



IS OUR INDUSTRY FACING A SHORTFALL IN SKILLS?



CUTS TO CERTAIN SKILLS PROGRAMMES AND TRAINING GROUPS MAKE IT TOUGHER FOR A SKILLED PROFESSION LIKE JOINERY.

Having the right staff with the correct training and skills set is crucial for every business in every sector. However, there are serious worries that the joinery and woodworking industry could soon see a shortfall in the amount of highly-skilled workers available – we took a look at what’s going on.

Education, training and skills are topics that never sit still, and ones that get talked about a lot by politicians, industry professionals and many other people. This is because they are vital in securing jobs for a lot of the population, which in turn makes the economy do well.

In recent years, there has been a lot in the news about certain industries that could see a lack of talent in the future as funding for training and skills programs have become more scarce.

For example, ProSkills, the lead national skills academy that fed into the timber industry and a handful of others, ceased trading. Dave Campbell, head of membership and training at the British Woodworking Federation (BWF), offers an insight into recent developments.

In a column in last month’s Timber Trade Journal, Campbell wrote: “The loss of ProSkills as our lead for qualification development in the timber sector earlier this year left the sector with a vacuum.”

However, he did offer some positivity looking forward, when he described how the Wood Industry Board from ProSkills had been subsumed by the Confederation of Timber Industries (CTI), and that they recently met in London to discuss the skills problem facing the industry.

He said the meeting was: “A chance to review our mission, which solidified the industry’s agenda. But, it’s also a chance to seize the moment, as, thanks to a seismic policy development, the time for action is now.”

Cuts to certain skills programmes and training groups make it tougher for a skilled profession like joinery, however optimism can be taken by these steps from the BWF and the CTI, as they work hard to encourage fresh blood and talent into our industry.