








## EAST MIDLANDS PEOPLE AND SKILLS CONFERENCE 2026 – WORKSHOPS

Session 1 (11:15am – 11:55am)			
Room: WPTH001	WPTH003	WPTH004	WPTH005
<p><b>From Graduate Potential to Workplace Agility: Building Reflective and Adaptable Talent</b></p> <p>Supporting the Transition and Adaptation of Skills from University to Workplace.</p> <p>As workplaces continue to evolve through technological change, shifting employee expectations, and increasing demands for agility, organisations are placing greater emphasis on adaptable, reflective and self-directed employees.</p> <p>However, many employers continue to identify challenges in supporting graduates and early-career talent to successfully transition from education into professional environments.</p> <p>This interactive workshop explores the current graduate mindset and skill landscape, the growing importance of transferable and human skills, and why reflective learning is becoming essential for workforce agility and lifelong development. Drawing on practical experience in soft skills development, the session will introduce the Reflective Goal Setting model - an approach designed to help individuals build self-awareness, adaptability, ownership and continuous learning habits.</p> <p>Attendees will leave with practical strategies to better support employee transition, engagement and long-term capability development within their organisations.</p> <p><b>Cheryl Travers, Reader in Organisational Psychology, Loughborough University</b>  <b>Susan Boon, Work Opportunities and Partnerships, Careers Network, Loughborough University</b></p> 	<p><b>Why Good People Leave: Neuro-Inclusive Approaches to Skills and Retention</b></p> <p>Many employers are struggling with skills shortages, retention, and disengagement, often without realising how everyday work design, communication, and training practices unintentionally exclude capable people.</p> <p>This practical, employer-focused workshop explores how neuro-inclusive approaches to skills development and workforce participation can improve retention without adding complexity or cost. It moves beyond awareness to examine how common practices around recruitment, training, performance management, and communication can either support or undermine capability.</p> <p>Designed for HR leads, people managers, and business owners, the session will explore why traditional approaches often fall short, how unnecessary cognitive load contributes to burnout and turnover, and what small, system-level changes can make a meaningful difference.</p> <p>Attendees will leave with clear, realistic actions they can take back into their organisation, regardless of size or sector.</p> <p><b>Marilla Bianco, Director &amp; Founder, Work'n'Diversity CIC</b></p> 	<p><b>How to build a culture that embraces AI: Shared insights from 80+ interviews with real SME leaders</b></p> <p>AI is now a people and culture challenge, not just a technology one. Organisations that move slowly risk being left behind as AI reshapes roles, skills and competitiveness. Drawing on live deployments and Digital Planning's new research with SME leaders, this workshop shows where AI adoption really breaks and how businesses can turn stalled pilots into measurable productivity gains.</p> <p>It will share what SME leaders across the UK are saying about AI, including why tools are rolled out but barely used, pilots never move beyond trial, and teams revert to spreadsheets when they do not trust new systems. You will explore the cultural root causes - leadership behaviours, how managers are supported, and how safe change feels for teams - and link these to workforce capability, skills gaps and talent strategy.</p> <p>Attendees will leave with tactics to increase adoption, access to Digital Planning's Digital Cultures Research Guide, and the opportunity to apply for funded support through the new AI Fund.</p> <p><b>James Ferraby, Co-Founder and Director, Digital Planning</b></p> 	<p><b>Do you need health coaching skills in your team?</b></p> <p>Health coaching is taking the world by storm, forget GLP1 injections, this workshop will explore why your team needs a health coaching injection! It's easy to learn and often the missing ingredient to transform the health of your workforce. We will cover a range of options for increasing skill and engagement in challenging times.</p> <p>This interactive and memorable workshop will be lead by Dr Ollie Hart, a GP from Sheffield, who cofounded Peak Health Coaching with GP partner Tim Williams. They have learnt through 40yrs + combined NHS experience of the value of enabling people to be actively involved in looking after themselves. They are now bringing these skills and approaches to business settings"</p> <p><b>Dr Ollie Hart</b>  <b>Managing Director, Peak Health Coaching</b></p> 

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Session 2 – (12:05pm to 12:45pm)			
Room: WPTH001	WPTH003	WPTH004	WPTH005
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Stop Training. Start Changing: Building a Learning Culture That Sticks</b></p> <p>Most companies don't have a learning problem - They have a <i>behaviour</i> problem. Courses get completed. Boxes get ticked. Nothing changes.</p> <p>This workshop shows you how to fix that—by shifting from formal training to habit-driven, culture-led learning. We'll explore how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design learning that lives in the day-to-day, not the LMS</li> <li>- Build small habits that compound into real change</li> <li>- Use curiosity, reflection and application (PEARS) to drive retention</li> <li>- Make every conversation a learning moment</li> <li>- Create a culture where people don't just comply—they improve</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Less content. More change.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Delivered by Si Beales -Founder &amp; Learning Director of Sidedoor Studio</b></p> <p>A specialist in <b>habit-based learning</b>, particularly in helping people boost their <b>human skills and learn creatively</b>.</p> <p>Si has worked with thousands of people and businesses, in the UK and abroad, to demystify learning and promote future skills. Brands such as <b>Adidas, Boots, The Law Society, Levi's and Sky</b>.</p> <p>Si has written for The Guardian, The Times, Vogue and Psychology magazine. And been a regular contributor to the BBC.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Before the Absence: Early Intervention for Employees Under Hidden Pressure</b></p> <p>Presenteeism costs UK businesses significantly more than absence, yet most support frameworks are built to respond to crisis rather than prevent it. This workshop focuses on the employees who keep functioning under sustained pressure until they cannot, and what organisations can do earlier to protect both their people and their performance.</p> <p>Practical, evidence-based, and grounded in over thirty years of clinical and coaching experience.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Delivered by Dr Elizabeth Rozario, former GP turned qualified coach and trainer, The Caregiving Journey CIC</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>How Working with Prisons Can Benefit Your Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why Employment Matters</li> <li>• Reasons to Work with Prisoners and Prison Leavers</li> <li>• Ways to Get Involved Opportunities within prisons             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) and apprenticeships</li> <li>-Employment on release</li> <li>-Commercial workshops and employer led training academies                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success to Date</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Next Steps &amp; Q &amp; A session</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Delivered by Theresa Salisbury Midlands Prisons Employment Lead</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unlocking Talent Pipelines: T Levels, V Levels and Levy Changes Explained</b></p> <p>Offering practical insight into the latest developments in T Levels, emerging V Levels, and updates to the Apprenticeship Levy – this session will help employers understand how these education and funding pathways can be used strategically to address skills gaps, strengthen talent pipelines, and support workforce development. Attendees will gain clarity on how T Levels are structured, what industry placements involve, and how they can directly benefit from engaging with students entering the workforce with relevant technical training.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Nikki Slack, Assistant Principal, Vision West Notts</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>