GIVING LONDON'S LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED A 'START'

Monday 23 March, 2015

Fourteen unemployed Londoners complete Thames Water's 'Give Someone a Start' work experience scheme

Unique three-week programme designed to make candidates more attractive to potential employers

Fourteen unemployed Londoners left Thames Water's offices with boosted CVs and increased confidence after completing a unique work experience scheme today.

The 'Give Someone a Start' candidates met Thames Water bosses and Barry Brooks from Energy and Utility Skills on Friday to receive certificates at a presentation event.

Thames Water Director Richard Aylard said: "As a major employer in the capital we're very proud of our Give Someone a Start programme and once again it's been a great success. Finding a job isn't easy and these candidates should be commended for going the extra mile to get ahead and enhance their future job prospects."

The scheme was first developed by Thames Water in 2012 and aims to give long-term unemployed people a foot-up on the career ladder. It explains what employers are looking for while equipping candidates with practical skills and hands-on experience in a real workplace.

Candidates each have a mentor and are given tips on interview techniques and CV writing, while also taking part in a workshop to sharpen-up their IT skills. It is hoped the knowledge they gain during the three-week programme will make them more attractive to potential employers.

Seven of the candidates were recommended for the scheme by Shaw Trust, the national employment, learning and skills charity. One of them, Anthony Radwell, who has been unemployed for more than a year, was chosen to enrol because of his plumbing qualification and background in light engineering.

Anthony said: "I have really enjoyed my time on the Give Someone a Start programme. The work I undertook with Thames Water complemented my existing skills in engineering and plumbing. I was encouraged to push myself and took the opportunity to absorb as much knowledge as possible from the team at Thames Water. I have gained a significant amount from the placement, learning the best way to find and stay in work is to refresh my skills so that I am best placed to compete in today's job market.

"My practical skills have been significantly improved over a short space of time and I have a newfound sense of self-belief. The programme has given me more confidence and motivation to work harder. Most important of all, I have a real chance to find a career that fulfils my life ambitions."

Barry Brooks from Energy & Utility Skills, added: "We are delighted to support the 'Give Someone a Start' scheme through our collaboration with Thames Water in the Energy & Efficiency Industrial Partnership. It is vital that we encourage new and diverse talent into our industry and we welcome Thames Water's important work in making a real difference to their local community, and the wider sector. These programmes are of the highest quality and will help young people get work. Congratulations to all those involved."

ENDS

Notes to editors

The west London scheme completes a set of four that Thames Water is supporting in 2014/15, along with Swindon, east London and Reading.

Thames Water launched the Give Someone a Start scheme in 2012 when 32 candidates from London and the Thames Valley spent two weeks with the firm getting used to being in full time employment, while learning about the water industry. Eight of them went on to secure jobs, including one at the company's head office in Reading.

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Thames Water also launched an industry-first traineeship programme in January for 45 people. They will join for six months' intensive training with the aim of securing a full time operational job with the company once they have finished training.

About Shaw Trust:

Shaw Trust is a national employment, learning and skills charity that helps people facing disadvantage into work, gain skills and take control of their futures. Over the past thirty years, the Trust has striven to combine its charitable heart with its commercial brain to provide the very best support to the people it was set up to serve.

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