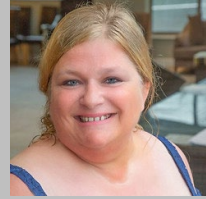


Jo Roche
Managing Director
Northern Training Academy Limited



Election Address - Training, education and development within the travel and tourism sector is absolutely critical to our industry. Having dedicated and motivated staff with the right skills, qualifications and experience are crucial for our survival – especially now as we are moving out of Covid and looking to take advantage of our future.

Hiring suitable staff is a challenge – now more than ever as potential new entrants to our industry are unsure about the future of the travel and tourism industry so there is understandable reluctance for people to enter. However, many of our industry leaders have been through previous monumental challenges (albeit, none as severe as that posed by Covid 19) and the resilience that they have displayed – and continue to do so – is heart-warming and invigorating. This sets the tone for the new dawn for travel and informs new potential entrants that the travel and tourism industry is a force to be reckoned with, is here to stay and offers innumerable opportunities for new recruits. Attracting new entrants is vital for our industry, but so too is retaining and retraining our existing talent – this is where my expertise is invaluable to signpost ITT members to suitable opportunities to meet their skills gap challenges.

The person representing education and training on the ITT Board should be able to embrace and build upon the resilience shown in the industry, be proactive and commercially aware of the unique challenges faced by our industry. I believe I am that person as I am in a unique position to signpost both traditional, relevant Higher Education opportunities, alongside work-based apprenticeship routes right from GCSE/Entry level through to Level 7 – Masters level opportunities.

I can advise on the levy funding situation faced by members and am in a position to highlight opportunities to the entire industry – from entry level right through to Masters Level opportunities. I am passionate about training and development at all levels and know that I can advise as to the best and most appropriate options available – with no hidden agenda.

Biography

Right back to the age of 12, I knew that I wanted a career in travel. Holiday brochures were my goto evening entertainment and I couldn't get enough information about places – still the case today! I have worked in/been involved in travel for over 25 years and have experienced a multitude of job roles throughout this period. I am also lucky enough to have experienced a myriad of travel experiences and love to impart my knowledge to our customers.

I was too old for a Youth Training Programme back in 1983 when I wanted to go into travel at age 17 (you had to be 16 back in the day) and today there is a misconception that people taking apprenticeships are 16-18 – completely not the case and it is my mission to dispel these false myths so that the travel and tourism industry can pick itself up from the floor and rebuild their respective companies. Well trained and highly motivated staff are key to this process.

I have been a supporter of ITT for some 19 years and have actively supported all ITT's activities. In my former role as Managing Director of Training For Travel (TFT), I was on the board of Education and Training. I had a gap until 2018 as I had parted company with TFT but then recognised the contribution that my new venture, Northern Training Academy could add into the company and individual experience and was accepted back onto the Education and Training committee.

In my new career as Managing Director of Northern Training Academy, providing apprenticeships from level 2 (GCSE equivalent) right through to undergraduate level, I am dedicated to make sure that all members in our industry can take advantage of the huge array of opportunities that the government are funding – dovetailing with the Higher Education degree offers.

In my former Training For Travel days, as well as being an active member of the Education and Training Committee, TFT also supported many ITT events and it is my intention that this will be continued and indeed extended through Northern Training Academy's activities.

From my extensive experience, combined with my passion for travel and tourism, I bring energy, enthusiasm and a fresh outlook onto education and training opportunities within the travel and tourism sector to re-energise the sector and help facilitate the much needed recovery.

Contact Details

joroche@northerntrainingacademy.com

website – www.northerntrainingacademy.com