

## March 2011

Welcome to STAR's first 2011 news update.

Inside this issue we celebrate the achievements and successes of our Public Sector Brokerage Service as our current contract comes to an end.

We will take a look at our new IT tools that are currently available for organisation and management development and surveys etc.

We will also take a closer look at the big changes that have taken place for vocational qualifications with the roll out of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF); learn about Apprenticeships, see what one of our learners has to say about our service and much more.

Hope you enjoy this issue!

**Stacey Marsden, Editor**



## Case Studies

If you and your organisation would like to feature in one of our case studies and possibly be included in one of our bi-yearly newsletters please contact either Stacey Marsden or Ashleigh Dalton on:

**01904 612 231**

Alternatively you can email STAR at:

**[star@star-tc.co.uk](mailto:star@star-tc.co.uk)**



# Latest News

## LSIS Skills and Employer Responsiveness Programme

STAR is currently supporting CfBT Education Trust in Yorkshire and Humberside on the LSIS Skills and Employer Responsiveness Programme.

The programme provides support through one to one consultancy, peer networks and master classes to assist publicly funded training providers to develop across 3 strands:

1. Employer responsive business - including the development of holistic services which make effective use of labour market information (LMI) and training needs analysis. This also includes a focus on preparation and achievement of the Training Quality Standard parts A and B.
2. Apprenticeship provision - including a focus on public sector apprenticeships, low performing sectors and movement to higher level apprenticeships. One element is the promotion of the Apprenticeship Improvement and Development [AID] tool to inform improved practice.
3. Pre-employment provision/getting people into work - meeting the challenge of developing integrated employment provision through engagement with regional partnerships and use of LMI. This also focuses on improving the effectiveness and employability outcomes of pre-employment or pre-redundancy programmes.

We are currently providing support against the employer responsiveness element to a range of providers and feedback to date has been excellent.

The programme is running until the end of March 2011. Organisations who are interested in accessing individual support or attending any of the regional support events should contact Sheila Morton at CfBT at [smorton@cfbt.com](mailto:smorton@cfbt.com) or STAR on **01904 612 231**.

## Stop Monkeying Around and Use our Survey Tool

Save time creating your own surveys and let us do it for you - Send us your hard copy questions and we will develop an online survey questionnaire for you on our comprehensive survey system. Once your survey is complete we send you the link to forward to your desired respondents.

### **Features:**

- Unlimited number of questions in a full range of formats
- Unlimited number of responses
- Unlimited access to data collected
- Download data in a range of formats including charts, graphs and raw data format, into spreadsheets for own manipulation
- Your company logo and message of your choice

***All this for just £250***

For further information please contact us on **01904 612 231**.

## STAR Launches New E Tool to Support Management Development and Business Growth

STAR is in the final development stages of producing a new online self assessment tool. The system named The Competent Organisation is designed to provide insights to Executive teams as to the level of best practice being utilised in their organisations and provide indicators as to how levels of performance can be raised in a sustainable way.

The tool is based upon the well established framework of the European quality foundation, which is the most used and widely accepted framework for capturing best practice across all sectors. It is utilised to drive and measure sustainable superior performance and create a vision of how leading organisations should operate to achieve enhanced results.

The system looks at the businesses and individual managers' performance against 8 critical business factors:

1. Adding value for customers
2. Leading with vision, inspiration and integrity
3. Managing by processes
4. Succeeding through people
5. Nurturing creativity and innovation
6. Building partnerships
7. Responsibility for a sustainable future
8. Achieving balanced results

The system provides automatic reports which display where improvements need to be made and the opportunities for business growth, allowing the organisation to put in place focused organisation and individual manager action plans.

The system is expected to be fully ready for the end of March. For further information on the system please contact us on **01904 612 231**.

## 'Tailor made' and open courses in your area

In the everyday working world staff training is often forgotten or put to one side for later, but good staff training is an essential investment to create and retain customers and give you a competitive advantage.

STAR can work with you to develop 'made to measure' courses covering subject areas including management, finance and customer service that will help to give you that competitive edge.

For further information on our bespoke courses please feel free to contact us on **01904 612 231**.

Alternatively STAR is currently running a series of short courses at our premises in York throughout March. These day long courses tackle the subject areas of Coaching and Mentoring & Managing Change. Costing only £110 + VAT per person, places are going fast so please act fast to avoid disappointment!

**Contact us** on **01904 612 231** for further details or visit [www.star-tc.co.uk](http://www.star-tc.co.uk) to download course flyers.

STAR is pleased to announce that we have recently started to deliver Apprenticeship Qualifications. We have secured funding from the Skills Funding Agency to deliver these qualifications.

### What are Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes that result in a nationally recognised qualification specific to the role the individual is carrying out. They also develop an individual's core skills including literacy and numeracy, essential for any role.

### Who are Apprenticeships suitable for?

Apprenticeships are available for both new and existing members of staff of **any age**.

### What Funding is Available?

Full funding is available for individuals who are aged 16 -18.



Part funding is available to those who are aged 19 plus and we are currently promoting a special introductory offer of only £150 employer contribution.

Individuals must be employed for a minimum of 16 hours a week, must be an EU citizen and must not have already achieved a level 4 qualification to be eligible to receive funding.

### What Qualifications are Available?

We are currently delivering the following Apprenticeship frameworks:

- Apprenticeship in Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools (Level 2)
- Advanced Apprenticeship in Specialist Support for Teaching & Learning in Schools (Level 3)
- Apprenticeship in Business and Administration (Level 2)
- Advanced Apprenticeship in Business and Administration (Level 3)

*As part of the framework individuals will also undertake national key skills certificates in Maths, English and ICT and an employment rights and responsibilities module.*

### How is the Training Delivered?

All qualifications are delivered face to face on your organisations site at times to suit you with additional support available via; phone, email, online materials and workshops as required.

For further advice, details on specific course content or to register please feel free to contact Ashleigh Dalton on **01904 612 231**.



### What is QCF?

The QCF is the newly designed framework for qualifications which will replace NVQ qualifications. It was created with the intention of increasing flexibility and accessibility for learners and employers and is behind the massive reform of the vocational qualifications system.

### How does it work?

QCF qualifications are based on national standards set by lead bodies – industry organisations led by employers who know exactly what skills are needed to do each job well.

These qualifications are based on proving competence in the workplace and the focus is on what individuals can do as well as what they know.

All qualifications in the QCF are made up of units of learning, each individual unit has a credit value (indicating how long the unit will take to complete) and a level to indicate the difficulty (within the QCF there are 8 levels). By qualifications being split up into credits, learners can build up their full qualification in small manageable portions.

There are three sizes of qualification in the QCF:

- Award (1 to 12 credits)
- Certificate (13 to 36 credits)
- Diploma (37 credits or more)

A level 2 qualification is equivalent to an NVQ level



2 or GCSEs (Grades A-C), and a level 3 qualification is an equivalent of an A Level, NVQ level 3 etc.

Please note that NVQs will still continue to be valued by employers. Individuals who have already attained an NVQ do not need to undertake QCF qualifications at the same level as they are direct equivalents.

STAR is now delivering a number of QCF qualifications including Business and Administration, Supporting Teaching and Learning and Work with Parents. These qualifications can be delivered either, in the workplace, via workshops or distance learning.

For further information on these qualifications please contact us on **01904 612 231**.



# Looking back Celebrating the Success of the Public Sector Brokerage Service

The integrated brokerage for the Public Sector exists to support public sector organisations to undertake staff development. This includes support to analyse training needs and locate quality training provision and potential funding available for training. STAR has been operating this service for almost 2 years.

To date, the service has supported 121 clients to provide training to almost 6000 individuals and has assisted many organisations to build their internal capacity for sourcing training. Our support has included:

- Providing an online system (2develop) to assist with the identification of individual training needs.
- Sourcing of quality training solutions to meet identified needs.
- Sourcing of funding for training solutions.
- Establishing provider networks and agreeing service level agreements to ensure a consistent process for locating learners, delivering training and reporting progress.
- Assistance to fulfil and report against the stages of the Skills Pledge.

## Key facts

- Almost 8,000 staff have utilised the 2develop system to analyse their training requirements.
- Over 90% of the training that has taken place has received funding.
- Over 75% of the training undertaken has resulted in individuals receiving a qualification that directly relates to their job role.



STAR would like to thank all of the clients we have worked with to date. It has been a pleasure to support you and we hope that the work we have undertaken will help you to continue to support further staff development long term. For those clients that are utilising the 2develop system for identifying training needs, the system will continue to be available to you beyond the 31<sup>st</sup> March; however we will be unable to provide funded system training after this date.

We would like to remind all organisations that you still have until the 31<sup>st</sup> March to access any final support you may require.

***'The service helped us to begin the Skills Pledge process and to find providers who have proved very able to supply relevant training in the workplace. The initiative has really helped us to meet the needs of large front line staff groups.'***

***'We found STAR to be flexible in approach, extremely helpful in guiding us through the processes involved and highly professional in response to our requirements.'***



Over the years teaching assistants have become more and more prominent within schools. Just like teachers they play a vital role in the classroom by ensuring children get the most from their lessons which is why it is essential that they hold the correct qualifications.

STAR has operated as a training centre for over 10 years delivering school support staff, management, and learning and development qualifications to schools, children's centres, Local Authorities and private organisations. During this time we have supported 3875 individuals through qualifications.

Among the numerous qualifications that we offer there are several different qualifications for school support staff, dependent on a learner's role and experience.



*'I have thoroughly enjoyed working with STAR, especially with Tracy as she has been extremely helpful, understanding and kind towards my needs and requirements as an individual. It has led me to continue and go for the level 3 qualification.'* Samim Malek, Hyrstmount Junior School



Samim Malek, a volunteer teaching assistant from Hyrstmount Junior School in Batley commenced her Supporting Teaching and Learning NVQ level 2 in October 2009, finishing just over three months later.

After completing this qualification Samim decided to continue further to do an NVQ Level 3, both for herself and also to enable her to secure a job.

Samim contacted STAR to undertake her Level 3 as she had found the service and advice previously given by her assessor Tracy Holmes, extremely



helpful and relevant. The delivery method was also particularly convenient as STAR's preferred means of assessing a learner is to visit them in the workplace, rather than working from a classroom.

As a result of her ongoing development Hyrstmount Junior School have gained a qualified individual in this area who has knowledge of how the school system works. Samim has an extra qualification to put on her CV, which will help her when applying for similar jobs in the future.

*'Doing this qualification has encouraged me to apply for the post of Learning Mentor and I also hope to go on to do a seal course, Reading Friends, Learning Mentor course and possibly HLTA. I would definitely choose and recommend STAR highly.'*

Since the completion of this case study Samim went on to complete her Level 3 Supporting Teaching and Learning NVQ with STAR in a very short time frame.

*'Tracey has been absolutely wonderful and has supported me every step of the way! I shall miss her visits.'*

For more information please do not hesitate to contact STAR on **01904 612 231**.

