

STEP UP – JANUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the second edition of the Step Up Newsletter

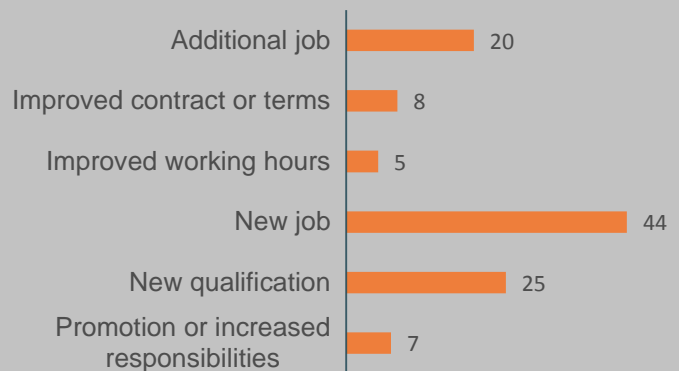
On Wednesday 9 November more than 70 participants attended the Step Up Learning Review, looking at issues raised in the first year of Step Up. The event featured presentations from all six organisations delivering the Step Up programme, in addition to speakers from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Greater London Authority and South Bank Business Improvement District, who also hosted the event. This newsletter brings together headline findings and learning from the evaluation of the first year by the Learning and Work Institute, as well as other material presented at the learning review.

Step Up achievements – Year One

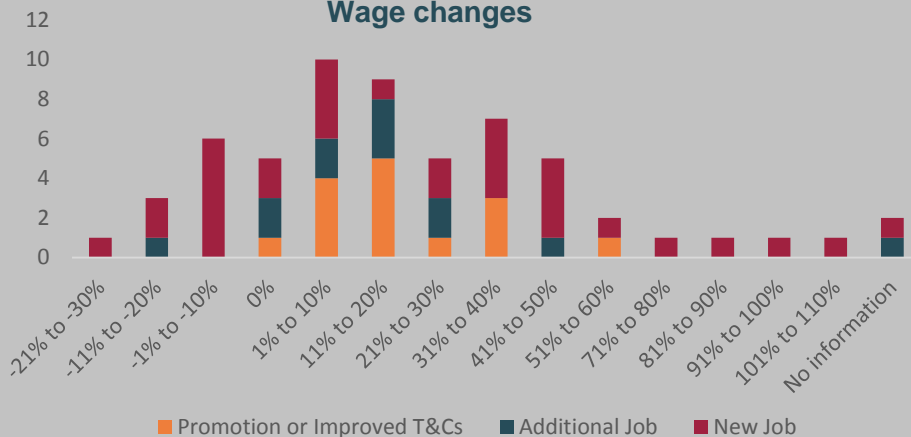
237 people have been recruited to the programme

- A third are male, two-thirds are female
- Employed in a range of sectors
- A mix of full-time and part-time workers
- Two-fifths have dependent children
- Average weekly earnings of £219.58

Programme outcomes



Wage changes



The average increase in hourly wage for participants was:

- 22.3% for those who obtained a new job
- 10.9% for those who obtained an additional job
- 19.1% for those who obtained a promotion or improved terms and conditions

Case study: Springboard

Simon was made redundant after 30 working years. Having been unemployed for 15 months, he was getting very depressed and despondent after applying for numerous jobs without success. After he was referred to Springboard through Jobcentre Plus, they helped him to find a job at Premier Inn.

Then, in December 2015, they approached Simon about joining the 'Step Up' programme which would give him training in leadership, communication and teamwork, relevant to his role at Premier Inn. This was extremely helpful for him; though he had recently been promoted from Team Member to Night Host, he was starting to lose self-confidence in the job.

As he was only able to attend one of the four monthly sessions, Springboard arranged for Simon to cover the parts he missed in separate one-to-one sessions to ensure he could benefit from the training.

The support Simon received from Springboard has given him a new lease of life. The 'Step Up' programme has helped to develop his self-confidence and given him an outlook on how to tackle his job. He is now hoping to get day shift training at Premier Inn, with a view to becoming an assistant hotel manager in the next 18 months.

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Learning from the first year of Step Up

Recruitment

Recruiting working participants presents new challenges and required some new approaches.

Good messaging focused on:

- Change and tangible outcomes
- Avoiding jargon
- A holistic support offer – ‘career progression’ is not an immediate draw
- Emphasis on 1:1 coaching and personalised support

Effective approaches included:

- A whole service support offer / ‘no wrong doors’ approach
- Working with partners that offered into-work support
- Strong local networks and community presence
- Welcoming environment and person-centred advisers

The concept of support for in-work progression is novel and requires clear and simple **messaging**.

Delivering support

Flexible, personalised one-to-one support is key, due to participant availability and diversity in circumstances/goals

Engagement was sustained through:

- Regular, personal contact (Facebook, Whatsapp)
- Creating a plan with clear end goals and milestones
- Responding to participant needs and feedback

One-to-one support can be effectively combined with:

- Developing peer support networks or mentoring
- Work experience and volunteering
- Online jobs board / text alerts

Sustaining engagement is crucial.

Achieving outcomes

At this stage of the programme, projects have been most successful at **achieving soft outcomes** (e.g. personal development, job search skills, career management). Of the ‘hard’ outcomes achieved, the most common is **securing a new job** rather than improvements to existing jobs.

An effective strategy is needed to secure (good) job outcomes, for example through:

- Job brokerage within organisation or working with external broker
- Partnerships (e.g. Lambeth Working, training providers)
- Using web-based tools to source jobs
- Developing individual employer relationships

All six organisations delivering the Step Up programme presented their own approaches and case studies at the event. You can find more information and slides for their presentations here:

<http://www.walcofoundation.org.uk/step-up-grant-programme.html>

We will be sending out the Step Up newsletter approximately every six weeks, with the next edition due in the week beginning 30 January.

If you have any feedback about the Step Up newsletter, please do let us know by emailing:

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**Nominations for L&W's
Festival of Learning 2017
Awards will be open from 1
February to 31 March - for
more information please visit
www.festivaloflearning.org.uk
where you can also find out
about our 2016 award
winners.**