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How can businesses ensure they offer careers and not just jobs?

Andrew Livingston, CEO, Screwfix

As a multi-channel retailer, we recognise the importance of offering careers not just jobs in supporting our growth, but we understand it can sometimes be a challenge to meet the long-term career needs of all employees across every business.

For the UK economy, offering careers rather than just jobs is vital as it ensures a continued flow of experience through the UK market and makes room for new entrants at every stage of the career ladder. By doing this, the growth and success of the UK economy can be protected. But, with various challenges impacting organisations, it might not always be a core focus. At Screwfix we try to meet this objective by focusing on four key areas.

Firstly, it may seem obvious, but investing in bespoke training to suit the needs of staff is essential. At Screwfix 65% of all our store management teams are recruited internally, so we have focused on developing the training requirements to support this. For example, we run a 'Fast Track to Store Manager' programme to ensure we continue to nurture our home-grown talent to support the business' expansion.

It is also crucial to spend time and resources on succession planning to identify the areas where staff can move into. For our business, a large proportion of the HR team's time is spent on succession planning and then recognising the training required to enable successful progression to take place.

While succession within a certain area of the company is one way to progress, it's also vital for organisations to understand the opportunities available through transferable skills. This can unlock future career pathways and can help support business growth. For example, a quarter of our admin vacancies in head office are filled by employees who have moved over from the contact centre.

Finally, it is only possible to refine a business' approach to developing long-term careers for its staff by listening to them to ensure their needs are being met. We run regular internal staff surveys and two thirds of the questions are on career development as it's such an important area in the success and motivation of our employees. We can only attribute our fast growth and on-going success to the dedication and enthusiasm of our eager workforce, who have been nurtured and supported throughout their development. Coupled with the opening of 60 new stores per year we have been able to create more of these opportunities.

However, no matter what businesses put in place to help their employees to progress, there is still an onus on the individual to take advantage of opportunities available to them to help their career flourish. Although some employees are happy and content to continue to develop in their current role, it is important that other measures such as investing in bespoke training, recognising transferable skills and building solid succession plans, are put in place within UK businesses to support those who want to develop a long-term, successful career. With a continued focus on career progression strategies across the UK economy, we can help to ensure we grow an engaging, dynamic and exciting workplace for all.

ENDS

Note to editors

About Screwfix:

Screwfix is recognised as being "where the trade buys" offering a straightforward and transparently-priced retail experience that enables busy tradesmen to shop 14,000 products over the phone, online, via their mobile or from their local store.

- From power tools and workwear to cables and pipe fittings, more than 11,000 products are available to collect from the national network of 400 stores. An extra range of over 3,000 products can be ordered over the phone, online or from a local store for next day delivery, with orders taken up until 7pm to home or site.
- screwfix.com attracts 1.9 million visitors per week and the Screwfix *Click & Collect* service means customers can conveniently purchase supplies online and then collect from store just five minutes later.
- Customers can contact the UK-based Screwfix call centre free 24 hours per day, 7 days a week (plus bank holidays) on 0500 41 41 41, or on the mobile-friendly 01935 414141.
- Screwfix stores are open 7 days a week – see screwfix.com for local opening hours
- 94 per cent of customers would recommend a friend to Screwfix.
- 50% of the UK are within 10 minutes of a Screwfix store, with 9/10 within 20 minutes.

- Screwfix employs over 7,500 people has been awarded a Gallup Great Workplace Award for its outstanding workplace culture and staff engagement.

PRESS information:

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