



Serco – Skills for You

Serco is a support services' business, which works across diverse, devolved business units, employing 29,000 staff in the UK. With Serco's people being recognised as integral to Serco's competitive edge, the vision for Skills for You is to create a learning framework which delivers learning and development opportunities for staff, at a time, place and pace that suits them and meets the needs of their managers.

Their approach to introducing and implementing Skills for You was to make it as easy as possible for the business managers to deliver the initiative and enticing for employees to want to be involved in learning. By capturing the successes and building strong supportive networks they hope to see Skills for You as part of the everyday induction and development process for all employees by 2007.

The establishment of pilots at a number of different sites, such as West Yorkshire Transport and Denholm Marine Portsmouth, showed how essential skills can be integrated with work-based learning and the business benefits it can have.

Further face-to-face implementation with each business manager ensured that a site specific approach was taken which took into account the needs of the contract, the individuals and the unions. Once this partnership was in place and a relevant training provider was selected, potential learners were approached and offered appropriate personal and life skills relevant to the group such as 'understanding your pay cheque' or 'writing a business letter and CV'. This approach ensured greater engagement for employees and helped to reduce the stigma attached to low levels of literacy and numeracy. We recognised that some staff would have poor past experiences of learning so the aim was to make learning relevant to their lives in an innovative and flexible way, engaging staff in learning and personal development, benefiting the individual and Serco.

- 674 employees currently training or completing their training
- The programme has visited 41 businesses and S4U is operational at 15 and more are due to start in the summer.
- More than 20% at each business are volunteering to learn – At RNAS Culdrose 51 came forward out of 253; RAF Wattisham 19 out of 73; Denholm Portsmouth 25 out of 110. Where it is an integral part of employee development the staff feel valued, such as the programme of ESOL at Leicester Royal Infirmary where 16 staff have completed their level 2 certificate
- Serco has seen a marked improvement in employees motivation and confidence, an increase in the numbers of staff going for supervisory roles and promotion. A number of staff also suggest an impact that training is having on their lives beyond work as they take positive learning experiences back into their homes and communities.

“Our people are our key asset and therefore their development a key business initiative and central to our corporate responsibility.”

Robert Smith, Assurance Director, Serco Group plc