

Professional development and wellbeing number one priority for drinks industry workforce

Results from the annual survey conducted by The Drinks Trust revealed that almost all (96%) of the drinks industry want to undertake professional development initiatives to help them in their career in the next 12 months.

The study, which polled 800 people in hospitality and the drinks industry overall in collaboration with Kingsland Drinks Group aimed to better understand the needs of the workforce.

While professional qualifications are the most desired form of development (25%), peer-to-peer networking also ranked as a significant priority (20%). Interestingly, stress and resilience training also took a top spot, with a fifth of people (20%) feeling this would help them in the longer term.

That said – and perhaps symptomatic of the tough economic climate, the need to attract more skilled workers and the repercussions of Brexit and the pandemic – just half (52%) of the industry are signposted to resources to support development, wellbeing, and mental health by their managers.

Alexandra Miller, Education and Training Programme DEVELOP Manager at The Drinks Trust said: “The research shows the workforce is hungry for tangible, measurable and worthwhile experiences that can benefit them in the long term. We’re heartened to learn that there’s a large population considering stress as a factor to address proactively. However, it also unearths a vital need for managers to talk to their teams more about resources available to them.”

While over half of the industry’s workforce benefit from some signposting to available resources, worryingly, 40% of respondents are not spoken to by their managers about their development or wellbeing at all.

In fact, rather than managers, family and friends ranked the highest (52%) in terms of where people would go for support if they needed it. However, peers are the first port of call in the workplace for over a third of people (39%) followed by managers.

Surprisingly, external organisations were a choice for just 5% of people despite free services such as The Drinks Trust.

Jo Taylorson, part of Kingsland's Thirsty Earth team, said: "I can tell you first hand that there's a huge willingness to develop talent - of which there is plenty – and support people who need help to nurture a greater sense of wellbeing and security. But there's a clear disconnect, with managers needing to close the loop and understand what's available to them to help their teams thrive. By doing so we're nurturing future players in the industry for the long term."

When asked what was most likely to encourage people to stay in the industry, four out of five people (80%) said training opportunities would help hugely, while the same amount (80%) said better support from employers on the topic of wellbeing.

Taylorson finished: "Continued pressures on consumers and businesses – after years of turbulence felt acutely by those in the industry – can only make the role of charities like The Drinks Trust even more critical. Our message to managers is simple; take time to learn what's available to you and your team, so you can sign post effectively and not tackle important things like development and wellbeing alone. Against the tough economic backdrop, we understand that there's more pressure than ever – but the workforce wants to be in the industry, and they want to hear from you. As senior leaders, we should make this a priority."

The Drinks Trust launched its Education and Training programme, DEVELOP, in 2022 with the aim to bring new talent to the trade while helping people out of long-term hardship. It offers individuals educational opportunities, resources, and bursaries to enter the industry or learn new skills to grow their careers. Support includes a variety of training options, from generalist short courses for skills such as CV writing and customer service, to specialist courses in bartending, brewing, distillation, and more.

The Drinks Trust also offers its Wellbeing Champions course, which has been designed exclusively for the drinks industry by leading experts. It aims to present the practical tools and knowledge to help leaders support their colleagues and develop wellbeing in the workplace.

About The Drinks Trust

The Drinks Trust is the charity dedicated to the drinks and hospitality workforce. It strives to empower our industry people through services designed to assist financially, restore well-being and develop skills, and to do so with compassion and respect. In doing so, The Drinks Trust seeks to create an equitable industry where

opportunities to thrive are open to all. To find out more, please visit www.drinkstrust.org.uk For media enquiries, please email Alessandra Brugola, Marketing Manager, at alessandra@drinkstrust.org.uk