

Letter to the editor

Dear editor

As a group of business people, passionate about Yorkshire and the Humber, we have made a commitment to support the region's business community in whatever way we can.

Having successfully survived a number of recessions, we have pooled our experiences to identify what we believe are priorities for Yorkshire's businesses.

A big issue for many businesses right now is cost cutting – and training budgets are often the first to go. But it is a false economy.

Even in these difficult times, there are real opportunities we should seize. In many businesses, it may be easier now to release staff for training. Larger businesses could strengthen their supply chains by developing training in partnership with suppliers.

Marketing needs to be more focused and with it the pursuit of excellent customer service. Good and timely financial information is vital, particularly daily cash reporting.

All of us recognise that there are businesses doing well and still new opportunities even in difficult times. There is funding and support to help innovate and develop products and services, as well as find new export markets.

We would urge businesses to make use of the free and flexible support available to help them. The initiative, Train to Gain has been extended to cover most employees in job-related skills and Apprenticeships are a cost-effective way to train people.

Business Link can help you with all the above, from skills and financial health checks to innovation and increasing sales - www.businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk or 08456 048 048.

We all need to maximise every opportunity.

Signed

John Anderson, Regional Director - Yorkshire & The Humber Region, BT

Mark Andrews, Chief Executive, NG Bailey Ltd

Alan Blackwell, Principal, Craven College

Andy Bond, President & CEO, ASDA Stores Ltd

Gordon Bridge, Chief Executive, Aesseal plc

Nick Cragg, Chairman, Nicholas Associates Ltd

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John Foster, Managing Director, Fosters Bakery

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