



Supporting Store Management Training

March 2008

1 Introduction

This project aims to

- Summarise current provision of training and development for store managers
- Investigate employers views on the effectiveness of current provision
- Analyse gaps between supply and demand
- Highlight potential interventions to enhance effectiveness of store management

An initial company contact list was provided by Skillsmart Retail. A desk review was conducted of published materials regarding store manager training practices within these companies to inform the interview process. A list of questions relating to store manager training was agreed with the project manager for use with appropriate training and development managers. Researchers were asked to identify up to date contacts for a list of 40 retail companies and conduct thirty interviews with retailers.

2 Sample

62 companies have been contacted as part of this project. 35 qualitative interviews were conducted. Of these 32 were with retailers from across the UK¹ and covered the following **retail sectors**: fashion and footwear (13), food (8), books/ toys/ music (4), DIY/transport/ furniture (4) and pharmacy/ health and beauty (2) and jewelry (1).

In terms of **company size**, the interviewees represented 17 large retail companies (i.e. more than 5000 employees), 8 medium (1000 - 5000 employees) and 7 smaller companies (less than 1000 employees). The number of outlets per company ranged from 1 to over 2500, covering a wide range of employee numbers per store, retail floor space and turnover - from local pharmacies to out of town superstores.

Further interviews were conducted with a shopping centre manager, a consultant working with major retailers on leadership development and a business adviser working with small retail companies in a business mentoring capacity.

Confidential records of interviews and additional materials from 11 retailers have been provided to the Skillsmart project manager and Leadership and

¹ (i.e. included interviewees with retailers based in Scotland and Northern Ireland)

Management consultant. At Skillsmart's request the consultant also collated an overview of company feedback highlighting potential areas of follow up action.

3 Findings

i Feedback by company size

The thirty five interviews revealed highly divergent training and development practices which are challenging to summarise in a meaningful way. For ease of understanding this section provides an overview of feedback from retailers by company size.

Smaller companies (less than 1000 employees):

- Initial training tends to place more emphasis on legal compliance and technical standards (i.e. company procedures etc) than behavioural skills
- All seven smaller companies use placements as a means of developing new managers, but the extent of these placements varies: some get 3 days, others 2 weeks, others up to 15 weeks
- Managers in two smaller retailers received little upfront training and relied heavily on buddy/ mentoring arrangements whilst running their own stores
- One retailer had a talent development programme to encourage supervisors to progress to assistant managers and assistant managers to prepare for store manager positions
- Another had a rigorous two year trainee management development programme linked to qualifications and accreditation
- Most stressed the importance of commercial effectiveness in managers of small companies
- Many used detailed task-based role specifications (e.g. "day in the life of") as a tool for manager self development
- Most area/ senior managers monitor and review new manager performance against company standards/ key performance indicators on a regular basis
- Some small companies buy off-the-shelf training packages on generic aspects of management training and tailor these for use in a retail context e.g. leadership styles, time management, managing change, health and safety
- One company had used external providers to help foster the development of inspiration styles of leadership. Another regularly sent managers on the BSSA summer school.
- All companies stressed the effectiveness face to face delivery and one expressed hopes to develop e-learning within the next two years
- Two companies stressed the importance of developing and recognising the skills of existing managers within small companies as a means of retaining good staff within a competitive employment environment.

Medium sized companies (1000 - 5000 employees):

- Four out of eight retailers offered talent development programmes and seven offered management development programmes.
- These programmes tended to combine technical and behavioural content.
- Both types of programmes tend to “sheep dip” all candidates- although sometimes fast track arrangements are available for internal candidates on management development programmes.
- Management development programmes vary in average duration from 6 to 18 months
- Placements in different stores or parts of the business are used by all eight retailers in the initial training of new managers
- An increased emphasis on behavioural training is common once people are established in management roles: this training tends to be delivered face to face and off the job.
- Training for existing (rather than new) managers tends to be in response to an individual learning needs or as a result of a new strategic initiative
- Typical courses offered to existing managers include improving sales, increasing commercial effectiveness, training the trainer, performance management, personal image and impact
- Four retailers had used external companies in the design and/or delivery of courses for store managers.
- One sent managers on BSSA summer schools and retail master forum
- One retailer was seeking accreditation of their management development framework from the ILM.

Large Retail Companies (5000+ employees):

- Whilst larger companies have often had formal manager training programmes for many years, most have overhauled these in recent years to place greater emphasis on outcomes and competencies.
- Regional/ area teams often help specify the design of this training or contribute to its implementation. Some interviewees expressed concerns about the consistency of training and recognise that commercial pressures sometimes mean that new managers are asked to manage stores before completing all aspects of their initial training.
- Of 17 large retail companies interviewed, 13 had talent programmes in place and 14 had formal management development programmes.
- Management development programmes varied considerably from a 13 week management induction to a two year manager designate programme.
- Talent programmes within larger companies were more likely to address progression through various levels of management and place more stress on the involvement of senior management in recruiting and supporting candidates.
- Some large companies -particularly those with larger branches- suggest that a lack of breadth of commercial or retail management experience may prevent existing store managers progressing into higher level area management.

- Large companies were more likely to have extensive learning resources (including short courses/modules) which trainee/ managers could access through company intranets.
- 5 retailers use elearning or are planning to extend the use of e-learning within internal training programmes in the near future, particularly in relation to “information heavy” training e.g. product training.
- Larger companies tend to offer more training opportunities than smaller companies, although they cover the same training topics. For example in addition to offering modules on managing teams or managing performance at different levels, larger companies may also offer face to face courses on these subjects at different times of the year. Overall there was a greater emphasis on personal skills development within larger companies.
- Store managers are often graded depending on store profitability/turnover/size. Some “super managers” may oversee a number of smaller stores as well as their own, whilst others may host placements for new store managers.
- Where companies are rolling out training related to new strategic initiatives, these “super managers” are often the first group to be targeted.
- Although placements were used by all large retailers in the initial training of managers, some interviewees stress the value of combining off the job workshops (in which the quality of learning can be better assured) with placements in stores of excellence which provide unsurpassable opportunities for application.
- Development opportunities for senior store managers tend to be tailored and focussed around workshops and project working, rather than use of placements
- Larger international companies are more likely to include elements of management training designed by teams outside the UK.
- 14 retailers had used external companies in the design and/or delivery of courses for store managers.
- Two retailers offered management NVOs and two had company training programmes accredited by CIM/ ILM.

ii **Current training and development for store managers**

Certain common themes arise from this feedback. All companies interviewed preferred to recruit **internal candidates** into store manager roles - particularly in relation to smaller branches/stores. Internal recruits are generally regarded as a “known commodity” which reduces the recruitment risks. Recruiting from within is also good for company morale.

Some commented that internal recruitment is also a less costly process: it does not involve agency fees, internal appointments progress more quickly through induction and in some cases internal recruits demand lower starting salaries than external appointments.

Nonetheless all companies had recruited **external candidates** into store manager roles in the past year. Many suggested that this was often down to geographical issues rather than internal skill shortages per se. For example if a new store is being opened in a remote location, this may not attract internal applicants. Also some regions have different employment patterns: e.g. the higher churn within shops in the South East often increases the level of external appointments.

All companies provided details of the training offered to new and trainee store managers, full details of which are recorded in the centre reports. Most of this training was designed and **delivered internally**, although many companies did use external training providers on certain projects.

In most cases this training covered both **functional/ technical standards** and a behavioural component. The technical aspects of initial training often covered company values, systems, procedures and legal requirements – which would often include company specific training on customer service, performance management and often commercial effectiveness.

Typical examples of **behavioural training** include leadership styles, coaching, delegating, motivating teams, managing difficult people and situations.

Many interviewees suggested that new store managers tend to lack confidence around performance management (managing appraisals, grievances and disciplinary procedures) and common training priorities include developing commercial effectiveness.

Placements in “centres of excellence” stores tend to be the most popular approach to initial training, with most falling between 8-12 weeks. Placements are often combined with opportunities to attend off the job courses.

Once placed in their own stores, managers’ performance is generally monitored by their **area manager**. In most cases area managers visit new store managers once a week, and undertake detailed performance reviews within a typical probationary period of three months.

Where specific off the job courses are offered to **existing managers** this tends to be either driven by individual needs (identified in performance review) or new strategic initiatives. For example a company drive on improving sales would result in training for all managers (often starting off with those responsible for the “top” stores) whereas an area of underperformance identified might result in a manager either revisiting an earlier training programme.

General updating regarding new products and company systems undertaken by area staff was often seen as “communication” rather than

“training” and is not always linked to the review process. This was particularly the case in those companies that did not employ training specialists in regional or head office teams.

In terms of **future plans** for store manager development, most retailers stressed the continued roll out of existing arrangements. A number of companies were focussing on improving the consistency of training standards throughout their company. Others stressed that they wanted to become “more clever” at using existing training materials and resources rather than continuing to develop more.

Retailers were asked to identify any barriers to progressing staff into particular levels within store management. Most suggest that a lack of personal motivation remain the most **significant barriers** to preventing more staff progressing from sales into junior management positions. A lack of awareness of existing opportunities may add to this. Some store/ area managers may be less effective than others at spotting and encouraging talent in their teams which can also act as a barrier.

Some retailers suggested that it was easier to encourage people into **assistant manager** positions than into store manager roles. As an assistant/ deputy managers, there is a perception that you have the opportunity to “do all the good bits” of being a store managers. Some deputy/ assistant managers are fully aware of the additional responsibility and accountability that rests with the store manager and regard this as too much hassle for too little reward. .

That said however most believe that internal programmes are reasonably effective at developing the supply of assistant and store managers.

“Talent development” programmes targeted at developing top store managers into future regional managers tend to be less well established than those directed at junior levels of management. Some larger companies reported that they were more likely to recruit externally into more **senior store manager roles** where a breadth of commercial and retail management experience was needed.

iii Effectiveness of current provision

Perhaps unsurprisingly, interviewees tended to highlight their main development programmes as examples of effective provision.

Many interviewees commented on the inherent difficulties in evaluating the effectiveness of training provision. The impact of some courses was easier to measure than others. For example where **sales training** had been targeted at certain managers, retailers monitored closely any sales uplift in these stores (although the placebo effect may contribute to this).

With **soft skills** training the impact was often more intangible and difficult to measure. Some used course feedback as a proxy measure whilst others attempted to look at staff retention, attendance and morale.

The investment in **talent development** programmes is often justified in terms of the number of new internal recruits they supply to managerial roles and the savings made on external recruitment. However this upfront investment is at risk if a slow down in growth means there is a shortage of managerial roles for the newly developed talent to progress into.

In terms of preferred **training methods**, supervised placements were highly valued by interviewees as a successful approach to store manager training. Companies often place a heavy reliance on workbooks as a development tool at lower levels of management (e.g. to assistant manager level) whilst most favoured face to face training for the development of higher level leadership skills. A number favoured approaches which encouraged managers to apply their new learning in the workplace and reflect on the impact of their new skills.

Most interviewees favoured short training interventions and **bite sized learning** that did not require much time out of stores for managers. Some also valued **informal** games type approaches as a means of encouraging people to think more creatively about how to solve retail management issues.

Little use is currently being made of **elearning** as a management development tool by the retail companies interviewed. Although some acknowledged that today's retail managers used ICT regularly for generating reports on sales and stock management, many felt that companies did not have adequate ICT resources in stores to enable e- learning.

Some did use intranets as a means of informing managers about available training and three made learning workbooks available as downloads. Two used e-assessments as a means of checking understanding of workbooks/ modules prior to sign off. Three retailers had plans to extend the use of elearning particularly in relation to company updates and product training.

Staff perceptions can influence the value of learning derived from different training opportunities. For example some staff only regard off the job courses as proper "training" and do not see placements as development opportunities and hence undervalue the learning they can deliver.

Other interviewees commented that the quality of the **support** trainee/ new managers receive after a course can have a strong influence on the extent to which managers can apply and consolidate that learning.

Finally, the **timing** of training can have a major impact on its effectiveness: an example was provided of a programme had been implemented in a period

of major store redevelopment and redundancies which made it difficult for participants to build on their learning within a store environment.

iv. Gaps between supply and demand

Companies both large and small spoke of the considerable challenges they face in dealing with the many approaches from training companies. As one company put it:

- "The challenge is to deal with many requests from local training providers keen to support retail training in individual stores. We do not have the resources to deal with these requests- even if they were attractive. Tend to find that training on offer is generally targeted at the young and less skilled and we already have own arrangements for training these staff, which covers similar ground."

Although most management training is designed and delivered in house, 20 of the 32 retailers named **external training suppliers** that they had used in the past. Some companies only used external suppliers for specialist areas of training, such as health and safety, fire training, first aid, whilst others have also used external suppliers for the design and delivery of face to face training for leadership styles, coaching and effective selling.

In some cases, training is handled externally as this is seen as more likely to affect behavioural changes. As external suppliers can be costly, some retailers restrict their use to senior management development, using internal staff to deliver training to the larger populations of junior managers.

Larger companies are more likely to use external suppliers to deliver some aspects of store manager training than smaller companies- although as they provide more training overall, they also provide more in house training.

Retailers were asked if they were interested in the "**accreditation**" of company training for store managers. Four companies have already achieved accreditation whilst five more were currently investigating accreditation with potential partners. Five already use NVQs with sales assistants/ team leaders and are considering using NVQs with managers.

A further 8 retailers were interested in accreditation for store managers although were not pursuing this at present. A number of interviewees from larger companies mentioned that accreditation of company training was "going up the agenda" in response to the Prime Minister's "Skills Pledge."

Ten companies were not interested in accreditation at this time. Reasons offered for this included that companies were too small, that companies first needed to develop consistent standards of training, and that senior management were not convinced of the added value accreditation might offer.

A number of interviewees commented on the complexity of the mapping process and bureaucracy as a major barrier to accreditation. Whilst ILM and CIMS were cited most often as accrediting bodies, a number of larger employers were investigating accreditation by local universities as offering a less bureaucratic way forward.

v. Potential interventions to enhance effectiveness of store manager training

There continues to be a lack of understanding regarding the role of Skillsmart Retail within the retail training market.

A number of companies remain unclear regarding the relationship between Skillsmart Retail and training organisations such as BSSA, AIS, Protocol and EDI, whilst others confuse Skillsmart with functions within Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills. This perception is exacerbated by the number of skills development projects that interface with retail employers.

“Top challenge is to simplify the offer. Make it clear what Skillsmart offers to large and smaller companies. Most obvious role is in speaking up for the interests of retail SMEs”

“We are pleased with this emphasis of Skillsmart on management. There seems to be a lot going on but not clear how it all links up”

As these quotations suggest, retailers of different sizes are looking to Skillsmart for different services in relation to supporting manager training.

Small sized companies

Our interviews suggest that smaller companies find it a challenge to keep up with the training required to ensure that they are legally compliant. Whilst there are some established **training for compliance courses** for example in relation to food hygiene, first aid, fire safety, courses that relate H&S to the retail context are not as widely available. Also some suggest that courses on employment law and equality legislation for example are rarely pitched at an appropriate level for store managers.

Some smaller companies would welcome an accreditation scheme that recognised examples of high quality courses that would help employers meet their compliancy needs. Others would prefer to use accredited training materials which retailers could tailor for use within their own company.

Whilst small retailers tend to place greater emphasis on technical training, many would like to encourage managers to develop their leadership skills but do not have the internal resources to do so. Feedback suggests that **bite**

sized modules on essential management/ leadership skills in a retail context are more likely to attract managers than longer courses.

Examples of possible modules include: coaching, leadership styles, motivating people, managing time, delegating, managing difficult people and situations, presentation skills, report writing, listening skills.

There is no shortage of courses and training materials on similar topics available from commercial suppliers- although many are either too long or costly for small companies. Also these resources lack is a **common framework** to help individual managers see how courses are connected and relate to jobs in the real world. Here large companies have an advantage: a number already offer modules/ workbooks on similar topics to their staff which form part of a training framework and link progression to and within certain roles.

As the custodian of the **national standards**, Skillsmart is in a unique position to "offer" short courses and materials that relate to actual jobs/ key roles. Feedback suggests that there would be some interest in an "entry range" of low cost/ free short modules for retail managers to complete in their own time or in the workplace. These modules could be organised in relation to the key roles and could in turn signpost further training and qualifications for managers.

Feedback from small sized companies suggests that they would appreciate advice on **funding** to support qualifications for managers. A particular concern is funding for the upskilling of the adult 24 years+ workforce. This concern is linked to a lack of understanding regarding the links between Skillsmart and Governmental Departments, which is often exacerbated by a number of cross agency projects which deliver pots of funding for special groups. Smaller retail companies are also be most likely to interface with the local skills shops in the next two years and so will look to these organisations for clear explanations of the links between these and other small business support services

Medium sized companies

Feedback from **medium sized companies** suggested that they too would welcome these initiatives.

Some medium sized employers are more interested in offering behavioural training to managers than smaller companies but often lack the internal resources to do so. Whilst they might also be interested in the bite sized modules outlined above, it is more likely that they have training arrangements in place covering this initial level of training. They may well be more interested in fostering further skills development. These companies have indicated a greater willingness to send managers on "**open courses**," acknowledging their value in enabling participants to network and learn from

the experiences of managers in different companies. Some already have managers taking external courses such as BTECs in their own time.

However for many companies the sheer abundance of external courses is off putting. Companies find it difficult to identify courses of particular interest and relevance and tend to leave it up to individual employees to choose a course that suits them- and hope for the best. Some companies would welcome guidance from Skillsmart on courses or training materials that are of particular relevance to retail roles. By promoting a link with standards, Skillsmart could **signpost appropriate courses and materials** for managers.

Those companies investigating **accreditation** for company training also reports concerns regarding the complexity of the mapping process and a disabling level of bureaucracy and paperwork associated with accreditation.

Some felt that Skillsmart had a major role to play in popularising the use of **national standards** so that these might be used as a “lingua franca” for all training within retail.

Some retailers associate the use of standards with the costs and bureaucracy of NVOs, whilst others assume these were developed elsewhere and involve hidden costs.

Both these perceptions act as a barrier to the wider use of standards in the development of accredited company training programmes.

To address these perceptions and promote the use of standards, these must be consistently presented as highly relevant to retail, straightforward to understand, easy to use. They should also be presented as a common resource developed by the industry, for the industry to use in its own interests.

Some retailers suggested that Skillsmart could help by developing “pen pictures” of **key retail roles** using the standards. These would effectively highlight the competencies underpinning the “day in the life of” task lists used by some retailers and would provide a useful first stop for employers looking to relate their training to national standards. Some employers also suggested that having some common reference points would also help simplify the mapping process.

Although roles vary between companies of different sizes, feedback suggests there remain seven broad job categories that could provide useful “ways in” to the national standards. These are: sales assistant, supervisor/ team leader, department manager, assistant store manager (in a small store, in a large store), store manager (in a small store, in a large store), specialist store management roles (owner managers, visual merchandisers, operations managers, finance managers, human resource managers) and area manager.

Feedback from medium sized companies also suggests that some would be interested in opportunities for managers to **network with other retailers**. Some see this as a way of retailers strengthening their influence in the community at a local level whilst others are more interested in the opportunities this would offer managers to develop a wider perspective on retailing and a deeper understanding of how different companies operate. Skillsmart Skillshops might offer an opportunity for networking at a local level although feedback from a shopping centre manager warns that with the competitive pressures many retailers are under, participation in events outside stores is often disappointing.

Large Companies

Feedback from larger companies tend to focus on general ways in which Skillsmart Retail could support retail rather than on its role in supporting store manager training.

For example larger retailers would welcome more being done on promoting retail management as an attractive career and would like to see Skillsmart doing more work on this with parents, teachers, the careers service and universities.

As major employers, large retail companies are expected by Government to comment on and participate in national training agendas. A number of large companies are committed to the Governments Skills Pledge and are considering accreditation of company training schemes in this context. Some are already using **national standards** and suggest that more should be done to encourage others to do so.

For example this research has uncovered an example of a large retailer who has found that initial resistance to using national standards in developing a management training programme was won over when trainers realised that the standards covered all the important areas and could save them time by using what was available and avoiding reinventing of the wheel. Similar **success stories** could be promoted more effectively through the retail press and the Skillsmart Website.

In light of the concerns voiced by large and medium sized companies about the bureaucracy of the mapping and accreditation process, Skillsmart might also consider working with these **accrediting bodies** on ways of streamlining this process. Feedback suggests that ILM and CIM are currently the most active accrediting bodies of company training with respect to retailers covered by this project so these would appear to be obvious targets for this work.

Some companies suggest that Skillsmart may have a role in **lobbying** for schemes and arrangements that retailers support. For example, one large company is piloting "individual learning accounts" in Scotland as this

encourages employees to become more committed to self development but does not involve the accreditation of company training. Skillsmart may wish to consider whether this programme would be welcomed by retailers in England and how this might complement the Skills Pledge.

Whilst large employers generally want to run their own management development programmes, some recognise that managers can only develop a wider understanding of retailing from exposure to other retailers. Some large companies suggest that it can be difficult to promote managers from store to area manager positions if they lack a breadth of understanding of retail that is often gained through working in a range of stores or companies.

However managers can develop a better understanding of different companies through meeting and networking with other retailers and participating in courses and training activities that are open to different companies. Some retailers have suggested that they are more likely to consider supporting senior managers attending externally run accredited **courses and qualifications** than other more junior managers, because of the numbers of people in these roles and level of investment involved. Again Skillsmart may wish to consider whether there is value in **signposting courses** and qualifications of particular relevance to these higher level roles.

Some larger companies have also expressed an interest in "*low cost high leverage development activities*" such as peer to peer learning projects which are also referred to as "action learning sets". These initiatives are not linked to accreditation but encourage participants to identify their own learning priorities. Through use of coaching and questioning techniques groups help members develop fresh and creative solutions to challenging problems or situations.

As this process is led by the individuals concerned, some think it is more likely to appeal to senior managers than curricular-led approaches. Some employers are considering setting up such groups in company for senior managers, who might otherwise resist ongoing training and development. Other companies see more benefits from participation in external groups as these would provide opportunities to network and extend senior managers perspectives on retail. Skillsmart may wish to investigate whether existing leadership projects which are based on action/ peer learning models might be extended to other regions

4 Recommendations

The preceding suggestions lead to recommendations that are wide ranging and in some instances extend beyond the scope of this project.

For example some larger employers do not see Skillsmart as having a direct role in supporting the training they provide store managers, but feel Skillsmart has a major role to play in promoting retail as a career destination

of choice. Similarly some employers want Skillsmart to focus more on being “the voice of retail” in discussions with Government. A number of smaller employers would like Skillsmart to provide guidance on how to access public funding for training.

As these suggestions do not directly relate to supporting store manager training they are excluded from this section. The recommendations that remain support different forms and levels of management training in order to meet the differing needs of companies of different sizes.

It is recommended that Skillsmart Retail:

1. Promote off the shelf “training for compliance” courses and materials that target small and medium sized employers
2. Provide low cost bite sized modules/workbooks to introduce retail leadership skills development to managers in smaller companies
3. Use descriptions of key roles in retail to highlight the relevance of national standards and promote their use as a common language of retail training
4. Signpost existing leadership and management courses that relate to key retail job roles / national standards and build on bite sized modules
5. Work with accrediting bodies (such as ILM and CIMS) to develop more streamlined approaches to mapping company training and accreditation.
6. Promote participation in accredited courses and qualifications as a means of broadening the outlook of senior store and area managers.
7. Provide opportunities for retail managers to network and broaden their understanding of retail management through participation in action learning sets.

In addition it is recommended that Skillsmart give consideration to the following questions which relate to these recommendations.

- To what extent would Skillsmart be prepared to initiate the development of training materials or courses on behalf of the sector e.g. on employment law for store managers. This research provides a list of external training suppliers that might be consulted on this matter.
- To what extent can short one hour modules/ work books be derived from existing training materials? Would any large employers be willing to share

some of their existing training materials on a pro bono basis? Are any Learn Direct modules on management and leadership skills suitable for managers of small stores? How might these be made available in work book form for retailers with limited IT access at work? How many modules should be made available and how much would this cost?

- How could Skillsmart Retail use its website to promote the use of national standards? For example, employer case studies could be used to show how standards relate to specific jobs and how they have been used within training (e.g. in designing management training and in seeking accreditation)
- Could Skillsmart encourage training suppliers to relate their courses/materials to national standards/ key job roles and in return publish information of these courses/ materials on its website? Is there a database of such courses that can be made available to retailers? How would this be kept up to date?
- What forms of accreditation do current/ future managers in retail most value? Are the ILM and CIM favoured because their scope extends beyond retail? To what extent are universities a growing provider of company training accreditation?
- Would retail foundation degrees provide adequate opportunities for broadening the outlook of senior store and area managers? To what extent do the learning needs of higher level store managers relate to foundation degree modules? Is there potential for higher level bite size learning linked to some of these modules? Would current/ future managers be more attracted to a more broad management/ business qualification?
- Could opportunities to network with other retailers help managers develop an appreciation of the value of other forms of learning? What can be done to help managers recognise the value of placements as a tool for development?

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