

## Business & Soft Skills Development Training Programme



**Your new / graduate employees deserve a comprehensive graduate-style development programme.**

**You deserve employees who are well prepared for the world of work.**

### **With GradStart™**

**Attract graduates** with a comprehensive graduate-style training programme.

**Rapidly integrate** your new young employees.

**Accelerate performance** of your new recruits.

**Retain employees** for longer.

### **WHY**

All young employees need a good grounding in core business and soft skills<sup>1,2</sup> if they are to make a productive and valuable contribution at work.

GradStart™ does just that — the business and soft skills development training programme for new / graduate employees.

For many graduates a skills development programme is a major factor in employer selection<sup>3</sup>.

### **HOW**

GradStart™ avoids the need for you to have dedicated training resources by using our cost-effective managed service. With our classroom-based courses and mentoring support, your new employees develop the business and soft skills they need.

Insightful metrics allow both you and your employees to track and rate their performance and progress.

### **WHAT**

The most important business and soft skills employers look for are<sup>4</sup>:-

- ◇ **Communication skills**
- ◇ **Self-management**
- ◇ **Problem Solving**
- ◇ **Team working**
- ◇ **Self-awareness**
- ◇ **Leadership and management**
- ◇ **Business and customer awareness**
- ◇ **Commercial and financial understanding**

Once a month, your employees will join with those from other employers to extend their knowledge and skills in a stimulating, thought-provoking and engaging environment that aids retention of knowledge.

Between formal sessions, your employees will be monitored and required to practise these skills and maintain a record.

Your employees will become competent and confident using these skills for the benefit of your business and their career.

**GradStart™ programmes are commencing nationwide.**

To find out more contact Gary Weinstein

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Visit [www.akonia.com/gradstart](http://www.akonia.com/gradstart)



		Why this is important	
Soft Skills Modules	<b>Self-awareness</b> All change and development starts with self-awareness. In this module we engage your new employees and motivate them to develop their skills and competencies. This will help them commit to learning and gaining the knowledge they need.  This will make a substantial difference both to the development of their career, and to the growth of your business.	<b>Self or personal management</b> Your new employees must be able to manage themselves effectively. Employers, like you, emphasise that demonstrating good time-keeping, motivation and a 'can-do' attitude are essential attributes in employment and building a successful career.  Without this know-how they won't build effective relationships and become the future leaders you need.	
	<b>Team working</b> Every day they interact with other people – colleagues, supervisors, managers, directors, partners and clients.  Knowing how to engage and work with others effectively will make a crucial difference to the long term health of your business, and allow them to make the continuous career progression you need.	<b>Communications</b> Effective use of language, both written and verbal, will help shape your new employees' destiny and identity, and showcase their leadership potential.  Presenting to a large audience, developing one to one relationships, writing reports or simply using e-mail effectively are all skills that highly effective leaders need, together with the ability to coach others to be equally effective.	
	<b>Problem solving</b> Being able to analyse a situation, formulate and consider options, assessing the merits and risks of each of them, are all critical skills your new employees will have to apply throughout their life and career. Making decisions and taking risks are an important part of a leader's toolkit and understanding what's appropriate will increase the probability of a successful outcome and protect the reputation of your company.  Developing confidence and learning to trust their problem-solving abilities will be paramount in building a successful career.	<b>Change management</b> Change is the natural state of 21st century business. Your new employees will be involved in significant change programmes throughout their working lives.  When a business invests in change, how do you know when you've finished, and what does 'good' look like?  By helping your new employees to understand the change process they will be better equipped to understand the impact that change will have, and how best to embrace and handle it with resilience and a positive mind-set.	
	<b>Interpersonal behaviour</b> Helping your new employees to learn how to behave personally and professionally with others is essential in building relationships with family, friends, clients, business partners and colleagues. They must understand there are subtle yet pronounced differences between personal and professional behaviour. What's appropriate in one context is not likely to be suitable in the other.  Also important is how your new employees represent your company by the way they dress, their attitude to work, their interaction with others, and their utilisation of social media.	<b>Leadership and management</b> As your new employees establish themselves in their career, they will need good management and leadership skills as they are promoted into increasingly senior positions within your company. Identifying and examining the qualities and attributes of role models in leadership will provide useful insights as they develop their own management and leadership style and behaviours. Teaching them how to set objectives and goals, to lead others, to lead projects and tasks, and to plan and estimate, will be of significant benefit to them, and create a foundation understanding that your new employees will use throughout their career with you.	
	<b>Industry sector</b> Building knowledge of your industry sector is essential. Your new employees will benefit from visits to partner companies and clients; talks from colleagues in different job roles and levels of seniority – from other junior and senior employees through to managers and directors.  In addition they will be taught how to acquire industry knowledge through research techniques, reading industry journals, and learning about competitors.	<b>Commercial</b> Understanding the commercial environment in which your company operates is important for your future leaders.  Learning about contractual commitments, why and how they are made, how to negotiate and behave with your clients and business partners will ensure they understand the boundaries within which your business operates and the importance of clear personal responsibilities.	
Business Skills Modules	<b>Financial</b> Many experienced business people do not understand the basics of business finance and terminology, and struggle to understand what a financial report is conveying.  These are key indicators of business performance and health, so it is essential that your new employees are taught the fundamentals of business finance at an early stage in their careers.	<b>Customer</b> Knowing how the sales cycle works, and how sales-people build relationships with clients will make the difference between gaining sales and losing them.  Understanding how to create an environment which makes customers satisfied with your products and service, ensuring their loyalty and supporting your company's continued growth.	

**GradStart™ programmes are available nationwide.**

**Call NOW to find out where and when your local programme commences.**

<sup>1</sup> CBI / Pearson: Gateway to Growth – Education and Skills Survey – July 2014

<sup>2</sup> City & Guilds: Making Education Work – Preparing Young People for the Workplace – October 2013

<sup>3</sup> HECSU / Graduate Prospects - The Best Graduate Employers as rated by Graduates – January 2010

<sup>4</sup> CBI / Universities UK: Future Fit – Preparing graduates for the world of work – March 2009

\* Terms and Conditions apply.