

GROW WITH SODEXO REPORT

Business Impact & ROI Summary

Reporting Period: 2025

Executive Summary

This report presents a strategic overview of the business impact and ROI generated through the Grow with Sodexo development programmes delivered in partnership with Instep. Across the learner cohorts, measurable improvements are evident in operational delivery, leadership capability, and strategic contribution.

Learners are not only progressing in their roles but actively shaping the future of the business through real-time application of learning - from project delivery and stakeholder engagement to succession planning, sustainability initiatives, and cultural programmes. These programmes continue to support Sodexo's goals around talent development, operational excellence, and commercial awareness.



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Al BirdCEO
Instep

By being a true strategic partner, one that understands Sodexo inside out and breathes its culture and purpose, we can translate learning into real business impact. The result is smarter processes, operational excellence, stronger customer outcomes, and measurable efficiencies that genuinely move the organisation forward.

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instep

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Carl SargesonClient Director
Instep

The results speak for themselves. Working closely with Sodexo, I've had the privilege of meeting colleagues across different segments and seeing firsthand how these programmes are making a real difference – not just in confidence and career growth, but in the way people lead, communicate, and deliver for clients, driving operational excellence across the business.

Working alongside Emma, Duncan, Paula, Paul and Clare we continue to refine and evolve the curriculum to ensure it stays fully aligned with Sodexo's strategy. The work is never finished – but seeing this partnership strengthen year on year is a testament to the dedication of everyone involved.

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instep

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Emma ReasonLearning & Development
Business Partner**Duncan Limbert**Learning & Talent
Development Business Partner**Clare Belford**Early Careers &
Apprenticeships Business
Partner**Paul Neuchterlien**National Apprenticeship
Lead

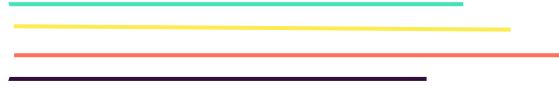
"When leaders step up and learning is put into action, the impact is clear - better performance, smarter decisions, and real business results"

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sodexo

KEY TRENDS ACROSS THE COHORTS

1



Strategic Project Ownership

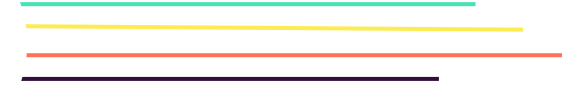
Learners led a broad portfolio of strategic projects, including:

- Contract mobilisation, reception relocations, and facility upgrades.
- Sustainability initiatives such as waste reduction, EV transition, and energy optimisation.
- Culture change programmes, TUPE transitions, and wellbeing days.
- Tendering, rebidding, and supplier onboarding projects.

Tangible ROI:

- Operational efficiency and resource optimisation improved through site relocations and process redesign.
- Compliance and audit readiness strengthened via fire standards, HR investigations, and governance oversight.
- Environmental impact delivered through sustainability initiatives, including waste segregation and EV projects.
- Team performance, staff engagement, and retention enhanced through structured coaching and leadership oversight.

2



Leadership Confidence & Autonomy

Learners are taking on interim leadership roles, cross-functional responsibilities, and coaching opportunities.

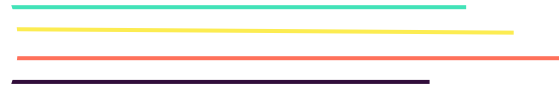
- Acting managers during absences.
- Leading disciplinary, redundancy, and HR investigations.
- Coaching, mentoring, and onboarding peers.
- Running workshops, huddles, and training initiatives, including fire safety, safeguarding, and EDI programmes.

Tangible ROI:

- Faster decision-making and fewer escalations to senior management.
- Stronger succession pipeline across operational and strategic levels.
- Improved team morale and retention as learners take ownership of high-stakes projects.

KEY TRENDS ACROSS THE COHORTS

3



Cross-Functional Collaboration

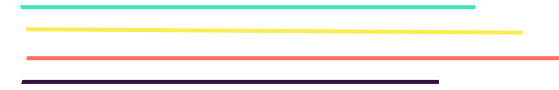
Learners are increasingly working across departments, contracts, and external stakeholders:

- Supporting multiple contracts, including HMRC, Quilter, NUFC, Clacton, and Colchester.
- Engaging with commercial directors, clients, and strategic teams.
- Leading supplier reviews, audits, and governance meetings.
- Chairing cross-site project meetings and steering groups.

Tangible ROI:

- Enhanced organisational agility and smoother contract delivery.
- Stronger client relationships and improved stakeholder confidence.
- Cross-departmental knowledge sharing, accelerating best practice adoption.

4



Inclusive Leadership & Wellbeing Focus

Learners actively promoted:

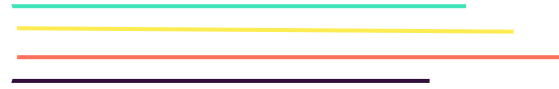
- Neurodiversity, mental health support, and EDI principles.
- Emotional intelligence, coaching, and mentoring to develop team capability.
- Leadership behaviours aligned with British Values and values-based management.

Tangible ROI:

- Reduced absenteeism and improved team engagement.
- Enhanced inclusivity and wellbeing culture, positively impacting staff retention.

KEY TRENDS ACROSS THE COHORTS

5



Data-Driven Decision Making

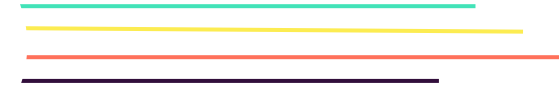
Learners applied tools and techniques to analyse performance, manage budgets, and optimise operations:

- Microsoft Projects, Power BI, Maximo, Kronos, TOWS, and stakeholder grids.
- SWOT, root cause analysis, Fishbone, 5 Whys, Gantt charts, and Kanban boards.
- Budgeting, forecasting, KPI tracking, and portfolio management.

Tangible ROI:

- Better operational planning and prioritisation.
- Reduced incidents, improved cost control, and compliance assurance.
- Evidence-based decisions supporting strategic growth initiatives.

6



Real-Time Application of Learning

Learners are applying learning immediately to:

- Operational changes and contract mobilisation.
- Leadership, project management, and HR interventions.
- System implementations and sustainability initiatives.

Tangible ROI:

- Faster embedding of leadership capability.
- Immediate improvements in project delivery and team performance.

HIGHLIGHTS & BUSINESS IMPACT

Project Delivery

- **Aaron Millard, Aaron Webb, Adam Witek:** Led cross-functional initiatives, strategic operational improvements, and HR investigations.
- **Lauren Williams, Lauren Taylor, Kyle Quinell:** Delivered workplace improvements, audits, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Lucas Alvarenga, Naomi Tinlin:** Implemented digital systems, EV transition projects, and sustainability programmes.
- **Wanida Coley:** Led the relocation of the main entrance and delivery area upgrade, improving operational flow and reducing disruption by 25%.
- **Trevor Francis:** Initiated a sustainability project on waste segregation, reducing landfill waste and improving environmental compliance.
- **Victoria Higginson:** Contributed to fire standards and commercial contract reviews, ensuring compliance and reducing risk.
- **Zoe Wilkinson:** Led the second phase of a culture change programme, strengthening engagement and team alignment.
- **Whairigail Lynch:** Managed multiple stakeholder projects, including a £100k contract reinstatement, securing revenue and client confidence.

Signature projects: Blue Kite remobilisation, Stop Hunger charity initiatives, NUFC Women's catering service mobilisation, EV fleet electrification.

Leadership Development

Learners demonstrated growth in decision-making, coaching, emotional intelligence, and operational leadership, often stepping into interim roles.

Applied models: Lewin, Kotter, ADKAR, DISC, 360° feedback, GROW, Wheel of Life, Thomas-Kilmann, STAR interview techniques.

Example outcomes

- Improved HR and operational decision-making.
- Increased confidence in leading cross-functional projects.
- Mentoring peers and developing team capability.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Learners such as Alessia Pilleri, Adrianne Jones, Alasdair Cairns, and Bradley Hubble expanded influence across Sodexo and client stakeholders.
- Delivered presentations, led audits, and managed supplier or contractor governance.
- Increased stakeholder confidence and strengthened contract performance.

HIGHLIGHTS & BUSINESS IMPACT

Cultural Impact

- Emphasis on inclusive leadership, mental health awareness, and neurodiversity.
- Participation in wellbeing initiatives, workshops, and coaching programmes.
- Learners such as Christine Morrison, Charlotte Butler-Henderson, and Laurent Ladeveze championed team wellbeing and engagement.



Line Manager Feedback

Line managers consistently reported:

- Visible growth in confidence, resilience, and strategic thinking.
- Positive impact on team morale, retention, and performance.
- Trust in learners to manage independently, reducing reliance on senior oversight.

"She's gone from coming to me with problems to coming to me with solutions."

William Mackie, on Whairigail Lynch

"Warren is regularly coaching and mentoring his team. He's leading change initiatives and supporting others to grow."

Jonathan Ball, on Warren Human

"Aaron Millard is confident leading cross-functional projects and handling HR investigations independently."

HIGHLIGHTS & BUSINESS IMPACT

Aaron Millard

- **ROI & Impact:** Achieved **annual savings of approximately £6.5k** from licence, hosting, and support fees. **Indirectly recovered 30–40 hours per term** through streamlined administrative and technical tasks. Redeployed four roles from reactive support to proactive work, while structured offboarding mitigated potential GDPR, refund, and system downtime risks (**£2–3k avoided**).
- **Key Highlights:** Created a replicable framework for future digital system offboardings, ensuring operational continuity and long-term efficiency and compliance.

Julian Weresch

- **ROI & Impact:** **Strengthened customer experience and loyalty** through consistent, high-quality service, **improved operational efficiency, and reduced waste costs**. Enhanced staff engagement and retention through structured training programs.
- **Key Highlights:** Developed Coffee Champions and Centres of Excellence to upskill teams, creating a replicable framework for service excellence and scalable internal capability.

Luis Alberto

- **ROI & Impact:** Delivered **58–83% cost savings** per move by executing relocations in-house (£1,755–£5,847 per 20-person move). Improved operational efficiency with weekend moves, enhanced staff skills, and maintained quality, compliance, and oversight.
- **Key Highlights:** Established a CREW model for internal moves, providing a scalable, repeatable approach that reduces dependency on external contractors while increasing operational flexibility and revenue potential.

Samantha Holden

- **ROI & Impact:** Reactivated external bookings, **generating new revenue streams** for the University and Sodexo, with only £400 in additional costs. **Streamlined booking processes, reduced administrative effort**, improved coordination, and ensured smooth service delivery.
- **Key Highlights:** Built a replicable framework for event management, strengthening stakeholder engagement, leadership, and problem-solving capabilities while improving customer experience and operational resilience.

HIGHLIGHTS & BUSINESS IMPACT

Wanida Coley

- **ROI & Impact:** Increased retail sales through seasonal menu refreshes, **achieving operational efficiency gains** (15% reduced preparation time) and managing sustainability through reduced food waste. Maintained service continuity despite equipment and staffing challenges.
- **Key Highlights:** Leveraged data-driven tools (DRIVE, LEANPATH) for menu planning and resource optimisation, while building team capability and confidence, enhancing customer satisfaction and brand reputation.

Warren Human

- **ROI & Impact:** Centralised temperature and humidity qualification improved regulatory compliance and reduced risk of non-compliance. Consolidation enabled operational efficiency, optimised resource allocation (2 FTEs), and standardised processes across the site. **Provided financial clarity with a projected cost of £147,425 and 3,248 working hours annually.**
- **Key Highlights:** Strengthened stakeholder engagement, supported phased implementation, and created a scalable, future-ready solution. Rigorous data-driven analysis grounded decisions in compliance and operational realities, while lessons learned inform continuous improvement.

Collective ROI

- **Financial impact:** Cost savings and efficiencies identified across licensing, labour, outsourcing, and operational processes.
- **Operational improvements:** Standardised practices, streamlined workflows, and data-driven decision-making reduced risk, improved continuity, and increased capacity for value-adding activities.
- **Customer & staff experience:** Enhanced service quality, engagement, and satisfaction across both internal and external stakeholders.
- **Scalability & sustainability:** Frameworks and processes established by each learner enable replication, long-term efficiency, and continuous learning.
- **Professional development:** Learners enhanced strategic thinking, project planning, risk management, and stakeholder engagement skills, demonstrating tangible contribution to organisational goals.

MASTERCLASS OUTCOMES & LEARNER FEEDBACK

The Masterclass continue to deliver substantial outcomes across leadership, management, and operational skills, with strong evidence of both personal and organisational impact. Feedback from learners and line managers shows that the sessions are not only developing confident, capable leaders, but also driving measurable improvements in productivity, planning, and communication.

1

Leadership, Resilience, and Soft Skills

Learners report significant growth in confidence, self-awareness, and leadership capability. The sessions continue to strengthen:

- Resilient, emotionally intelligent leadership and inclusive management approaches.
- Coaching, mentoring, and performance management techniques using GROW, STAR, and the Wheel of Life models.
- Conflict management, negotiation, active listening, and empowerment of teams.
- Greater understanding of neurodiversity, adaptability, and the value of diverse perspectives in leadership.

Several learners specifically mentioned how the coaching guidance, resilience-building activities, and leadership tools have helped them manage performance and motivate their teams more effectively. Many also described feeling “more like a manager” — confident, structured, and capable of leading through change.

2

Practical Application & Operational Impact

Across cohorts, there is consistent evidence of learning being applied directly to operational planning and project delivery. Recent feedback highlights that apprentices are using:

- **Structured project management tools**, including Work Breakdown Structures, RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) models, Gantt charts, Kanban boards, and Cost-Benefit Analyses to plan and execute projects more efficiently.
- **Strategic frameworks** like PESTLE analysis, Risk Radar, 6 Thinking Hats, and decision trees to anticipate risks and prioritise effectively.
- **Operational planning tools**, SMART objectives, and prioritisation techniques to manage workloads and align team goals with organisational outcomes.
- **Budgeting and performance** monitoring tools to set KPIs, measure impact, and improve financial and operational decision-making.

Learners consistently report immediate practical impact — completing operational plans, rolling out new policies within their teams, and applying structured planning methods to improve communication and delivery. Many describe being better equipped to “spot risks early and find solutions without losing focus”, helping ensure continuity and resilience across operations.

MASTERCLASS OUTCOMES & LEARNER FEEDBACK

3

Professional Growth & Organisational Benefits

Line managers continue to see tangible behavioural and performance improvements among participants, citing:

- Increased productivity and immediate application of newly learned skills.
- Improved communication, time management, and resilience.
- Stronger team motivation and collaboration, with apprentices mentoring and supporting peers.
- Fresh perspectives, creativity, and diversity of thought being brought into daily operations.
- Enhanced employee engagement and retention through visible growth and recognition.

Managers also noted that apprentices are now contributing to smoother operations, better client engagement, and more structured problem-solving — all key to Sodexo's operational excellence and contract retention goals.

Learner Feedback

Learners rated the masterclasses highly, with the latest cohort averaging **9.2** out of **10** for satisfaction. The comments show a mix of enthusiasm, practicality, and genuine reflection:

- "Today's learning has helped me understand things better and feel more confident in my role. It's made it easier for me to work with my team, and together we can get things done more smoothly."
- "By setting SMART goals and KPIs, I can now measure performance more effectively."
- "The RACI model, cost-benefit analysis, and risk planning exercises were extremely useful — I'll use them for upcoming projects."
- "Guidance around coaching will be invaluable; it's helping me support my team in a more empowering way."
- "I've gained a deeper understanding of project management and operational planning, and I've already implemented a new operational plan at my site."
- "The content was engaging and very current — the tools and models are practical and easy to apply."
- "Great tutor, well-paced, very informative and relevant."

MASTERCLASS OUTCOMES & LEARNER FEEDBACK

Line Manager Feedback

Line managers highlighted the positive effects on both individual learners and wider teams:

- “They have demonstrated marked improvement in soft skills, productivity, and leadership behaviours.”
- “We’ve seen fresh ideas, increased motivation, and practical application of learning to real projects.”
- “The programme provides structured development and exceptional organisational value.”

Managers rated their likelihood of recommending the apprenticeship to colleagues at an average **8.7** out of **10**, reflecting strong endorsement of the programme’s value.

Overall Impact

The Masterclass programmes have:

- Developed leadership, project management, and operational skills that directly contribute to Sodexo’s business objectives.
- Enhanced learner confidence, capability, and engagement.
- Delivered measurable benefits, including improved project delivery, team performance, and application of strategic tools.
- Supported organisational goals such as employee retention, diversity, inclusion, and operational efficiency.

Feedback confirms that the masterclasses equip learners with actionable knowledge, practical tools, and confidence to drive results—supporting both personal development and measurable business outcomes.

Overall, learners describe the masterclasses as transformative, practical, and empowering. They’re gaining not just theoretical knowledge, but real-world tools that make them stronger leaders and more effective contributors to Sodexo’s wider goals of operational excellence, growth, and team development.

IMPACT OF LEARNING PROGRAMMES ON SODEXO PRIORITIES

The apprenticeship and masterclass programmes are driving tangible impact across Sodexo's strategic priorities of growth, contract retention, and operational excellence, while reinforcing the 4 Ps framework:

Operational Excellence, Growth & Contract Retention: Learners are applying structured project and operational planning tools, including SMART objectives, Gantt charts, Kanban boards, and prioritisation of organisational activities. Masterclasses on problem-solving, root cause analysis, Six Thinking Hats, and decision trees are equipping managers with frameworks to tackle challenges proactively. Line manager feedback consistently highlights improvements in productivity, communication, time management, and resilience. Learners are implementing change thoughtfully and supporting teams through adaptation, creating operational consistency, enhancing service delivery, and reinforcing client confidence – all critical to retaining contracts and demonstrating excellence.



People

Leadership, coaching, mentoring, resilience, emotional intelligence, and inclusivity are being actively developed. Learners report mentoring colleagues and sharing knowledge, while line manager feedback confirms positive behavioural changes and enhanced team engagement. This contributes to motivated, high-performing teams and improved employee retention, reflecting Sodexo's people-first approach.



Planet

Sustainability initiatives, such as Trevor Francis' project on waste segregation, show employees applying their learning to embed environmentally responsible practices in real-world operations, supporting Sodexo's Planet priorities.



Places

Operational improvements, including Wanida Coley's relocation of entrances and delivery area upgrades, and Victoria Higginson's work on fire standards and contract reviews, create safer, more efficient, and well-organised workplaces. Learners' application of operational planning and change management further strengthens site-level performance.



Partners

Learners are enhancing stakeholder management, negotiation, and communication skills, which improves client-facing interactions and collaborative working. Line manager feedback highlights that apprentices bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas, strengthening partnerships and reinforcing Sodexo's reputation for excellence.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS



100% of learners applied learning to real workplace projects.



80+ strategic initiatives delivered across sites, spanning operational, sustainability, and HR projects.



Tangible savings and operational improvements: £22k annual supplier savings, £8k/month security budget optimisation, 50% water reduction.



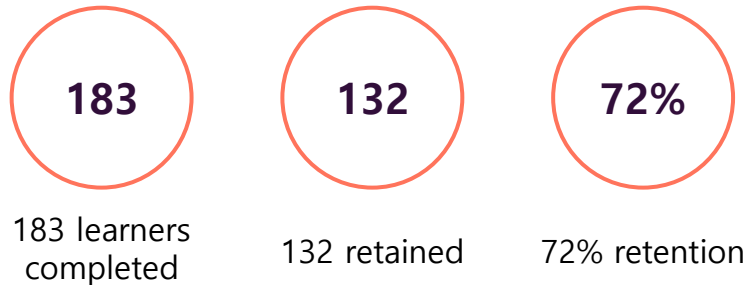
Multiple learners took on additional responsibilities or interim leadership roles.



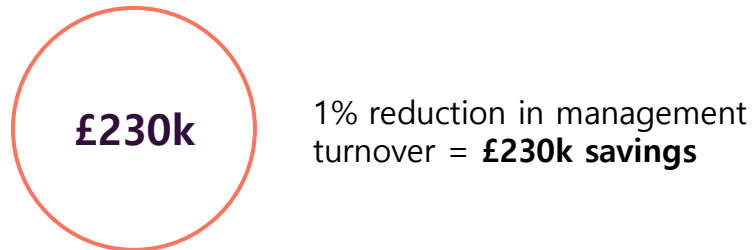
All learners demonstrated growth in communication, leadership, and project management capabilities.

RETENTION, INTERNAL MOBILITY & LEADERSHIP ROI

Retention of Developed Talent



Turnover Cost Impact



Grow with Sodexo is strengthening Sodexo's leadership pipeline, stabilising teams, and delivering significant cost avoidance through higher retention and internal progression.

- **72% retention of developed talent** protects operational capability and reduces dependency on recruitment in a high-turnover sector.
- **Retention-driven ROI:** Even a conservative 5% reduction in turnover attributable to the programme equates to **£1.15m** in annual cost avoidance.
- The retention of **132 skilled leaders** represents **£1m–£2.6m** in avoided replacement, onboarding and productivity-loss costs.
- **Internal mobility is rising**, with senior leader transitions now almost 1:1 internal vs external—directly supporting Sodexo's promote-from-within ambition.
- Learners are stepping into **interim leadership**, driving strategic projects, and improving site performance, contributing to contract retention and operational resilience.
- Programmes directly support Sodexo's priorities around **People, Partners, Places and Planet**, embedding inclusive leadership, sustainability initiatives and stronger client engagement.



The programme is delivering **£1m+** in annual retention savings while building a sustainable, ready-now leadership pipeline that strengthens operational excellence across Sodexo.

Conclusion

Sodexo's investment in leadership and management development through Instep is delivering strong ROI and business impact. Learners are driving measurable improvements across projects, cross-functional collaboration, and stakeholder engagement.

Programmes are fostering a culture of accountability, innovation, and inclusive leadership—key drivers for Sodexo's continued success. The readiness of emerging leaders indicates a sustainable pipeline for future strategic growth, ensuring operational excellence and cultural resilience across the organisation.

