

Successful launch of MITIE's new Real Apprentice programme

A new programme called the Real Apprentice has successfully launched, helping the long term unemployed and disabled members of the community back into the workplace. The first intake of apprentices has already seen success with many of the candidates now in employment, having previously been unemployed for at least 6 months.

The programme, launched in August 2009, was an adaption on the first Real Apprentice. The new scheme has now grown to help the long term unemployed and members of the community who have mental, physical or cognitive disabilities, and saw MITIE partner with JobCentrePlus (London & City East) and the London Employer Accord (LEA). These partnerships meant that, this year, the participants were able to keep their full benefits whilst on the programme, as well as receiving a travel and clothing allowance.

Following a two week screening and training process, the apprentices completed a ten week placement within various departments in MITIE. During their placements, the apprentices participated in a variety of tasks ensuring candidates not only gained new skills but invaluable employee references which gave them the confidence to succeed in a working environment.

"As a people organisation, nurturing our employees to achieve the best they possibly can is a core part of our ethos," commented Ruby McGregor-Smith, CEO, MITIE. "In the coming months, we will be rolling out the Real Apprentice to other areas of the UK enabling more people to become involved and giving them the chance to shine."

This year the scheme has culminated in an awards ceremony to crown this year's Real Apprentice. On Wednesday 3rd March 2010 the awards ceremony was held to announce the winner of The Real Apprentice and to celebrate the achievements of all the apprentices. Jim Knight, Employment Minister, spoke at the event, which was held in the prestigious Communities and Local Government building. James Ritchie was crowned the winner of the programme, receiving £500 as a prize. Since completing the programme James now works for MITIE working on their total facilities management contract at the National Audit Office.

Jim Knight, MP, commented "I want to congratulate MITIE on the Real Apprentice scheme and its achievements in giving young disabled people the opportunity to get on the career ladder. With a quarter of the candidates now in employment this is a real success story for disabled people and the long term unemployed."

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Notes for editors

What is MITIE?

We're the strategic outsourcing and asset management company.

What does that mean in practice? Providing everything from strategic consultancy, to world-class delivery on the ground. From long-term infrastructure planning, to facilities management, property and engineering services. Our strategic input can add value at the highest level, while our practical management expertise can save customers money and maximise their returns. At the

same time, it's not just what we do, but how we do it that makes us different. Our people are passionate about what they do, committed to working in partnership with their clients, and will always look for a fresh answer to a new challenge.

We work with our clients in three ways; some take full advantage of our whole range of expertise by buying the whole suite, others may only need one aspect of what we do:

Strategy and consultancy

+ Facilities and project management

+ Service delivery

In other words, we think, we manage, and we deliver.

The thinking phase is all about finding strategic answers to long-term challenges about assets and resources. Facilities and project management puts those plans in place, and our unrivalled range of services is one of the best in the business.

There's a lot more to MITIE than you probably think. We're a big company with big ambitions – a leading FTSE 250 support services business, with more than 54,000 people, revenues in excess of £1.7bn, and a reputation for being the best.