

The Business Magazine (online)

29th March 2010



South: HR expert slams 'time to train' law

Debbie Taylor says new legislation completely misses the point.

Legislation designed to give employees better access to training has been labelled "a waste of time" by a leading HR expert.

According to Debbie Taylor, director of Target HR Consultancy, the 'time to train' legislation, which will come into force on April 6, 2010, completely misses the point when it comes to addressing employees' development needs.

"The legislation gives employees the legal right to ask for time off so they can undertake training, but, crucially, it does not give them the legal right to it," she explained.

"Employers are under no obligation to meet an employee's request for time off and, even where it is granted, there is no requirement for the employer to pay the cost of the training.

"Up until April 2011, the legislation will only apply to larger organisations with 250 or more employees. The majority of these organisations will already have the appropriate training programmes in place, so the legislation will have a limited impact.

"All in all, this is legislation for legislation's sake, which will only serve to increase the amount of paperwork going through HR departments."

Taylor argues that training has nothing to do with legislation and that employers should be training their staff with the necessary skills to do their jobs as a matter of course.

"It would be a sad state of affairs if employees have to rely on employment law to access training," she explained. "Common sense says that training is vital to improve both staff and business performance and any employer worth their salt should have these kinds of provisions in place," she commented.

"Ineffectual legislation like this only serves to give HR departments a bad name and the government would be better advised to spend their time and money on subsidising training for small businesses. It is only through measures like this, rather than legislation, that the government stands any chance of making a real difference where staff training is concerned," she added.

Reproduced with the kind permission of The Business Magazine.

