



MASTERING SKILLS

MORSON INTERNATIONAL PUT UNEMPLOYED LONDONERS INTO WORK

Background

Morson International, a supplier to London Underground Limited (LUL), provide labour and services for operational, engineering and support roles across Transport for London (TfL) and LUL. This includes safety-critical positions such as health and safety supervisors across the underground network – jobs known as ‘Protection Masters’ – a person certificated by LUL to provide protection for themselves and others while out on track. The role involves ensuring the safety of employees working on rail sites as well as protecting rail assets.

A partnership between LUL, Morson International, Set Solutions (a training provider), London Employer Accord and the TfL supplier skills team created a pilot programme designed to help people into work. The pilot had two main purposes:

- Addressing the problem of skills shortages within the industry; and
- Providing a qualified and job-ready pool of candidates able to fill these roles in the future.

Key themes

By providing training and support for unemployed Londoners, the programme sought to give candidates an opportunity for a sustainable job and career. It involved mentoring and pre-employment support work, on-site work experience and attaining the London Underground certifications needed to demonstrate technical competency.

The programme involved close collaboration between training providers, funding agencies, skills and training bodies, and the projects directorate of London Underground, who played a central role in finding job positions. The role of protection master was identified as one with a continuing demand for vacancies. In addition, it provides an excellent starting salary, with additional career opportunities and possibilities for career progression. >>



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Wayne Frewen
Morson International



**Transport
for London**



MAYOR OF LONDON





Working in partnership with the London Development Agency (LDA) and Set Solutions, a comprehensive training programme was developed to enable participants to attain the necessary skill level to start employment. This included gaining the skill certifications required by London Underground to carry out the job, covering topics such as fire safety and track competency – understanding the technical and safety issues involved in rail track management on the underground.

Outcomes

Following extensive advertising of the opportunity with Job Centre Plus organisations and other referral agencies across London, more than 100 individuals registered interest in the programme. Following initial assessment, thirty candidates were selected to participate following interview. Of these, 21 have gained jobs and have started work.

The pilot programme has demonstrated how an effective pre-employment training and work preparation initiative can make it possible to create employment opportunities for candidates who might otherwise struggle to gain employment in the transport sector. London Employer Accord account director, Graham Edgar said: “This is a fantastic example of private and public sector organisations working together to achieve great things – employees for an organisation and jobs for Londoners.”

According to Wayne Frewen, from Morson International: “All the organisations involved gained valuable experience and learned useful lessons in how to structure and manage a programme of this kind. Co-ordination, planning and flexibility are crucial. More importantly, we can now transfer this expertise into different fields of employment – to other engineering disciplines and offer more people opportunities to develop and find work”.

A number of the participants in the programme, now working as protection masters, agree about the scheme’s benefits. Frank Williams, 44, commented: “This has been a great opportunity for me. I now eat and breathe rail safety. This is something I really wanted to do. The course was intense but the career opportunities are real with this, and I look forward to the work”.

Anisha Buddhia, another who came through the course to secure a job, said: “I had never really considered working on the railway, but to my surprise I really enjoyed getting back into the classroom, gaining my qualifications, and working out in the field. The support I have received has been amazing and I do look forward to work each day”.

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Programme participant