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Outstanding partnerships: Landmark Training

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Brief description

This example shows how Landmark Training's outstanding partnerships with a wide range of employers and agencies benefit learners.

Overview – the provider's message

'We work with a wide range of partners to widen the provision that we offer and to help young people develop skills in subjects that we cannot provide. It has been particularly successful for our foundation learners, where part of their course is delivered by organisations like the Buildings Craft College. We took a conscious decision to work with large corporate organisations to raise our young people's aspirations and self-belief. They develop employability and social skills and also learn to communicate with adults from different backgrounds. Our job is to facilitate the journey; it is the young people who have the courage to take the first steps. In many ways we are building bridges between the underprivileged young people of East London and the affluence behind the gleaming towers of Canary Wharf.



My advice to others? Partnerships often take a long time to become fully established, but it is worth investing the effort to get as much involvement as possible from people at many different levels of the company.'

Chris Mandl, Chief Executive, Landmark

The good practice in detail

Developing an excellent range of partnerships

Landmark Training was judged to be outstanding for its partnerships in the [2010 Ofsted inspection report](#). Inspectors commented that, 'The excellent range of well-established partnerships benefits learners enormously. They range from small training providers and voluntary sector organisations to large national and international companies.'

Chris Mandl's advice is to work with partners at a range of different levels. For Landmark, this has been very successful in their work with Barclays and HSBC, where they have links from apprentices to board level.

Below are some of the ways in which this works:

- A manager from Barclays sits on Landmark's board
- HSBC sponsors Landmark's annual learner award ceremony
- Landmark's senior managers are mentored by managers from Barclays
- Barclays provide free training for Landmark staff
- HSBC and Barclays provide regular 'employment preparation' and learning and development days for foundation learners, where their staff help with CVs, interviewing and communication skills. This support includes mentoring.
- Landmark delivers apprenticeship training and assessment for staff who work for Barclays.

Many of the links that Landmark has with large corporate companies have been developed through local organisations, like the East London Business Alliance (ELBA) which acts as a broker between the company and the training provider. Members of ELBA meet with staff to review how activities can best fit with the curriculum and benefit learners, while also meeting Landmark's aims. ELBA has a history of employing apprentices from Landmark, several of whom are now employees. Partnerships have also helped learners to develop skills in exercise and fitness centres, host conferences for local organisations, take leadership training courses and join entrepreneurial programmes. Amar Lodhia, Managing Director of the Small Business Consultancy says: 'We deliver an inspirational entrepreneurial programme called "E=MC²" where a group of between five and 10 learners form an enterprise and devise and produce a good or a service. We use a "dragons den" approach to test the results. The latest group invented a hot drink stirrer that tells consumers when a hot drink is safe to drink. Learners also help out at events, representing the Small Business Consultancy. As a result, they become more gregarious and employable. Landmark has helped us to formally accredit E=MC² with a qualification and Landmark's Skills Development Manager has joined our strategic board.'

The Biz Academy – a 'win-win' for Landmark and Salesforce.com

The Biz Academy is one example of Landmark's innovative partnerships for developing employability skills for foundation learners. The partnership was initiated by Salesforce.com who approached Landmark because they wanted to work with young people through their foundation. It initially resulted in a one-week programme where staff from Salesforce.com

and their partner companies delivered a course to develop learners' interview skills, confidence, self-esteem and target setting. They did this through a wide range of activities including company visits, motivational speakers and delivering training within a business environment.

The programme has evolved into a 12-week course where learners develop literacy, numeracy and customer service skills, and are trained to become Salesforce administrators. Landmark has invested in an additional member of staff who has completed the Salesforce.com training in order to provide the young people with the highest quality training. On completion of the course, most of the learners progress to apprenticeships within companies that are using the Salesforce.com product. Philip Kenley, a manager with the Salesforce.com foundation says: 'Landmark has been an ideal partner for us. Both organisations understand each other's requirements and are very flexible. The Salesforce.com foundation gives grants to support the programme and a significant amount of employee time, but we get a lot in return. Our employees visibly grow after being given the opportunity to take part. The "biz week" gives young people an opportunity that stays with them, particularly through the inspirational speakers and being part of a business environment. The young people that we have employed from the Biz Academy have amazing opportunities to become a significant part of this company.'

The Biz Academy has good progression rates, with around 80% moving on to apprenticeships. Particularly successful learners have progressed rapidly into management and training roles. Learners are encouraged to keep in touch with the people they meet through the biz week, and those with the initiative to do this have been very successful.

Some ex-Biz Academy learners who are employed by Salesforce.com said:



'The biz week was an eye-opener and made you question what you wanted to do with your life... it was good preparation for working for a company that demands high quality... the activities give you the opportunity to demonstrate skills that might not have come out during an interview... I made good contacts that really helped me, particularly with interview tips... they gave positive and motivational feedback but also helped you find your weaknesses... working for Salesforce.com is brilliant and the staff really help you to fit in.'

Sharing resources and expertise

Partners are actively involved in delivering programmes and supporting learners' development. They coach learners with job-searching techniques to help them to secure employment. The relationship with the Buildings Craft College (BCC) brought together BCC's specialist training facility in timber and stone work with Landmark's expertise in delivering literacy, numeracy and job search. Learners benefit from the links BCC has with major construction companies who can provide good opportunities for progressing into work. John Appleton, Director of Development for the Buildings Craft College says: 'The responsiveness and professionalism of Landmark has made this partnership work. We are pleased to be in a partnership that has such good support and regular, fortnightly meetings. Both organisations have been very open about their specialisms, and the result is a programme that is working very well.'

Landmark is also a member of many local alliances, including the East London Training Alliance (ELTA), where training providers share their expertise. It enables the partners to work together on joint bids for additional funding and to form peer-review groups to share arrangements for quality assurance, observations of teaching and learning and self-assessment. Chris Mandl is clear that as a provider, you need to be selective about who you work with for peer review and ensure that there is a good degree of trust.

Provider background



[Landmark Training Limited](#) is a registered charity based in Stratford, East London. The company provides training in business administration, customer service and retail for learners aged 14 to 25 living in East London. Landmark also works with a school to offer foundation learning programmes for pupils in Years 9 and 10 who are at risk of exclusion. Most of Landmark's learners come from areas that have high levels of unemployment and social deprivation.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

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