



ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

The Senator Group

Accrington-based The Senator Group, which is the largest British manufacturer of office furniture, has taken on eight staff thanks to Access to Employment (AtoE).

AtoE provides Lancashire businesses with access to potential candidates to help support objectives and achieve growth, in addition to pre-employment training. It is delivered through the Lancashire Employment and Skills Executive Partnership's (LESEP) network of partners located across the county.

Before taking on new roles with The Senator Group, the recruits embarked upon the eight-week Preparation for Work course through the Textiles Academy, based at Themis at Burnley College. The academy was established by the company along with other leading textiles, apparel and furniture manufacturers to facilitate training in the industry.

The course is delivered by Burnley College, and equips candidates with the basic skills required to gain employment in

the industry including operating machinery, product inspections and repairs, sewing disciplines including overlocking, seaming and twin needle sewing, as well as employability skills such as timekeeping, punctuality and responsibility.

The Senator Group, which has showrooms in London, Chicago and New York, approached Access to Employment as a result of a skills shortage in sewing which has affected the recruitment process.

“I would definitely recommend Access to Employment to other businesses”

Steven Crook, Sewing Supervisor
The Senator Group

Steven Crook, sewing supervisor at The Senator Group, said: “There is a chronic skills shortage in sewing particularly in our industry, furniture manufacturing, and it can be a barrier to recruiting new staff.

“As an employer this course has opened up new avenues of employment we would have otherwise not explored.



“The process benefits the learners by preparing them for employment in a realistic way, and the fact we can tailor the course to the needs of our business is hugely beneficial, for example teaching the importance of consistent sewing seams – so that those who go on to gain employment with the company are fully prepared.

“A lack of experience is often a barrier to gaining employment, but this course means applicants are prepared for their roles. All the recruits are doing well and it's good to see how they have progressed. I would definitely recommend Access to Employment to other businesses.”



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Email: info@access-to-employment.co.uk