses and is based on the cost of living and means that people can meet their everyday needs [What is the real Living Wage? | Living Wage Foundation](#)
- **Competitive pay and benefits:** These may not be the first consideration when taking or keeping a job but pay and benefits are the most tangible evidence of employee worth. If employees don't feel valued, they're going to seek better rewards elsewhere.
- **Workplace engagement & voice:** Support your staff, engage with them and take their opinions on board. Make sure you are approachable if they need advice. But most of all communicate with them on a regular basis. Keep them updated on what is going on in the business, get feedback from them and share your culture and mission so they feel a part of your company. 2-way communication is very important. Active listening (listening to, observing verbal and non-verbal messages and providing appropriate feedback) has the potential to reduce conflict and improve productivity as mutual understanding between both parties is conveyed- research shows that the average person listens at about 25% efficiency. [An employer's guide to active](#)

[listening in the workplace \(redcrossfirstaidtraining.co.uk\)/](https://redcrossfirstaidtraining.co.uk/) [Take 10 Together](#) · MHFA England

- **A safe, healthy environment.** This varies depending on the industry, but as an employer you need to show staff you are adhering to all safety and health standards. In addition to physical safety, employees seek a workplace where they can be free of stress, harassment, discrimination and morale issues. Employers should try and create a calm, stress-free environment where employees can do their best work without unnecessary drama and their well-being and mental health is considered a priority to the business. [Health matters: health and work - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- **Inclusive employment-** communicating that your business has inclusive recruitment and employment policies and that you are aware of some of the barriers that may exist when people are considering applying for a vacancy- this could ultimately lead to a wider pool of talent to choose from.
- **Offer an Apprenticeship** – Apprenticeships can demonstrate to your future workforce that you support your employees learning and career progression by investing in their development through a structured training programme. [What are the benefits of hiring an apprentice? \(apprenticeships.gov.uk\)/](#) [Skill Up Somerset – Apprenticeship & Skills Advisory Service](#)
- **Offer learning opportunities:** Make sure employees stay invested with new challenges. That could mean increased responsibilities, training in new tasks or financial support for off-site learning. Provide opportunities to employees to develop their personal growth and self-awareness: A business that cares about the personal development of its employees will have a more engaged workplace which links to employee performance and profitability over time. Provide personal development resources, encourage personal goals alongside professional goals and schedule time for personal development.
- **Focus on the long-term:** Short-term goals are important but setting and communicating long-range strategic goals help employees stay motivated

**Additional benefits employers can consider offering to their employees.** These factors can be effective when recruiting and it shows potential candidates that your company believes in investing in its people. [Employee Benefits | Factsheets | CIPD](#)

- ❖ Health and wellbeing time off
- ❖ Well-being support and training (incl. mental health)- [www.newleaf.uk.com/smewellbeing/](http://www.newleaf.uk.com/smewellbeing/) [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- ❖ Volunteering- Spark Somerset is our volunteer sector organisation that can provide help and support- [Hello | SPARK \(sparksomerset.org.uk\)](http://Hello|SPARK(sparksomerset.org.uk))
- ❖ Access to work- [www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work)
- ❖ Remploy services- [www.remploy.co.uk](http://www.remploy.co.uk)
- ❖ Flexi time- above
- ❖ Paid sick leave
- ❖ Maternity/ paternity leave
- ❖ Adoption leave
- ❖ Reasonable time off for public duties (jury service/ Cllr role/school governor) or to look for work if being made redundant – or representing those who are

- ❖ Study/ training leave
- ❖ Pension contribution
- ❖ Life insurance
- ❖ Health insurance
- ❖ Healthcare
- ❖ Cycle to work schemes- one example-[Employer Benefits, Ride To Work Scheme - Bike2Work Scheme](#)
- ❖ Charity schemes
- ❖ Childcare onsite or discounts. Salary sacrifice schemes to redeem at nurseries.
- ❖ Gym discounts
- ❖ Food/ beverages
- ❖ Taste card- discounts in many food outlets
- ❖ Opportunity to develop and progress within the business/ organisation. A good employer will provide opportunities for employees to grow. Many people want to have the potential to move up in salary, job title and responsibilities and this can be stated early on.
- ❖ Policies readily available to employees- including wellbeing

## **Psychological contract:**

Understanding of mutual expectation between employer and employee, to maintain positive relationships.

- **Respect:** In research this is rated very highly. Employees want to be treated courteously. They want to know that the employer will listen to them. They want to know that new ideas and suggestions will be considered and that any problems will be addressed.
- **Trust:** Employees expect their employers to be fair and honest with them.
- **Security:** Employees don't want to worry about the longevity of their employment. Employers must be open and truthful about the state of a business and its long-term viability.
- **Recognition:** praise for a job well done.

Other considerations:

- **Mindful Employer:** [Mindful Employer \(mindfulemployertentsteps.co.uk\)](http://mindfulemployertentsteps.co.uk) and training staff as mental health first aiders.
- **Somerset wellbeing pledge-** [Somerset wellbeing pledge](#)
- **Provide Employee feedback-** communication with employees are key!
- **Provision of excellent people management skills and delivering support-** to ensure you get the best from your staff remember the importance of good leadership, patience, problem solving, good communication, the ability to relate, be approachable, flexible, and trusting; show an interest in them, be open minded, honest, show empathy, respect, support.

## **Recruitment/ Advertising:**

The way in which you present your vacancies and the channels you use to advertise them can influence the success you have in attracting the right candidates. It is a highly competitive market and it is important to sell the company to applicants. Be mindful of

images used in any advert and consider how content on your website and social media may portray the business to potential applicants.

A good employer will hire the best person for the job, regardless of race, gender or age. The company should also promote within the company using fair system based on the employee's work ethic and not personal relationships or opinions.

- **Good recruitment practices:** [Recruitment Process Overview | Factsheets | CIPD](#)
- **Progression (training):** Career development is about making sure employees fulfil their potential and progression is extremely important to employees: half of those aged under 35 believe promotion should come every two years (Adecco, 2013). Employees who see a clear progression path are more likely to be engaged and committed to their jobs. Employees are one of the biggest investments a business makes: their skills and knowledge continually grow through training, on-the-job learning, and other development initiatives. Helping employees to progress will get the maximum return-on-investment (ROI) for the business. Employee progression is also a key element of succession programmes, where younger employees are developed as future replacements for aging senior staff. Succession makes the most of the knowledge that already exists within a business.
- **Access to work:** This is a publicly funded employment support grant scheme that aims to support people with a disability start or stay in work. It can provide practical and financial support for people who have a disability or long term physical or mental health condition. Support can be provided where someone needs support or adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments. An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support to enable an employee to start or stay in work, or to support you if you are self-employed. Access to Work factsheet for employers - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Ensure awareness of:

- **Being Disability Confident** can help businesses recruit, retain and develop disabled people who will help businesses to succeed. The Disability Confident badge will also show disabled people that a business recognises the value they can bring to the business. More information on the scheme and details of how to join can be found at: [Disability Confident employer scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- **Recruitment of Older workers:** [Good Recruitment for Older Workers \(GROW\) | Centre for Ageing Better \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](#)
- **Fertility support:** [Fertility in the workplace/ fertility network/ Working Families HR guide to fertility support in the workplace](#)
- **Menopause support:** [Managers guide to managing menopause at work/ Menopause at work](#)
- **Foster friendly employer-** <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/get-involved/championing-fostering/fostering-friendly>
- **Neurodiverse employer-** Being neurodivergent means that an individual may think and learn in a different way to others. Neurodiversity has a wide spectrum that covers a range of hidden neurological conditions, such as but not limited to Autism Spectrum, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Tourette's and social anxiety. [Inclusion and Diversity in the Workplace | Factsheets | CIPD. neurodiversity workplace toolkit.pdf \(qmb.org.uk\)](#)

- **Awareness of social mobility issues**- ensuring no barriers relating to background, geography etc- [Hiring - Social mobility toolkit - Social Mobility Commission \(socialmobilityworks.org\)](#)
- **Supporting mental Health and Emotional wellbeing support for employees**- [www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/mental-health-and-wellbeing/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/mental-health-and-wellbeing/) [www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/](http://www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/) / [Mind Training - Mind/](#) <https://www.newleaf.uk.com/smewellbeing/know-where-to-signpost-for-help-and-support-general-resources/>

Consider:

- Work trials/ work experience- opportunity for staff/ potential employees to come into your business and explore a role before committing to it. JCP help for recruiters ie job trials- [Jobcentre Plus help for recruiters: Work trials - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and also traineeships-<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships--2>
- Mentoring existing members of staff to fill vacancies/ extend breath of knowledge and skills of existing staff
- Apprenticeship's- please contact Skill Up Somerset for your Free impartial Apprenticeship Skills and Advisory Service: [Skill Up Somerset – Apprenticeship & Skills Advisory Service](#)

## **Advertising vacancies**

Ensure you consider all of the above points in information to potential candidates.

There are a number of sites locally to advertise jobs including:

- Community Employment hub Facebook page opportunities – [Community Employment Hubs - West Somerset; Taunton and Wellington \(facebook.com\)](#)
- Somerset Jobs: [Somerset Jobs | New Jobs in Somerset 2021](#)
- Indeed: [Job Search | Indeed](#)
- Total jobs [www.totaljobs.com](http://www.totaljobs.com)
- Find a Job: [Find a job - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Vacancies can also be unloaded directly on the DWP **Find a Job** webpage. Please click onto the following information links to create your own employer account- [https://youtu.be/TQpfJLk\\_Ad4](https://youtu.be/TQpfJLk_Ad4)(link is external)

- Login to employer account- <https://youtu.be/CGHthXUJtdY>(link is external)
- How to create a copy of a job advert- <https://twitter.com/findajobsupport/status/1185196952327245824>(link is external)

There is also permanent DWP Employer Advisor email addresses:

[TAUNTON.LMRATEAM@DWP.GOV.UK](mailto:TAUNTON.LMRATEAM@DWP.GOV.UK) for the Taunton Office and

[MINEHEAD.LMRATEAM@DWP.GOV.UK](mailto:MINEHEAD.LMRATEAM@DWP.GOV.UK) for the Minehead Office.

DWP can also help with organising a recruitment fair for your business. [Jobcentre Plus help for recruiters: Recruitment advice and support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Training**

Investment in the skills of your workforce is critical in retaining and developing talent. There are many training providers in Somerset offering a wide range of skills and training programmes supporting businesses and their employees including:

- **Skill Up Somerset** providing free impartial advice and guidance on apprenticeships and skills [Skill Up Somerset – Apprenticeship & Skills Advisory Service](#). The team can work with you to clarify the current and future skills needs of your business and ensure that you are directed towards the best possible local and national training provision to address them.
- **Serco** ([Skills Support for the Workforce \(serco-ese.com\)](#)) provides a range of FREE bespoke training programmes and qualifications including IT, leadership, and management, as well as vocationally relevant courses targeting specific areas of improvement. The training is designed to meet skills gaps within local businesses, with a focus on the LEPs' priorities to help boost the local economy in each area.
- **Bridgwater and Taunton College:** [Information For Employers and Businesses - Bridgwater & Taunton College \(btc.ac.uk\)](#). Call: 01278 655111 or email [business@btc.ac.uk](mailto:business@btc.ac.uk)
- **Richard Huish College Taunton:** [Sixth form courses, adult learning and courses for business | Richard Huish College](#) Tel: 01823 424 603. Email: [apprenticeship@richuish.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeship@richuish.ac.uk)
- **Somerset Skills and Learning** [Meet The Account Managers - Somerset Skills & Learning: SS&L \(sslcourses.co.uk\)](#).
- **Dorset and Somerset Training Providers network-** [DSTPN – Dorset & Somerset Training Provider Network](#)
- **Strode College:** [Further Education, Adult Training, Vocational, Academic and Leisure Courses | Strode College \(strode-college.ac.uk\)](#) Employer Engagement Team. Call: 01458 844499. Email: [apprenticeships@strode-college.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@strode-college.ac.uk)
- **Yeovil College:** [Yeovil College - Further and Higher Education in Somerset | Yeovil College](#) Yeovil College Students and Customer Services Team on [01935 845512](tel:01935845512), email [enrol@yeovil.ac.uk](mailto:enrol@yeovil.ac.uk)
- **Western College-** [Weston College has a wide range of courses to suit all learning needs. From school leavers to adult learners looking to get back into education, there is a course that can help brighten your future. | Weston College](#)

There are often grant schemes to help you fund training and a wealth of free courses. For more information look at The Growth Hub- [Home page - Growth Hub \(heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk\)](#)

## **Redundancy Support:**

**Local Authorities-** Each Local Authority has a Response to Redundancy Task Force that is ready to help support you and your employees through this difficult time. [Response to redundancy \(somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk\)](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

**National Careers Service-** a free service providing careers information advice and guidance to help make decisions on learning, training and work at all stages of a career. <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>

**Skill Up Somerset-** providing free impartial advice and guidance on apprenticeships and skills [Skill Up Somerset – Apprenticeship & Skills Advisory Service.](#)

## **Local business support services for SWT businesses:**

- **Growth Hub-** free, impartial advice for all businesses. [Home page - Growth Hub \(www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk\)](http://www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk)
- **Chamber of Commerce-** membership organisation to support business British Chambers of Commerce [Business support - Somerset Chamber \(www.somerset-chamber.co.uk\)](http://www.somerset-chamber.co.uk)/ [www.taunton-chamber.co.uk](http://www.taunton-chamber.co.uk)
- **Minehead BID-** [www.mineheadbid.co.uk](http://www.mineheadbid.co.uk)
- **Federation of Small Business-** membership organisation supporting business- [www.fsb.org.uk](http://www.fsb.org.uk)
- **Somerset Business Agency-** [www.somersetbusinessagency.org](http://www.somersetbusinessagency.org)
- **Business Information Point-** [Small Business Advice & Support | Business Information Point \(businessinfopoint.co.uk\)](http://businessinfopoint.co.uk)
- **Your Local Authority-** Somerset West and Taunton Council- [Business support \(somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk\)](https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

**We would like to thank all partners for their input and endorsement of this document.**

Sample of useful reads/ resources- there are many more on the internet!

- ★ 5 Common Characteristics Of The Best Employers Around The world - Career Guide | myStarjob.com
- ★ 12 Characteristics of a Good Employer You Should Know About | Indeed.com
- ★ Good-Employer-Guide\_2020.pdf (catch-22.org.uk)
- ★ An Employer's Guide to Family-Friendly - Employee Wellbeing Congress - Culture shift: prioritising wellbeing for future business success
- ★ Working Families | Toolkits, Guides and Policies for Employers - Working Families- lead the way in helping organisations and employees build enabling and flexible environments that enhance productivity, creativity and wellbeing so that work works for everyone
- ★ Inclusive Employers: [Inclusive Employers - experts in diversity and inclusion](#)