

Introduction

DH Associates has many employers who are established customers and give us repeat business. For these we are their preferred provider. We also have a small number of new employers leads every month who have the potential to become customers. To grow the business, we need to increase the number of new leads whilst maintaining and developing our relationships with existing customers. We have an excellent reputation for customer service and our ethos is to work in partnership with employers to ensure investment in training leads to business and service improvements.

New Enquiries

New enquiries are a potential source of business and must be responded to in 3 working days. Enquiries can be sign posted if we are unable to meet their needs. Initial contact may be by email or telephone. For potential leads an initial visit must take place within 10 working days.

For all enquiries we need to track the source (how did they find out about us). This will build up information on investment in advertising, Endorsement etc. We also need to track outcomes for leads; numbers sign posted, declined service and why and service taken up.

Initial Meetings

Initial meetings with potential customers should be a balance of clarifying customer needs, adapting our offer to meet needs, selling DH Associates based on our USP and identifying any additional services/funds we can offer or support employer to access.

At initial meetings employers may be sign posted or may decline our service. The reasons why need to be collated.

A successful meeting should lead to key information being collated on the following documents: ONA/TNA, Proposal Agreement, Observation agreement, Customer Information Form. These may be completed over a number of different meetings.

Timescales for the delivery of the service should be agreed, it can take several months for new employers to refer new learners. There should also be agreement reached on any follow up actions and who will do these.

New Employers

A new employer is defined as a lead that has agreed to contract a service from us and delivery has been planned, this could be new learners to sign up and/ or training to be delivered. A contract must be signed by the employer and DH Associates covering the main terms and conditions, for apprenticeship provision there is a standard contract. There will be a named contract manager for each employer.

New employers will need additional support and information in the first 6 months working with us. Often issues arise quite quickly at the beginning of delivery, and it is important to identify and resolve these if we are to maintain new customers.

The contract manager from the Business Development Team will keep in contact with new employers, minimum of a telephone call within 1st month of delivery starting and a 3-month review date set for service to be evaluated.

At the 6 months review a decision will be made as to the level of risk for new employers and they will be moved on to 3, 6 or 12 month review cycle.

Employers will have a named trainer lead to promote clear communicate and raise any concerns with. The lead trainer will build a relationship with line managers to plan the delivery of programmes for individual employees.

Employer files will be set up and maintained to include records of all meetings, OTLA/TNA, contract, contact details and reviews. Information must be entered on database for all new employers identifying contact details, services start date, key contacts and named contract manager.

Established Customers

DH Associates work with over 200 repeat business employers every year. Some of these are large employers, the majority are SMEs, and a small number are Personal Assistants. Established customers will have a good relationship with trainers and particularly their lead trainer.

All employers will be risk assessed to decide the frequency of reviews by their contract manager. The minimum review frequency is 12 monthly, this may be suitable for PAs or SMEs. For employers with large numbers of learners and multiple sites more frequent reviews are required.

The frequency for review should be recorded on the data base and on the employer file. This can be reviewed if risk levels change.

Employer Engagement Process

All employers will have a formal contract with DH Associates covering key terms and conditions and agreed costs if appropriate. For commercial delivery booking conditions and cancellation charges should be included.

Employers engaging in apprenticeship delivery are offered full support in recruiting apprentices through the Recruit an Apprentice Service; we will shortlist, interview and select apprentices. For apprenticeships employers are given information on End Point Assessment (EPA) organisations to identify the EPA for their apprentices.

Levy employers are supported in setting up and administrating their DAS accounts. Non levy employers are advised of the appropriate contribution. Invoicing arrangements are agreed within timescales for payment. All invoices are monitored to ensure payment compliance. Employers are informed of any incentive payments for 16–18-year-old learners.

Care employers are advised of the Skills for Care Work Force Development Fund to support apprenticeships in the Care sector and the conditions for applying.

For employers with apprenticeship contracts referral of potential learners will be agreed, this will usually be by the lead contact for the employer to the DH Associates contract manager. All

apprentice referrals will be allocated a trainer and will be contacted within 5 working days to arrange an initial meeting. It is expected all apprenticeship leads will be on programme within 30 working days of referral.

The employer will agree a commitment statement for each apprentice to meet funding requirements, including paid off the job learning.

For all learners the employer will be involved in the following: eligibility checks, identifying appropriate apprenticeship programme and level, prior learning, health and safety assessment and agreeing the individual learning plan.

At the end of each month employers will be given a report on the outcome of referrals. This will identify the learners and apprentices that have started programmes and any referrals that did not go ahead and why.

Each month the lead contact of the employer will be sent a report detailing the attendance and progress of all learners, including apprentices.

Line managers of learners and apprentices will be involved in the design of the programme to ensure it meets the needs of the learner and the service. Line managers will contribute to the provision of paid off the job learning and will support the learner in the workplace, this may be through a workplace mentor.

Formal reviews of learner progress are tripartite and involve the employer, learner and trainer. This ensures progress is reviewed, gaps identified, and plans agreed to meet knowledge, skill and behaviour needs.

Learners completing standards and reaching gateway will have a tripartite meeting with the employer and training provider to assess readiness for EPA. If additional support is needed this will be agreed and the meeting reconvened.

EPA will be booked by DH Associates with clear agreements on the timing, presentation of EPA materials by learner and how the learner and employer will receive results and certificates, direct from EPA.

Learners will be sent their certificates of achievement by DH Associates; employers are sent a copy.

Communication with Employers

DH Associates marketing strategy details the methods used to promote our service to new and existing employers.

DH Associates web site reflects our current offer and enables direct referral through to Business Development. We are well represented on media; Facebook, LinkedIn, twitter, utube.

We are on external directories to promote our offer; Find a Provider, Skills for Care Endorsed Provide List. The majority of our business comes from word-of-mouth recommendation.

We produce a newsletter for employers and learners that keeps them informed of changes and celebrates learner achievement.

Evaluation

Evaluation and feedback from employers is used to improve the service to employers and learners. Employers will be asked to evaluate the service to individual learners at the 3 monthly learner reviews. This enables trainers to adapt the programme to meet the needs of the learner and employer.

At each contract review meeting the contract manager will collect the views of the employer on the quality of delivery and any suggested improvements.

All evaluation and feedback will be collated and used to inform quality improvement of programmes.