The big skills campaign – an update on creating an integrated marketing and communications campaign for learning and skills

21 March 2007

Presented to National Council by Nicky Brunker, Learning and Skills Council
What we are trying to achieve

Overall
• A more robust and rapid return on England’s skills and learning investment

The Big Skills Campaign aims to improve the attitudes and aspirations of employers and individuals by encouraging a greater level of investment in learning and skills enabling both the social and economic value to be realised to life, to work and to business.

Alignment
• Initially align existing DfES, LSC and SSDA activities and ensure a long-term fit for partners as part of the Leitch review of skills, plus other partners across the FE system
• Positively influence Attitudes and Behaviours toward skills and learning
• Help the sector … learners … employers … and Government in their efforts to respond to the learning and skills challenge and to deliver value for money

Amplification
• Raise Awareness – overarching campaign – flexible in terms of scale
• Amplify and focus existing campaigns – co-ordinate, not replace them
• Accommodate messaging shift regarding the learning and skills investment
• Create relevant and tailored messages (using a combination of ‘carrot’ and ‘stick’)
• Get across the concept of “employability”
Why have an integrated campaign?

1. Low awareness of or understanding of the value of learning and skills

2. Once aware … little clarity about where to go with the most basic questions in a complex environment

WHERE DO I GET INFORMATION & ADVICE?

WHAT QUALIFICATION CAN I GET?

Level 4
- Foundation degree

Level 3
- Level 2
- Level 1
- Skills for Life

WHERE DO I GET TRAINING?

THOUSANDS OF TRAINING PROVIDERS

SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES

HOW DO I PAY FOR IT?

SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES

Self-funding
What does success look like?

Significant and measurable improvement in audience awareness, attitude & behaviours
- Monitored via campaign tracking and product/service uptake

Better results from investment in learning and skills
- Reduced inefficiencies raised by consumer confusion
- Improved awareness of the paths available and the value of learning & skills
- Improved user satisfaction with the range of services provided
- Improved awareness of the value of the need to fund one’s own learning and skills in some cases

Improvement in England’s standing in the learning & skills arena
- Headline ‘UK tops OECD skills ranking’

A more competitive economy
- 95% of workforce achieve full level 2 by 2020
- 80% of SME’s provide Learning and Skills for employees
Target audiences and stakeholders

- Initial focus to be on over 9m adults without a Level 2 qualification. However the idea needs to work across all audiences and have the ability to be flexible and adaptable including young people and higher level skills.
  - unemployed/seeking employment 2.7m
  - In lower level education 1.8m
  - Under qualified and working in key sectors 1m
  - Under represented (BMEs Only) 2.5m

- Employers
  (SMEs in identified sectors and large employers) 86,000

- Adults who would benefit from new investment in skills & learning 1.1m

And Stakeholders
- Government, Partner organisations (national, regional, local, European), intermediaries, training providers,
- Over 4.5m key influencers (e.g. parents, teachers)
- Media
The process for developing the ‘big skills’ idea

- The LSC, with DfES and SSDA has run a combined advertising and Public Relations pitch process with four ‘paired agencies’
- Involved key learning and skills partners as part of this process e.g. learndirect, Jobcentre Plus, AoC, ALP etc

A ‘two-horse’ race
- Narrowed it down to two agency pairs and two ideas
- The two ideas now in qualitative research (results due 26 March)
- One recommendation to be made (subject to clear research findings and Ministerial approval) by end March
- Agency appointment confirmed by end March
- Campaign development continues apace!
Campaign insight from the agency pitches

Achieving ambition and potential
• Attitudes to learning are less of an issue. The real barrier seems to be a ‘poverty’ of ambition that tends to hold many people back.

• The job for communications is to prove to the different audiences that they can achieve their potential. By doing this, we can start to restore an environment for positive learning, that over time, can become a positive, virtuous circle.

Getting the message to work
• Whilst a change in cultural attitudes is required at all levels, it is the hardest to reach groups where the needs are greatest and the barriers the highest.

• A combination of advertising and PR will be used to deliver both ‘hard’ and ‘softer’ messages which can be specifically tailored to different audiences if required (i.e. more stick, than carrot).

• We are testing the ideas to see how much ‘carrot’ and how much ‘stick’ should be applied in the campaign, to which audiences and in which situations and circumstances.

The big skills campaign needs to create a long lasting campaign that positively changes attitudes, and over time, affects cultural change
It is more important in 07/08 to focus on generating desire to learn than in any subsequent years.

Desire to learn will ultimately be led by consumer and employer recommendation and word of mouth. This allows following years to focus more on the delivery of the route to education.

However the process of reducing ‘Desire’ support will be gradual and considered and dependent on research results.
Consumer Journey to Learning and Skills – LSC Campaigns

- UNAWARE
- AWARE 45%
- FAMILIAR 50%
- INTENTION 25%
- REPEAT ACTION

Create desire  Show route  Final hurdle  Further desire

**Big Skills campaign**

- The Pledge
- Train to Gain
- Skills for life
- Level 2 @ 19
- Adult Level 2
- 14-19

National Skills Academy and New Standard

Apprenticeships

- ALG
- EMA

FE System, FE Reputation, Fees and corporate communications

*Updated March 2007*
Consumer Journey to Learning and Skills – Partner campaigns

- UNAWARE
- AWARE 45%
- FAMILIAR 50%
- INTENTION 25%
- REPEAT ACTION

Create desire Show route Final hurdle Further desire

Learn Direct (Spotlight)
Learn Direct (NVQs)
Aim Higher

Learn Direct (Business)
Learn Direct (Advice)
14-19 Diplomas
Investors in People
Foundation Degrees
Student Finance

Updated March 2007
Outline Communications Calendar – lead message by month (version 2)

**Big Messages:**
- FE Fees
- Level 2
- Train to Gain
- Big Skills
- Provider communications

**Updated March 2007 – see detailed campaign plan for further information**

**Outline Communications Calendar – lead message by month (version 2)**

**Big Messages:**
- Funding
- 14-19
- Train to Gain
- Big Skills
- Provider communications
- FE Fees
Communications architecture

Overarching message to change **attitudes and aspirations** towards learning and skills leading to cultural change

Consumer messaging designed to **motivate uptake** and **encourage investment** in Skills and Learning across all partners

Developing the **reputation**, communication and responsiveness of **Further Education** to meet demand

**FE System** reputation communications

**Big Skills Campaign**

- **Portfolio Marketing and communications**
- **Corporate Communications** – ‘what we do’
- **Stakeholder and corporate communication** will generate and **reinforce relationships** with the DfES LSC and partners

Overarching message to change **attitudes and aspirations** towards learning and skills leading to cultural change

Consumer messaging designed to **motivate uptake** and **encourage investment** in Skills and Learning across all partners
### Overarching BIG SKILLS message appears here in its own campaign and inside:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio</th>
<th>Young People 14-19</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without minimum qualifications your options are limited / You can get paid to learn</td>
<td>Invest in training to make your business more profitable</td>
<td>You need a minimum set of qualifications to get on / It pays to get qualified It pays to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.g. Apprenticeships, EMA, 14-19</td>
<td>E.g. Train to Gain, Apprenticeships, NSA, New Standard</td>
<td>E.g. Adult L2, Skills for Life, ALG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FE Reputation</th>
<th>FE reputation</th>
<th>Choice and Fees</th>
<th>FE Reform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The FE system is confident, flexible, responsive, expert and adaptable and delivers excellent learning through a high quality environment</td>
<td>The FE system can deliver inspiring, high quality learning that meets your needs and is at the right price</td>
<td>The FE system is an asset to the nation, is always there when you need them and consistently responds to the government and community challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.g. meeting targets</td>
<td>E.g. Fee income, funding, provision</td>
<td>E.g. Agenda for Change, FE Reform, Leitch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate</th>
<th>The LSC</th>
<th>FE System</th>
<th>DfES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The LSC’s role is to create the right market and to ensure that we meet these challenges</td>
<td>The FE system will work together to deliver world class Learning and Skills</td>
<td>The FE system is delivering world class Learning and Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stakeholder, Reputation</td>
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**Stakeholder and corporate communication will generate and reinforce relationships with the DfES LSC and partners.**

**Consumer messaging designed to motivate uptake and encourage investment in Skills and Learning across all partners.**

**Developing the reputation, communication and responsiveness of Further Education to meet demand.**
Campaign timetable/next steps

1. Integrate the planning of LSC and partner campaigns – calendar to be discussed with DfES and partners across the System – April/May and ongoing
2. Creative agency appointed and idea agreed with Ministers – by beginning April
3. LSC staff engagement
   – A series of LSC workshops are proposed mid to end April and ongoing
   – Campaign internal communications commence – April and ongoing
   – LSC ‘live’ intranet launches (May)
4. FE System national partner engagement
   – 2 external workshops proposed – 27th April and 1st May
   – Campaign internal and external communications commence – April and ongoing
   – Campaign website and partner support ‘helpline’ commences (TBC)
5. Launch Big Skills campaign across the different media (all dates TBC), phasing in product and service campaigns, starting with Train to Gain and ALG, followed by Skills for Life, EMA and Apprenticeships and partner campaigns
   – Launch arrangements to be finalised, but likely to include a Ministerial launch (date TBC)
   – Fulfilment solution mapped and agreed – national telephone number and website domain acquired (April)
   – Press (w/c 14 May), Radio (w/c 14 May), Outdoor (w/c 4 June), On-line advertising (w/c 4 June), TV (w/c 4 June)
6. Pre-campaign tracking and evaluation strategy in place within the LSC ‘on line’ campaign site (May)
Further information can be obtained from:

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