





EAST MIDLANDS PEOPLE AND SKILLS CONFERENCE 2025 – WORKSHOPS

Session 1 - 11:10am to 11:50am			
Room: WPTH004	WPTH005	WPTH006	WPTH003
<p>Improving recruitment and retention of your Future Talent – Loughborough University</p> <p>Susan Boon - International Work & Opportunities Coordinator Careers Network, Loughborough University</p> <p>Balancing employee expectations in a way that fits with your organisations' goals and needs can be an ever-changing landscape.</p> <p>Employers are facing challenges in retention rates, shifting workplace preferences, skills shortages and the use of AI by candidates - Understanding students' career motivations is more important than ever. Join us for this workshop that aims to give practical advice and actions you can take to improve your recruitment process and retention of future talent.</p>	<p>Accessible Marketing for HR Professionals: Inclusive Communication for Recruitment and Retention - Tania Gerard, Founder of Tania Gerard Digital UK, Accessible Marketing Consultant, Neurodiversity Trainer</p> <p>This session will explore how HR teams can apply accessible marketing principles to job adverts, employer branding, and employee engagement strategies to attract, retain, and support a diverse workforce. Covering:</p> <p>The Foundations of Accessible Marketing in HR – Understanding what accessibility means in recruitment and employer communications.</p> <p>Common Barriers in HR Marketing – Identifying unconscious exclusion in job descriptions & hiring processes</p> <p>Practical Steps for Inclusive Communication</p> <p>Tips on accessible job postings, social media hiring campaigns, internal communications.</p> <p>Legal and Ethical Considerations.</p> <p>Real-world examples of businesses successfully integrating accessibility into their HR and employer branding strategies.</p>	<p>Unlocking Engagement: Practical Strategies to Inspire, Retain, and Elevate Performance – Carla Brown, Head of Business Development at PDW Group</p> <p>Session Overview: In today's workplace, engagement isn't just a buzzword - it's a business imperative. This session will provide practical tools, insights, and proven strategies to dramatically boost employee engagement, retention, and performance.</p> <p>Engaged employees are more loyal, motivated, and productive - and they're less likely to leave. When leaders and managers know how to foster engagement, they create teams that are proactive, collaborative, and driven by shared purpose.</p> <p>We'll explore <i>The 5 Conversations Framework</i>, which equips leaders to build trust, clarify expectations, recognise strengths, address challenges, and align on shared goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building Trust and Driving Engagement 2. Setting Clear, Mutual Expectations 3. Recognising and Leveraging Strengths 4. Tackling Unhelpful Behaviours Constructively 5. Aligning on Outcomes and Action Plans <p>We'll also dive into Influencing People and the 5 Benefit States - a powerful approach to fostering empathy, improving communication, and strengthening trust-based relationships across your organisation.</p> <p>By helping individuals understand how their work contributes to a positive culture, you'll boost motivation, create deeper connections, and build a workplace where people want to stay and thrive.</p>	<p>Values-based recruitment for the modern workplace – Chris Grocock Head of Business Development & Partnerships, Futures</p> <p>How businesses can recruit staff that share their values and purpose leading to higher productivity and better staff retention. The workshop will discuss not just the steps and processes recruiters should put in place, but also where they can receive external help from public programmes and initiatives that are free at the point of use and funded by government. This support can deliver pre-employment training and careers advice for candidates, facilitate a range of employer interactions with their candidate pool, beyond the typical "application-assessment-interview" process, and provide guidance and help to implement a variety of practical inclusive practices that can widen and diversify the candidate pool. As well as direct benefits to your workforce, which will in-turn contribute to growth, these activities can also meet social value requirements and priorities, enhancing your brand with key stakeholders, customers, and local communities.</p>
			

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Session 2 - 11:55am to 12:35pm			
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<p>Stakeholder involvement, as engagement alone is not enough. How business can help shape skills development in the East Midlands</p> <p>Facilitator: Kate Lou and Colleagues, Pro Excellence Partnership Ltd.</p> <p>Many organisations rely on local Colleges, Universities and Training Providers for the development of their future talent, however all to often we hear employers complain that they cannot find the talent with the Skills and Behaviours they need in their business. Now is the time for Employers to get more involved in shaping the skills supply system locally.</p> <p>In this workshop we will explore how education and training organisations can more effectively involve employers in the design, delivery and resourcing of their training solutions. We will explore how Education and Training Organisations can build stronger and more valuable relationships with employers, delivering long term impact and value to both organisations.</p> <p>Employers can also play an important role in the Governance of education and training organisations, as well as in the planning of local skills funding. We will also share information on how employers can get involved and consider best practice from different areas.</p>	<p>Working Well - East Midlands - Donna Bharmal, East Midlands Chamber, Employment Services</p> <p>Join our workshop to find out how East Midlands Chamber, in partnership, are providing FREE Recruitment & Retention support to businesses across Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire</p> <p>East Midlands Chamber can help provide your business with new staff and in-work support, as well as offering you the opportunity to give something back to the community by providing local jobs for local people.</p> <p>Our support includes:</p> <p>Skilled candidates who choose to work for your business.</p> <p>Guidance on supporting your workforce with their wellbeing and specific health conditions, including reasonable adjustments and Information on applying for Access to Work funding to further support; Ongoing support for your employees from Employment specialists who help them navigate challenges in the workplace, leading to increased job satisfaction and employee retention.</p>	<p>Beyond First Impressions: Understanding Facial & Visible Difference in the Workplace with Gary Parsons</p> <p>Facial and visible differences are still too often excluded from inclusion conversations. In this powerful session, leadership speaker and mental health advocate Gary Parsons shares what it's like to lead with a visible difference - and why organisations need to rethink how they support difference in all its forms.</p> <p>Diagnosed with facial paralysis at 18, Gary went on to scale a multi-award-winning business while facing unconscious bias and the pressure to hide his condition. Through personal story and practical insight, he'll challenge common assumptions and offer inclusive strategies that go beyond the surface.</p> <p>What You'll Learn in This Session:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What facial and visible differences are, and the realities behind the labels 2) The emotional and workplace impact, including communication barriers and confidence gaps 3) Common misconceptions (like "it's just cosmetic") and how they harm inclusion 4) How to support colleagues respectfully, from everyday interactions to policy-level change <p>This isn't just a conversation about appearance - it's about empathy, equity, and the future of truly inclusive workplaces.</p>	<p>An Employment Law Update which feeds into your recruitment and retention strategy - Jesse Tataobuzogwu, Senior Associate (Employment), Freeths</p> <p>This workshop looks at the recent and forthcoming changes including what employers can expect from the Employment Rights Bill with the aim of ensuring your business is up to date with the latest changes which can in turn feed into your recruitment and retention strategy. This workshop is aimed at HR professionals, Operational Directors, Finance directors, business owners and anyone responsible for recruitment and retention in your business.</p> <p>The session will be run by expert employment law advisers, Freeths, who will share with delegates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A general update on developments your organisation needs to be aware of - How these changes feed into your recruitment and retention strategy - What issues they are advising employers on to tackle the challenges in this area; and - Top tips for employers to consider as part of their recruitment and retention strategies. <p>This practical and interactive workshop aims to discuss these live issues in a peer-to-peer environment and will look to practical case studies on this topic. This workshop will arm delegates with the tools needed to navigate these challenges and manage the associated risks</p>
