

Dunc is a knight on the tiles

Build your career – and pay packet



DUNC the hunk dumped his office job and climbed the ladder to self-made success. Duncan Haynes took a course in plastering and went on to do roofing, electrical, tiling, carpentry and bricklaying. Now he has set up on his own and has a full order book. Find out more on Page Five.

THE building industry is crying out for good workers with qualifications – especially in the London area.

Firms just can't find enough carpenters, plumbers, bricklayers, electricians, plasterers and other skilled workers.

And that means great opportunities – and big money – for those willing to learn.

You could easily earn more than someone with a fancy degree from a top university when you are in your early twenties.

Simon Bartley is the chairman of SummitSkills, which aims to improve skills levels in the building, services and engineering industries.

He says: "By the age of 21, a successful apprentice will be earning significantly more than a graduate."

He questions whether bright school leavers – girls as well as boys – are right to go into education rather than learn a specialist, high-paying, trade through an apprenticeship.

Simon says: "Many people are being persuaded to stay on in full time education, often wrongly. Staying after 16 can be the wrong move."

"What counts is how good you are at a job, not how you get there."

But opportunities are not limited to school-leavers.

If you want to upgrade your skills or learn new ones you'll find you're pushing at an open door whatever your age.

Employers are desperate for good workers who can cope with the latest techniques in the construction industry.

Bosses know if they don't get enough good people, they risk losing jobs and giving up profits.

And you could help your firm help itself as well as help you by telling them about the free money they could get if they provide training. The Construction Industry

By LAURIE STONE

Training Board realises the better you're trained, the better you'll do your job, and the more you'll earn.

So it has set up a grant scheme which gives your firm money so it does not lose out while you're learning or upgrading your skills.

Bosses have to set up a training plan. But they don't have to worry if they're not the best form fillers – the CITB has a special, easy-to-use, pack full of details and documents for firms and employees.

Even the smallest firm could get £500.

But if you work for a bigger firm, telling your boss about the scheme could bring in thousands.

An employer who sends **TEN** people for **FOUR** days training each could pick up **£1,500**.

And it does not have to be college-based training. Many forms of workplace training counts for a grant as well.

There's a huge variety of courses on offer. For instance, the National Construction College trains more than 35,000 people each year for the building industry.

One course in scaffolding and access work offers a complete package from basic scaffolding through to NVQ3, a level which commands respect and a big pay packet.

This college has places for people with experience but no recognised qualification. Passing the course could lead to jobs in offshore scaffolding, petro-chemical plants, power stations or building sites.

The Government have pledged to push up the number of young people going into training for highly-paid skills.

They will fund a new Union Learning Academy to support training schemes.

Other government schemes include the Sector Skills Agreement to treble the number of building firms helping to push further ahead the skills and earnings of employees.

● **FOR details of Construction Industry Training Board courses call 08457 33 66 66.**

‘You can earn more than a graduate’

WIN A VIVARO VAN

DO you know a really fantastic builder? Then builders merchants Jewson wants to hear from you. They are searching for their Builder From Heaven 2005. The best builder gets a brand new Vauxhall Vivaro van – and you get a luxury weekend break for two.

Jewson managing director Peter Hindle says: "We're looking for builders doing an excellent job, providing a great service and quality work for their customers day after day. And we're searching for builders who are helping to encourage more young people into the industry. We want to challenge TV programmes such as Builders From Hell."

Get more details online at www.buildersfromheaven.co.uk

By **STUART BRODKIN**

We're building a better future

WANT to build yourself a better future? Then look no further than the Builder Training Centre.

There you can turn your hobby into a career if you are an amateur DIY enthusiast. Or increase your earnings if you are a professional by honing your skills.

The Builder Training Centre opened two years ago to address the shortage of courses for those in the building trade or those trying to get into it.

Since then thousands have trained successfully by taking five-day courses in a range of disciplines.

Originally there were courses in bricklaying, plastering, plumbing and roofing. But demand led to the addition of wall and floor tiling, carpentry, kitchen fitting and electrical courses.

Most of the courses can be taken during the week, or at weekends for those with commitments during the week.



SKILLS . . . Peter Townner

Peter Townner, the man behind the Builder Training Centre, started out in the building trade as a labourer 20 years ago.

He has a wealth of experience from building a garden wall to a complete house. He says: "All our instructors are highly experienced tradespersons – from plasterers and bricklayers to Corgi-registered plumbers with over 150 years combined experience in the building industry."

"Students can take advantage of all the tips of the trade, personal experiences and advice we can offer."

"The number of students, both men and women, who have attended our courses is in the thousands."

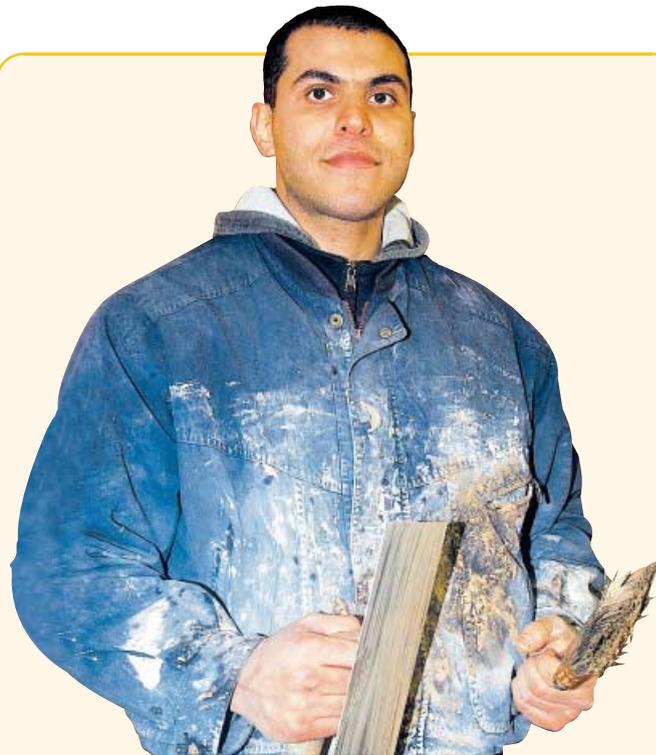
"They come from all walks of life, ranging in age from 16 to over 70."

"All have different reasons for attending. Some want to find out whether they like the subject enough to commit to a college course. Others just want to increase their portfolio of skills for their own benefit to enable them to carry out home improvements and repairs."

"All courses are very much practical and hands-on, giving as much experience as we can in the time available."

"They are intensive and demanding but the atmosphere is relaxed and enjoyable which creates a good learning environment."

You can visit the Builder Training Centre at any time during opening hours or visit the website at www.skillsclub.com.



AHMED KHASABA – 'IMPRESSED'

AHMED was so impressed with the Builder Training Centre that he took all seven courses.

The former NHS worker crunched all the learning on offer into six weeks when he decided to launch a new career as a property developer.

Ahmed, 34, from Stoke-on-Trent,

Staffs, says: "I was really impressed with the quality and content of teaching. The course was very professional and gave me a lot of confidence."

After doing the electrical course, he took roofing, plumbing, bricklaying, tiling, carpentry and plastering.

STEVE BENNETT – 'FIRST CLASS'

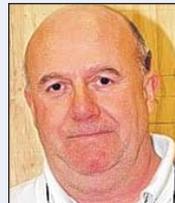
SELF-TAUGHT builder Steve wanted some qualifications to back-up his skills – so he turned to the Builder Training Centre.

And he wasn't disappointed. Steve, 52, from the Isle of Sheppey, Kent, took the plumbing course and has just

completed the electrical one.

Steve, who works for a housing and plumbing firm, believes it is essential have the right qualifications.

He says: "I found the courses very easy to follow and the tutors are first class. I'd recommend them to anyone."



CHRIS MOLLOY – 'EXCELLENT'

FACTORY worker Chris is looking to become a self-employed brickie and decided to get qualifications.

Chris, 42, from Thames Ditton, Surrey, has always done his own home improvements and thought he could hone his skills

and turn them into a job. He has taken the bricklaying, plastering, carpentry and plumbing courses and passed with flying colours.

He says: "The tutors are excellent. I'd recommend these courses to anyone considering DIY as a profession."



DUNCAN HAYNES – 'ENTHUSIASTIC'

DUNCAN is a DIY fan who has transformed his hobby into a full-time business.

He ditched his office career and took a series of courses at the Builder Training Centre.

Duncan, 35, from Chiswick, West London, took a course

in plastering and went on to do roofing, electrical, tiling, carpentry and bricklaying.

Now he has set up on his own and has a full order book.

Duncan says: "I gained a great deal of knowledge from enthusiastic and experienced tutors."



WESLEY COOPER – 'GOOD THINGS'

WES is an ex-brickie looking to go back into the building trade so he decided to polish up his skills at Builder Training Centre.

And the 45-year-old, from Armoy, Northern Ireland, liked the course so much he stayed on to take courses in

plastering, roofing and tiling.

He says: "I'd heard a lot of good things about the centre and they lived up to all my expectations – and a lot more."

"Now I am planning to launch my own business offering good quality building services."

