



The Skill Exchange Partnership (TSEP)

"Unemployment in any form is damaging and wasteful. The impact on employees and the economy has long term implications and the cycle of recruitment and redundancy is a practice that we should be trying to change."

John Taylor, Chief Executive, ACAS

We all enjoy to one extent or another the incredible social benefits and economic comforts of the 21st Century and yet whenever business drops or dries up, the way we treat employees has, one might argue, not really changed in 150 years. Despite the advancement and development of our industries and workplaces, skill wastage through job cuts continues to be one of the first victims of even short-term downturns.

Wasting skills damages people, families, companies and public services as well as the overall national and global economy. The Skill Exchange Partnership (TSEP) is an independent, non-political and not-for-profit group, which looks at new and emerging ideas designed to better manage changes in employment and help employers see and use ways to exchange, share or simply save UK skills.

The concept for TSEP was originated by the founders of StaffShare, an innovative online skill exchange that operates as a Social Enterprise and I accepted the invitation to share the Partnership in December of last year.

TSEP will work to create a focal point for UK employers to follow the widening debate surrounding economic and social changes and their effects on the way we work, treat employees and manage skills. There is particular emphasis on local action through the creation of regional hubs or TSEP regional centres to help businesses throughout the UK to avoid redundancy and keep our skills deployed.

Today, all employers should feel a moral obligation to avoid wastage and people with skill are arguably our most precious commodity. Encouragingly, even as the UK economy struggles for survival, some employers are finding creative and innovative ways to avoid the damage, cost and personal impact of redundancy and lay-offs. The Skill Exchange Partners want to explore these trends and encourage more employers to embrace this approach.

Although a redundancy strategy is often heralded as the only option left to an organisation in crisis, it can often in fact be an expensive, drawn out and painful process for all concerned. Yet, given reasonable planning and consideration, real alternative policies like job-sharing, early retirement, re-training, flexible working, mobile or home working as well as secondment or redeployment between employers are all potentially fast and effective ways to cut an organisation's employment costs but also save careers and skills.

Find out more about **The Skill Exchange Partnership** at: <http://www.staffshare.com/partners.php>