

Train company appeals to people on career breaks through new partnership

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Continuing its mission to entice people of all backgrounds to consider a career in rail, Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), is partnering with purpose-led consulting, coaching and networking organisation Women Returners for the first time.

The new partnership aims to help GTR tap into the talent pool of women who have taken a career break and are looking to get back into employment. The two organisations have worked together to develop a bespoke programme that aims to recruit trainee train drivers for January 2023.

Women Returners specialises in enabling all professionals who have taken a long career break to get back to fulfilling work in a supportive way. The experienced and high-calibre returner talent pool is made up of (mainly women) candidates who have taken a career break for childcare, eldercare or other reasons.

Successful candidates will benefit from a formal training programme, which includes a Level 3 apprenticeship. Full-time employment at GTR is given at the very start of the training period, with a starting salary of £32,080, rising to £63,196 once the individual is fully qualified. Tailored career support will be provided from Women Returners, not only for the recruitment and onboarding process, but three

months into the training programme too.

Zoey Hudson, head of talent, diversity and inclusion at GTR, said: “We’re passionate about having a diverse workforce and constantly challenge ourselves to look at new ways to attract talent. There could be a whole host of reasons why someone has chosen to take a career break and instead of focusing on a gap in a CV, we should be looking at the skills and life experience that person can bring to the business.

“We’re really excited to be working with Women Returners for the first time and can’t wait to support talented professionals back into work with a highly sought-after train driver role!”

Improving diversity among drivers is a priority for GTR; and the company said it is clear to see from the numbers that targeted recruitment and marketing is working. In 2021, there were 3,500 applications from females for trainee train driver roles, up from 800 just the year before. With a target of 50 per cent of all new recruits being female, the train operator continues to explore partnerships that help reach relevant audiences.

Women Returners deputy CEO, Hazel Little, commented: “Since 2014 Women Returners has partnered with over 150 leading organisations to create supported routes back to employment for career returners.

“This is our first trainee train driver returner programme – it’s fantastic to be working with GTR to get more diversity into the rail industry and to create this unique opportunity for the returner community.”

To find out more and apply for the role by working with Women Returners, visit: <https://womenreturners.com/opportunities/govia-thameslink-railway-returner-supported-hiring-programme>