



Summary: Digital Apprenticeships Managers Network Lunch 29 October 2019

Objective

LOTI's desired outcome with this project is to build London's digital talent pool, and the skilled resources required by boroughs, by creating at least 100 digital apprenticeships in LOTI member boroughs by September 2020. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

LOTI is currently developing a [Digital Apprenticeships Playbook](#) with Hackney, the Lead Borough on this project. In addition to that, LOTI wants to support line managers by providing a forum to network and share experiences and best practice between LOTI member boroughs.

Participants

The lunch was attended by:

Chris	Lynham	Hackney
Fahim	Ahmed	Camden
John	Edwards	Lambeth
Joe	Shah	Camden
Lisa	Stidle	Hackney
Mal	Morris	Hackney
Mobeen	Zafar	Camden
Paul	Tyler	Hackney
Peter	Nguzo	Hackney
Sanja	Milojevic	Camden
Vivien	Day	Kingston

Lorin McAuley RBKC and WCC

Michelle Fitzgerald Brent

Experiences and Challenges

Service Managers shared how they have found managing apprentices, drawing on their learnings to inform potential solutions that can be shared and tested as part of LOTI's Digital Apprenticeships Scheme. Some of these have been incorporated into LOTI's [Digital Apprenticeships Playbook](#), but others included:

Perception

- Team Dynamic - Apprenticeships have changed and prior to recruitment, it's important to ensure that the team's understanding and expectations of the apprentice has been clarified and that they are brought along on the journey.
- Confidence – clarify ways of working early on so that you can manage challenges that come with upskilling and onboarding a new person into the team
- Governance – set out a clear business case that outlines the organisational benefits as well as tackles the financial and budgetary constraints

Recruitment

- Preference – geography can be stated as a prerequisite candidate criteria on application forms
- Experiment – engage with schools to get on their distribution lists and attract good talent early
- Advocates – use existing or previous apprentices in digital and paper-based marketing. Get young people to speak to young people in a language they understand, to sell the benefits
- Dynamic – use varying forms of media e.g. social media, videos, posters, etc.
- Diversity – keep evaluating the success of recruitment dependent on the demographics of applicants and successful hires
- Language – talk about 'tech' and 'digital' in a way that can be understood by anyone

Training

- Manage expectations – clarify what internal and one-to-one training will be provided
- Look further – seek out opportunities to second the apprentice to another team/private sector organisation in the borough/LOTI member borough

- Feedback – build in a regular catch-up meeting with the apprentice and their buddy, where necessary, to check in on their progress (with their work and with the training provider)
- Collaborate – think about ways that you can expose the apprentice to working with other teams/organisations/boroughs on one project

Support

- Mentoring – experiment with peer-to-peer mentoring if there are multiple apprentices, or encourage other members of your team to mentor
- Buddy – give your apprentice scope to develop other skills by pairing them up with multiple buddies or members of other teams
- HR and Apprenticeship Team – what guidance is available to manage special circumstances? What can be reasonably left to the Manager’s discretion?
- Apprenticeship network – co-learning space and an opportunity to teach them how to network and develop their soft skills

Network

Apprenticeship Managers

Agreed to meet every quarter to network and:

- Share policies and best practice
- Share list of training providers and preferences
- Draft a future plan for LOTI Digital teams that would outline the list of skills needed in the future (add to this list of [Digital Apprenticeship roles](#))
- Co-design courses to support the skills that LOTI member boroughs are looking for
- Co-design a secondments scheme
- Define what a [Digital Apprenticeship](#) is including their job descriptions, whether or not the levy is a mandatory requirement, the validity of transfers from suppliers, etc.
- Explain how the [pledge](#) works

Apprentices

Create a networking space for apprentices to meet and:

- Develop their soft skills
- Get external support with their role and any challenges they face
- Grow their professional network
- Present and share their learnings
- Broaden their understanding of the sector e.g. site visits

Next Steps

1. Invite all attendees to Digital Apprenticeships Basecamp and share an [opt-in link](#) to circulate to colleagues
2. Draft and share the summary of insights from DA Managers Network lunch
3. Share LOTI's [Digital Apprenticeships Playbook](#) and ask for feedback by Friday 8 November
4. Create a list of [Digital Apprenticeship roles](#) and ask for input
5. Create a list of topics to discuss at the subsequent network lunches
6. Doodle poll 3 possible dates in January for the next network lunch