

## LIFELONG LEARNING - GROWING NETWORKS FOR CONTINUOUS LEARNING

ACORN (Adaptive Capabilities for Organisational Renewal through Networks) DP is creating training networks between companies to develop a culture of Lifelong Learning amongst employees. These networks are groups of employers who may be linked in various ways, e.g. through a supply chain, geographical location, or be members of the same trade association. The aim of these networks is to work together to change the learning culture in companies to benefit the most disadvantaged. There are several areas of good practice within DP activities, in terms of engaging employers and looking for win-win solutions to the issue of employees undertaking learning. Within DP activities there is a broad sectoral focus on manufacturing

There are key issues that the DP is seeking to address, including the shift to a knowledge economy and the decline in the manufacturing base of key areas which has created a need for a 'skills update'. There is a need to develop flexible basic skills provision in response to companies reporting poor literacy and numeracy skills adversely affecting business performance.

As long-term unemployment is more prevalent in the 50+ group, and older people and ethnic minority groups, currently experiencing high unemployment, will make up an increasing proportion of the workforce in the UK, there is a particular focus on these groups of people.

Once established, the company learning networks are used in a number of ways to develop skills and support training. Improving methods of access in SME's to help develop new workplace skills is a key activity. This work will be done by combining improvement driven learning, independent face-to-face learner support, company learning centres, and open and distance learning.

Companies are being encouraged to develop their ICTs skillsbase through an innovative business driven ICTs centred knowledge and learning network linking the DP with individual learners, training providers and LearnDirect.

In addition, traditional training and work driven workshops are delivered and other basic skills training (literacy and numeracy) provided. To support the training, multimedia training materials have been developed in DVD format.

The management information system established by the DP has been held up as an example of good practice at national level. The system was developed by one of the partners and allows the project manager to track which partners log on to the system and for what purpose. The system houses: workplans, actions planned, actions undertaken and achievements; working group agendas and minutes; supporting documentation; message boards and discussion groups.

### **DP information**

Member State: Great Britain

DP Identifier: UKgb-3

Link to [DP website](#)

Link to [EQUAL database description](#)

All comments and information should be emailed to [empl-equal-etg3@ec.europa.eu](mailto:empl-equal-etg3@ec.europa.eu)