BRITAIN’S TOP BOSS REVEALED

- New research reveals Richard Branson to be Britain’s favourite boss
- Nearly two thirds (61 per cent) of Brits want to work for an employer who demonstrates a commitment to training
- Over three quarters (77 per cent) of people questioned feel that they would benefit from more training
- Over half (54 per cent) believe that the perfect boss is someone who believes in their employees’ futures by encouraging professional development

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New research into Britain’s best bosses, released today by the Learning and Skills Council to celebrate Skills and Apprenticeships, reveals that 51 per cent of the country’s workforce would most like to work for the tycoon Sir Richard Branson. The well-known businessman beat a host of household names including Sir Alan Sugar, Gordon Ramsay and Sir Alex Ferguson to take the prize.

The survey of 2,000 Brits also unearthed the main characteristics we look for in a perfect boss. Results showed that a boss who gives us credit for great ideas topped the poll, with 60 per cent of respondents stating it was the most important characteristic for them. Employers that demonstrate patience, taking the time to show their employees new techniques and help them learn (58 per cent), were voted a close second. And bosses who demonstrated a commitment to training and teaching us new skills and techniques (54 per cent) completed the top three most popular characteristics.

Conversely, an employer who does not impose any dress code restrictions (16 per cent), regularly organises compensated social events (17 per cent), or lets you leave work at
4.30pm on Fridays (19 per cent) appeared at the bottom of the list – demonstrating that, on the whole, Brits are much more interested in working for people who invest in their future and encourage development than those who operate a relaxed and social working environment.

Interestingly, while over half of respondents (52 per cent) felt that they worked for people who encouraged professional development, over 77 per cent felt that they would benefit from more training and 61 per cent of us would like to see our employer commit to more training. In fact, an overwhelming 82 per cent of respondents stated that if they were thinking about changing jobs, they would be more likely to choose an employer who invests in more staff development and training.

James Caan, star of Dragon’s Den, says that not only is it essential for employee development to offer training, but it also has a positive impact on an organisation’s bottom line. He says: “As a CEO I am committed to my employees and I always encourage them to succeed. A great way to ensure this is to offer regular training and development. The results are enlightening – motivation, productivity increase, and a culture of ‘the team’ are encouraged. Focusing on the talents of individuals within the company impacts on the success of the business as a whole.”

David Lammy MP, Minister for Skills, says that training and a commitment to learning new skills is crucial to the future success of the nation:

“Skills lie at the heart of both economic development and personal success so it is critical that employers across England provide their staff with the opportunity to learn new skills and develop existing ones; Apprenticeships are a fantastic example of how this can benefit both businesses and their staff. It is important that, as a nation, we remain competitive on a global scale and training or learning new skills is the best way to ensure this.”
Chris Banks, Chairman of the Learning and Skills Council, says: “We remember a good boss like we do a good teacher; because we rely on our bosses to pass on their experience and teach us new ways of doing things. Today’s research findings show that we have more to do to help people recognise the benefits of skills and qualifications, and to break down the barriers preventing people from learning new skills. Yet it’s clear some bosses are leading the way and are actively helping their employees to train and up skill. Two out of three jobs in the future will require a higher level of skills and better qualifications. Indeed, in less than ten years, there will be very few unskilled jobs. Many people may not realise how supportive of training their employers are and we would encourage everyone to talk to their employer to see what training options are available to them.”

Often, employers offer funding or in-house training schemes to their employees. With the Learning and Skills Council’s ‘Train to Gain’ programme, businesses are advised on how training can improve the skills of their employees and raise business performance. This is good news for would-be learners, with 78,000 employers already on board. Many of Britain’s leading businesses have also signed the ‘Skills Pledge’ to demonstrate their commitment to training and supporting their staff. More than 3 million people across the nation are already working for companies who have signed up.

In addition, the Learning and Skills Council has a wide variety of training and funding advice available to anyone interested in updating their skills or obtaining a new qualification.

With so much support available, what’s stopping you from updating your skills? To find out more about training and funding options available to you, talk to your employer or visit www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands

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Notes to Editors:

The Learning and Skills Council Top 5 Boss List

1) Sir Richard Branson (51 per cent)
2) Gordon Ramsay (15 per cent)
3) Sir Alan Sugar (14 per cent)
4) Sir Alex Ferguson (8 per cent)
5) Fabio Capello (5 per cent)

Research

The research was conducted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council by 72 Point, based on a survey of 2,013 people in England.

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

The LSC offers a host of support services to help those who are already in the workforce, or are about to enter the workforce, to gain the skills they need to succeed, secure their future or grow their income. For example, you could receive the Adult Learning Grant (ALG) for your decided course, a grant designed as a helping hand for adults thinking about learning but worried about the financial barriers standing in their way. ALG provides low income adult learners with up to £30 a week to help with the extra costs of learning. Since the grant became available, over 43,000 people have received ALG. You could also access training at work through the LSC’s flagship programme for employers, Train to Gain.