



Networks

The Untapped Resource



www.makeyourmarkconnect.org

Enterprise, Innovation, Creativity and Networks

“In today’s knowledge-based organisations, networks of informal relationships are often more critical to performance and innovation than those of formal divisions and units. These networks have a lot to do with personal productivity, learning and career success. Helping employees build vibrant networks can have tremendous pay-off for managers in terms of both individual and departmental productivity.”

‘Building vibrant employee networks’ Rob Cross & Sally Colella, Management Tools, Dec 2004.

The Make Your Mark campaign is connecting people and ideas across the country, unleashing a creative mix of talent, energy and entrepreneurial spirit. Networks aren’t just for entrepreneurs – businesses can benefit hugely from connecting staff internally, or by providing the opportunity to exchange ideas with others in the industry. The Make Your Mark campaign is a not for profit organisation and we can give you information, tools and advice to help you to develop your workplace networks.

Networks: Why you should get connected

Diversity and Inclusion

In a diverse marketplace a company must respond to the challenge of creating an environment that respects diversity and strives for the inclusion of all employees in the important work of the business.

Combat departmental silos by connecting employees in peer groups across your organisation. Encourage networking events to put diversity and inclusion policies into practice.

Why not sponsor a network?

Barclays Cultural Diversity Network working together with the g.a.p. network

Barclays Cultural Diversity Network was established in 2003 for ethnic minority employees. The network's objectives are to support community and business activities, be a platform/forum for personal development and create opportunities to network employees from ethnic minority backgrounds with external businesses.

The Cultural Diversity Network continues to support a range of activities to encourage people from ethnic minority backgrounds to participate in community and business initiatives. The network is affiliated with g.a.p network, an information conduit for delivering business network meetings to the BAME community.

Barclays have sponsored events for g.a.p network meetings and supported them by delivering presentations focused on:

- Initial stages of starting a small business
- Business planning
- Requirements for opening a business account
- Financing a business
- Provision of Barclays Great Ideas Software and brochures

“g.a.p network are promoting the principles of networking and sharing information and opportunities - including fundraising, tendering and procurement and marketing/branding within the BAME community.”

Paulette West, Regional London Leader & Central Committee Member for the Cultural & Diversity Network – Barclays Bank PLC and founder member of g.a.p network

Networks: Why you should get connected

Recruitment & Retention

Finding the right people and holding on to them is central to any organisation's strategy.

Improve recruitment and retention of talented staff by networking staff internally and use external networks to tap into pools of potential employees.

Why not network your young employees across departments?

Harrogate Borough Council formed its own young employees network to act as an initial point of contact for young employees in the council. The group has 12 core members from across departments, who are regularly consulted on key council issues such as the recruitment and induction programme, taking forward suggestions from the staff survey and developing a mentoring programme. They also arrange a number of social events throughout the year that encourage wider involvement from all staff members.

“The Young Employee Group has been an unqualified success in raising the profile of younger council staff members with Councillors and Senior Officers. It has uncovered their potential and showcased the amount of talent the council has internally.”

Kevin Douglas, Executive Director, Department of Corporate Policy & Improvement, Harrogate Borough Council.

Skills Development

Attaining core competencies relies on staff possessing soft skills such as teamwork, leadership and communication skills.

Encourage workplace enterprise networks to create an environment to develop these key skills.

Deliver on key Corporate Social Responsibility strategies by linking with local school and community networks.

Why not network your graduates or apprentices?

BT – The Apprentice Network

This network organises events and provides a point of contact for peer to peer advice through apprenticeships. It represents the diversity of the apprentices across all lines of business – BT Retail, BT Global Services, BT Wholesale, Openreach and BT Fleet.

The Apprentice Network's aim is “to help apprentices achieve career success through networking, personal development and providing support.”

Kathryn O'Sullivan, Openreach Academy Project and Efficiency Manager

Networks: Why you should get connected

Enterprise Culture

Enterprising workplaces inspire and energise their employees. Fostering a can-do attitude and culture is critical for success in increasingly competitive global markets.

Profile your organisation as a leader on the enterprise and innovation agenda.

Why not have an 'Ideas at Work' day?

Halifax Bank of Scotland 'Ideas at Work Day'

During Make Your Mark's Enterprise Week 2006, HBOS plc ran 'Ideas at Work Day' as part of an ongoing Customer Service initiative. Approximately 1,100 Business Banking colleagues at 7 main sites across the UK were actively encouraged to submit innovative new ideas and to network with remote colleagues. Over 100 ideas were generated from 'Ideas at Work Day' in areas such as product development, training, and community involvement, with rewards offered for those that are implemented.

"Taking part in Make Your Mark's 'Ideas at Work Day' is a great example of how we create such an environment that engenders innovation and creativity. By tapping into the imaginations of our colleagues, not only do we find great new ways of doing things, we empower every member of the

workforce – which is essential to attracting and retaining the best people."

Anne Shiels, HR Director, HBOS Retail

Innovation & Creativity

Innovation and creativity thrive in networked organisations. Successful organisations find ways to give their employees the time, support and tools they need to stimulate creativity and innovation.

Create a work environment that supports creative thinking and innovation.

Why not encourage innovation?

Peer to peer networks support innovation and give employees the opportunity to discuss, develop and implement their ideas.

"We continually look for more innovation and creativity to meet our customers' needs in an increasingly competitive marketplace. That's why we are investing heavily in our apprenticeship and graduate programmes and pro-actively encouraging creative and entrepreneurial behaviour amongst our employees."

Adam Crozier, Chief Executive, Royal Mail Group plc.

Next Steps

1. Build a workplace network

Contact Make Your Mark for advice, information and tools to set up your own workplace network.

2. Become a Make Your Mark Connector

If you or your organisation has started a network then we would like to invite you to become a Make Your Mark Connector. These are people across the UK who run a variety of networks that bring ideas and people together. We are creating a national group to link these people together and connect the country. For more information get in touch or see www.starttalkingideas.org/connectors

3. Tell us about your network

We are also interested in hearing about any existing networks that your organisation may offer and any ideas you have for future network events or activities. For further information please see www.makeyourmarkconnect.org or contact Eimear@makeyourmarkconnect.org

Contact us:

Make Your Mark
6 Mercer Street
London
WC2H 9QA

Tel: 020 7497 4037
Email: networks@makeyourmarkconnect.org
Web: www.makeyourmarkconnect.org

Make Your Mark is the national campaign to create an enterprise culture among young people in the UK. Make Your Mark is run by Enterprise Insight – a coalition founded by the four leading UK business membership organisations - the British Chambers of Commerce, the CBI, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Institute of Directors. It works in partnership with the leading enterprise development organisations, is supported by the Small Business Service of the DTI and is personally endorsed by the Chancellor.