

Notes and news

Toolkit to help HR directors recruit more women to technical roles

A toolkit has been launched to help HR directors to attract more women into technical roles in engineering, information technology, construction and science.

Wise, which campaigns to get more women and girls into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), the engineering skills body Semta and the Institution of Civil Engineers have formed a partnership to launch the apprenticeship toolkit for all businesses that employ staff in STEM roles.

Launching the report at the Institution of Engineering and Technology's conference to mark National Women in Engineering Day in Birmingham, UK, the Wise Chief Executive, Helen Wollaston, hailed the toolkit as a step change for business. She said: "Employers tell us they would employ women in technical roles if only they would apply. A few simple changes to how roles are described and marketed make all the difference. We put the toolkit together to share examples of what others have done. This is not just about encouraging girls to consider a STEM apprenticeship. We would like to see employers offer apprenticeships to women of any age who want the opportunity to do something different – including women they already employ".

James Kidd, the Chief Executive of the engineering, design and information management company Aveva, explained: "It is critical for us to obtain the right skills and talent in a highly competitive market [...] We have a growing, award-winning apprenticeship program that helps us to find and develop young professionals, a key ingredient of our future success. Aveva is pleased to support the Wise apprenticeship toolkit".

Despite growth in the number of apprenticeships over recent years, with three million new apprenticeships in England since 2010, the number of women taking up apprenticeships in technical roles has remained low – only 17 per cent in ICT, 8 per cent in engineering and 2 per cent in construction. Research shows that women still only make up 21 per cent of core STEM employees. Only 17 per cent of ICT-apprentice graduates, 8 per cent of engineering-apprentice graduates and 2 per cent of construction graduates are women.

Ann Watson, Chief Executive at Semta Group, said: "There is still a view that apprenticeships, especially in engineering and other technical fields, are not for girls. That is just nonsense. We know from the work Semta has done that women and girls working in Stem apprenticeships almost universally love their jobs, have a great experience and are in high demand. That is why the toolkit is so important. It is a great resource for HR teams looking to reach out and attract women and girls into often-male-dominated industries. We have put a step-by-step plan together to support their efforts".

National House Building Council (NHBC)'s software selection

The NHBC has chosen Kallidus Learn and Kallidus Perform to enhance learning opportunities and employee development. NHBC was looking for integrated learning and performance for its 1,300 staff working across a number of sites.

Kallidus Learn is a cloud-based platform which enables an engaging and effective learner experience to be delivered to learners across multiple platforms and provides extensive reporting capabilities. It ensures must-do courses are within two clicks of sign-on and learners can access personalized learning when and where it suits them. Kallidus Learn will support mandatory compliance training via tablets, laptops and desktop PCs and will ensure that learners can easily find and complete the learning they need to be compliant and to support their development.

NHBC will use Kallidus Perform to support the company's performance development review process which is carried out every six and 12 months, giving managers greater visibility around employee engagement and progress against objectives.

Meanwhile, Iceland has chosen Kallidus Recruit to support its recruitment team, streamline recruitment processes and improve the candidate experience. Iceland is a British supermarket chain with the emphasis on frozen foods, including prepared meals and vegetables. It has more than 880 stores throughout the UK and a further 40 owned or franchised stores across Europe, and a global export business.

Iceland needed a system that would provide comprehensive reports and metrics on all recruitment activity and processes, profile the source of individual applications and automate job descriptions across multiple job boards. Kallidus Recruit is an automated tracking system that offered all of these features and more to help to streamline processes and improve the candidate experience.

The project was deemed complex, so it was important that Kallidus would be able to hand-hold the recruitment team throughout the implementation process.

Philip Pyle, Head of Sales and Marketing at Kallidus, said: "We are delighted to be working with Iceland and to be supporting its digitized approach to recruitment management".

In a separate development, one of London's oldest and largest housing providers has chosen a new learning-management system, giving employees the ability to drive their own development.

Peabody needed a system that would provide a common, centralized platform to deliver training and track performance management. The system needed to convey a professional image of the learning and development team and provide a positive experience of online training to drive a culture of self-motivated personal development.

Peabody chose Kallidus Learn. Philip Pyle said: "A key driver for Peabody was to provide a professional and positive learner experience".

As well as being a housing provider, Peabody is a registered charity, delivering an extensive range of community programs. The housing it builds and maintains is both for affordable, sustainable housing and the private sector.

Meanwhile, NPT Homes has chosen Kallidus 360 to facilitate 360-degree feedback in the organization.

NPT Homes is one of the largest social landlords in Wales. It is responsible for more than 9,000 properties in the Neath Port Talbot county borough. With just over 500 employees, it is committed to providing good-quality housing and a range of services to help people to manage their homes.

NPT Homes was keen to get a better understanding of performance and developmental feedback from teams as a whole and needed a solution that would enhance the performance management process which only accounts for feedback from line managers.

Rich program of activities in Learning at Work Week

Allianz Worldwide Partners in the UK has hosted its third Learning at Work Week, offering employees access to personal and professional development activities and workshops. Learning at Work Week 2017 used the theme Curious and Creative, inspiring more employers to support workplace learning.

The week started with manicures and hypnotherapy. People could also attend lunchtime talks on topics including money management, body-building and nutrition.

The mid-week sessions brought the Curious and Creative theme to life, with Latin dance, a craft workshop and a biscuit-icing master-class. A number of employees benefited from car-maintenance and career coaching sessions as well as enjoying some practical first-aid training from a qualified first-aider.

Allianz charity partner the London Air Ambulance was on site on Wednesday, speaking about the life-saving work it does across the capital. The week was rounded off with health checks and meditation on the Friday, easing everyone into the weekend with reflexology, massages and a hip-hop dance class.

Serge Corel, Allianz Worldwide Partners Chief Executive in the UK and Ireland, said: "Learning at Work Week offers a great opportunity to inspire employees and reward them for their year-round hard work and commitment. This year's event was our most successful yet and we are confident that the week will become a firm fixture on our calendar. We understand the benefits of creating a happy, engaging workplace and Learning at Work Week allows us to focus on personal development in a way that is fun and informative while helping to recharge our batteries and bring the team together".

Julia Wright, National Director of the Campaign for Learning, which co-ordinates Learning at Work Week, said: "Allianz Worldwide Partners has shown brilliantly how to inspire with a rich program of activities, and demonstrated that all types of learning can have a positive impact for work".

Hilti plans to revolutionize learning

Global construction giant Hilti plans to revolutionize learning for its 25,000-plus employees across the globe. The company has chosen Fuse as its new learning system. The work involves:

- replacing a traditional learning-management system with a new learning solution;
- modernizing and standardizing the way all employees receive learning;
- increasing employee engagement with easy access to a mobile, consumer-grade learning technology where employees can find knowledge and share experiences; and
- equipping employees with the ability to curate and socialize content from subject-matter experts.

Rachel Hutchinson, Head of Portfolio and Community Management at Hilti, announced: "Fuse allows us to rapidly deploy and update learning across the globe. By allowing flexibility, we are able to democratize learning, which means we can adapt to the changing environment faster than ever. This learning technology is the foundation of ensuring that we can achieve our learning principles of making content available when and where it is needed, on any device, to all of our team members".

Steve Dineen, Fuse Universal Chief Executive, commented: "We believe that the future of learning is best delivered through maximizing engagement of the workforce through the creation of mobile, social and video-based learning experiences. We are already seeing the Hilti team rapidly enter the next-generation environment on Fuse with tremendous success and we are really looking forward to helping the team to accelerate this over the months ahead".

Hilti Group, with headquarters in Liechtenstein, operates in 120 countries, with more than 25,000 employees. It designs and manufactures leading-edge technology, software and services that power the construction industry.

Dataiku teams up with new-technology staffing firm

Enterprise data science software-maker Dataiku has announced a partnership with new-technology staffing firm Kubrick Group to train and staff groups of technical candidates in big data and data science technologies to meet the booming demand for skilled big data workers in the UK.

In the UK alone, it is estimated that there will be a need for 157,000 new big data and data science workers by 2020. However, the number of available and qualified workers is much less, often forcing UK companies to look abroad to fill their big data technology positions.

The partnership between Kubrick Group and Dataiku will train mathematics, physics and computer science graduates in the latest big data engineering, data science and data analytics technologies. Following an external accreditation, the trainees will become consultants and join Kubrick Group clients to help them to tackle data challenges and extract value from their data.

The consultants will be supported and developed throughout the two-year program with constant training, career coaching and pastoral care to maximize value for the client. After the two years, the client has the option of keeping the consultant permanently for no extra fee.

“We are excited by the opportunities presented by this partnership,” said Simon Walker, Managing Partner of Kubrick Group.

Dataiku, the maker of the all-in-one enterprise platform Dataiku Data Science Studio, will provide Kubrick trainees with its latest platform, which uses the most recent technologies in data science and machine learning, in addition to a host of training resources and materials. Kubrick will allow companies to fully exploit the power of Dataiku by providing highly trained data engineers and data scientists as a flexible and cost-effective solution to companies looking to harness the maximum amount of value from their data.

Many organizations unprepared to meet expectations of modern workforce

Less than half of organizations are confident that their approach is right for the modern workforce, according to research.

The work was carried out by SumTotal, a provider of talent management solutions, and Fosway Group, a human-resources and learning analyst. It included a survey of SumTotal customers from the Europe, Middle East and Africa region, supplemented by interviews with directors, heads of department and managers.

Changes in the world of work, evolving employee expectations and advances in technology are transforming the modern workforce and the modern workplace. Pitched against a backdrop of growing skills gaps, the pressure on organizations to rethink their talent approach – and systems – is intense. The research shows that most organizations are not ready to tackle these challenges, with only 44 per cent confident that their talent management strategy is ready for the modern workforce.

“Many organizations are not only unprepared but also worried about their ability to meet the expectations of the modern workforce,” said Larry Neal, Chief Executive of the Skillssoft Group. “In not having a clear strategy for their talent management, many organizations are risking losing out to more agile and innovative competitors. This research highlights the challenges that most organizations face, but also demonstrates the ways in which they can overcome them”.

“Focusing on millennials and technology disruption can detract from addressing other major workforce trends,” commented David Wilson, Fosway Group Chief Executive. “The workforce is aging and becoming more diverse, virtual and freelance working is on the rise and skill gaps continue to grow. Employees with the right skills are in high demand so there is huge pressure on organizations to deliver a strong employee proposition. This research reveals real answers for how HR and learning can attract, retain and develop the talent required to help their organizations to succeed”.

Key findings of the research include:

- workplace culture is holding organizations back, with only 44 per cent believing their talent management approach is ready for the modern workforce;
- in only 16 per cent of cases is organizational culture not a barrier when looking to improve talent management processes;
- 86 per cent find managers’ skills and attitudes an issue when meeting the expectations of the modern workforce;
- 88 per cent find other priorities and time an issue when tackling change in the workplace;
- the structure of the modern workforce is changing all the time, with 33 per cent of employees working in flatter organizational structures;
- 42 per cent of employees work where their skills are in demand rather than because of company loyalty;

- 27 per cent of employees are contingent workers rather than permanent members of the payroll;
- in the most vulnerable areas of digital, soft skills, leadership and management skills, less than 15 per cent of respondents think they have all the skills they need to succeed;
- around 67 per cent of survey respondents say that workers now need to learn - and get up to speed - more quickly;
- 44 per cent report that employees are working more often using a mobile device as their primary tool;
- 55 per cent report that collaboration and social-media tools are key to working in their organizations; and
- 68 per cent see more and more impact of virtual technology on their workforce.

Program helps SimCorp to prepare for expansion

SimCorp, a provider of investment-management solutions and services to the global financial services industry, has teamed up with FDM Group, an international IT and business services provider, to recruit and develop high-caliber information-technology talent, to support SimCorp's expanding business in North America.

The FDM Group Careers Program will ensure that SimCorp continues to operate with the scale and flexibility required to serve its current client base, and be poised for expansion.

Through the collaboration, the FDM Group recruits and trains talented individuals who are placed at SimCorp to work on its solutions for the global investment-management industry. The individuals enter SimCorp as FDM consultants, working in business, IT and financial roles, and can become permanent SimCorp employees after two years. These individuals play an important role in SimCorp's growing teams across New York, Chicago, Boston and Toronto. The joint program has also recently been rolled out to include SimCorp's London and Paris offices.

"We are committed to this program and the opportunity it brings us to scale to our clients' needs and be agile in our response to changing market conditions. By building a bespoke training package, we can ensure that FDM consultants are equipped with the skills required to add value to our clients," said James Corrigan, Executive Vice-President and Managing Director of SimCorp North America. "The strong caliber of FDM consultants has allowed us to quickly scale our market-unit teams, bringing in young and diverse talent to continually advance our cutting-edge technology. This strategic foundation is crucial in supporting SimCorp's north American clients and the 180-plus clients that rely on us worldwide".

Rod Flavell, Chief Executive, FDM Group, said: "FDM values its collaboration with SimCorp, which demonstrates how companies can achieve real results by being innovative in the way that they invest in their talent pipeline, to give them the competitive edge. This is particularly important in the current climate, when employers are finding it difficult to recruit people with IT skills. The added benefit is that, after two years, FDM consultants can transition to permanent employees, allowing organizations to retain the knowledge, skills and resources long-term".

Coursera announces global partnership with Axa

Coursera has announced a global partnership with Axa, the worldwide insurance company. Axa will adopt Coursera's enterprise platform, Coursera for Business. This enables employers to draw on online learning content, created by 150 universities, to address their workforce-development needs.

Coursera will work with Axa to curate relevant content and integrate Coursera courses into existing learning paths with a goal to further equip the global workforce with the knowledge and skills required to succeed.

The partnership follows a three-month pilot, during which more than 1,000 Axa employees registered as learners, with around half receiving certification. It will provide all Axa employees in 64 countries with free, easy, and on-demand access to more than 300 courses on topics such as

data science, digital marketing and leadership. Upon completion, Axa employees will receive sharable electronic course certificates, which highlight the new skills they have gained to advance their careers. Axa will also explore creating custom content on the platform.

“We are delighted to partner Coursera as we are setting the pace for an ambitious self-learning organization within Axa,” said Rino Piazzolla, Axa Group Head of Human Resources. “Our industry is undergoing rapid transformation, and providing direct access to the best academic knowledge will help our employees to drive this transformation and give them an opportunity to manage their learning curve and enhance their skill sets. Coursera will complement our broader learning offer by bringing the campus to our workplace”.

“We are honored to partner a forward-thinking organization like Axa as it innovates on its learning and development model and prepares employees for the jobs of the future,” said Jeff Maggioncalda, Coursera Chief Executive. “The success of Axa’s pilot program [...] is a strong testament that learning is central to business agility and talent engagement in a changing world”.

Coursera for Business has been adopted by more than 90 large enterprise and government customers around the world, including L’Oreal, PayPal, Danone, JP Morgan Chase and Air France-KLM.