

# HACKNEY COUNCIL

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**Sarah-Jane works with external partners and suppliers to the London Borough of Hackney to identify opportunities for apprenticeships.**

**Within Hackney Council, there are approximately 25 management and leadership apprentices. Of these, 4-5 were new hires at level 5 and they have up to 5 existing employees on levels 3, 5, 6 and 7.**

**Within the broader Apprenticeship Network, external partners, including schools, tend to put existing employees onto level 3. Schools also use apprenticeships at level 5 for Heads of Department and level 7 for Headteachers.**

## THE CHALLENGE

The Hackney Apprenticeship Network supports external partners and suppliers – who are typically made up of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and schools – to identify opportunities for apprenticeships. The network was established to give SMEs access to the apprenticeship levy, that they otherwise would not have been able to afford. In addition, the network supports schools – who do pay into the levy – to use apprenticeships strategically and effectively.

The challenge that most SMEs find within the network is that they do not have the capacity or funding internally to support upskilling of their employees. Similarly, within schools, they find that they lose people at Teaching Assistant level because they are unable to progress within the school if they do not have degrees. For both SMEs and schools, this can cause a massive skills gap with people in senior positions lacking the right management abilities. It also represents a cost, losing people with knowledge of and commitment to the organisation.

## HOW MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP APPRENTICESHIPS ARE USED WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

For both SMEs and schools within the network, management and leadership apprenticeships are used as a way to upskill existing employees to become leaders in a qualification that they trust. Most SMEs within the network use level 3 qualifications.

“What we tend to find, particularly for smaller businesses, is they're looking for level 3 team leaders. So, that will be somebody that's been in the business for a little while and needs upskilling a bit because they're taking on some management responsibility or some leadership responsibility.”

By upskilling managers early, management and leadership apprenticeships are used as a way to prevent people being promoted without the appropriate skillset.

More specifically for schools, level 3 qualifications are used for Teaching Assistants. Not only is this to upskill them, but it also helps with retention as it means they are able to progress within the school which they previously would have required a degree for.

“One of the particular challenges we find is around teaching assistants... They can be very, very skilled, very experienced. So, they can be in post for fifteen, twenty years or something. They're very good at what they do but because they don't have a degree, they're not able to go into teacher training. So, they would have to have a

degree first. What we're starting to see is if we can put them through a level 3 apprenticeship to get them the team leader qualification, they can then take over and supervise other TAs; that's one way of keeping them.”

For internal employees on levels 5, 6 and 7, these are used in a more ad hoc way. They are typically for people who have been in the council for a while and are looking to upskill to progress to the next level. They will use level 5 for operations or departmental managers, and levels 6 and 7 for those with more experienced and complex leadership positions – typically across a large department with multiple project teams. They have found the standards align closely to the managerial levels at Hackney Council and therefore, if someone shows skills gaps at a particular level it is fairly simple to map them to the correct management and leadership apprenticeship level.

## THE IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP APPRENTICESHIPS

Management and leadership apprenticeships across the levels are a good way of preventing 'accidental managers' – people who are promoted for technical skill, but who lack appropriate management or leadership capabilities.

“This in turn can force change as a ripple effect.”

If people are undergoing intensive training, they come back with new ways of thinking and reviewing problems. It injects innovation across a variety of areas – business thinking, practical challenges, strategy. But it also encourages better coaching relationships between employees.

“That cultural change that is given by approaching a problem differently, or a management situation differently, again, it's forcing that ripple effect of change. So, rather than the micromanaging that happens quite a lot in accidental managers, that much more coaching and mentoring type of style of management and leadership is obviously taught within CMI programmes, that ripples back out to empower people and it allows individuals around them to grow as well.”

## FUTURE APPRENTICESHIP PLANS

Hackney Apprenticeship Network will continue to support SMEs to use the Borough of Hackney's apprenticeship levy. This will largely be done in the same way as it has been done recently. The network will continue to support schools with decisions around management and leadership apprentices. The trend of putting Teaching Assistants on level 3s to boost retention and progression is set to continue. Likewise, encouraging more senior staff to be put on levels 5 and 7 will continue.

## ONE KEY SKILL FOR FUTURE

“Horizon scanning and adaptability are the two big things... A job that somebody does now may not even exist in 10 years' time.”

Changing circumstances and ways of delivering jobs will also have a huge bearing on how managers are required to adapt their styles. Planning and adapting for the future will be key to ensure effective management.

