

Maths Takeaway



This month's special

The economy

You already know that the current economic downturn makes it a tough time for businesses large and small, but did you know . . .

- improved maths skills can help your business reach its full potential.

Better maths confidence means:

- reduced wastage and miscalculations
- effective use of resources and reporting
- efficiency savings
- flexible staff prepared to take responsibility



Starters

Do any of your employees need to be better at . . .

- working out the quantity of materials for a particular job?
- understanding rotas and timetables?
- calculating journey times and fuel usage?
- filling in time sheets and checking wage slips?
- calculating costs and dispatching orders correctly?
- measuring accurately and safely?

See the skills checklists for examples of other maths skills that you might want to improve within your organisation:

www.move-on.org.uk/numeracy_resources.asp

Staff can check their maths skills by doing the mini-test at:

www.move-on.org.uk/testyourskills.asp

Main course

What do numeracy levels mean practically in the workplace?

Level 2 – unsupervised work

- Equivalent to GCSE A*–C.
- Skills are secure and transferable. Example: Work out the total cost of a service that has been quoted without VAT.

Level 1 – supervised work

- Equivalent to NVQ Level 1/GCSE D–G.
- Coping level. Example: Work out simple percentage increases and decreases on sale goods.

Entry Level 3 – highly supervised

- No equivalent
- Getting by. Example: Understand fractions used in sale items, such as 1/3 off.

Entry Level 2 and 1 – highly supervised

- No equivalent
- Survival level – know and read simple measures. Example: Estimate equal portions of food for sale.

Specials

Cutting costs and developing the business

The CBI's 2008 audit surveyed 735 firms employing 1.7 million people between them. The survey showed serious concerns about employees' abilities to spot simple numerical errors and some 34% of those surveyed reported lower productivity as a result.

Improving maths skills can improve efficiency, but the skills are also central to wider workplace skills.

Maths is essential for success in many NVQs. You might expect a construction NVQ to include a lot. Other NVQs do too – for example, 83% of the units from a Cleaning and Support Services NVQ at Level 1 require Level 1 maths.

Support the upskilling of your staff so that they will be successful on an NVQ that benefits both them and the company



Train to Gain offers free opportunities for staff to improve their maths and gain a national qualification. Call 08000 15 55 45.

Set menu

Could your employees answer the following questions?

- 1 A total of eight million people, or 25% of the working age population, in England have maths skills above Level 2. This leaves how many people below Level 2?
a) 10 million b) 24 million
c) 16 million d) 8 million
- 2 Studies suggest that the cost to employers of poor basic skills among the workforce could be as high as £206 000 for companies employing 50 people or more. Based on this figure, how much could a company employing just 15 people save by upskilling?
a) £41 200 b) £20 600
c) £10 300 d) £61 800
- 3 If one person wastes just twelve minutes a day due to poor maths, each day translates into one hour per week or 52 hours per year. How much are you paying for wasted time?

Log on to the Move On Learner Route at www.move-on.org.uk to try some more numeracy questions.

Extras

Grin . . .

'A director decided to award a prize of £50 for the best idea of saving the company money during the credit crunch. It was won by a young executive who suggested reducing the prize money to £10.'

. . . or groan

48% of people educated to degree level or above do not have numeracy skills at Level 2 or above.

For advice on addressing skills in the workplace, and to find out about government support or training, call 08000 15 55 45 or visit www.traintogain.gov.uk.

Workplace training through Train to gain providers should be:

- Flexible
- Relevant
- Responsive