

Company Profile

<i>Company name, address</i>	Happy Cityside House 40 Adler Street London E1 1EE
<i>Contact Person (name, e-mail, tel.)</i>	Debbie King
<i>City/Country</i>	London, UK
<i>Activity</i>	training



<p><i>Description of core business</i></p>	<p><i>max 300 characters (no spaces)</i> Happy has established itself at the forefront of innovative and quality training in the UK by putting the interests of their stakeholders first in the short-term, above immediate profit. The culture of the company is to provide a wider benefit - to those who work here; to those we work for and to those beyond the company who we can help. We are dedicated to using our skills and resources to have a positive effect on the community. The current aim is for no less than 20% of profits to be recycled into the community.</p> <p>We are the leading provider of desktop computer training to the public and voluntary sectors in London.</p> <p>Our mission is to create new ways of training & empowering people to reach their full potential. We seek to create an enjoyable environment in which students can relax, make mistakes and learn in a supportive environment. We run our courses at our centre in Aldgate, where we have 12 training rooms, but also at clients' sites and other training venues across the UK. As well as our standard courses, we provide customised and bespoke courses to many of our clients across all sectors.</p> <p>Happy e-learning - our online creation, is arguably the leading e-learning provider in the UK. We won the largest e-learning procurement to take place in Europe.</p> <p>The focus of Happy e-learning has always been on effective learning from the beginning we have promoted blended now accepted as the way to make e-learning succeed.</p> <p>Happy people are the management and personal development arm of Happy. Its aim is to help organisations create great places to work. We run courses such as "Create a Great Place to Work", "Supportive Manager", "emotional Intelligence", "Positive Organisations, Positive Staff", and also provide tailored courses and one to one coaching.</p>
<p><i>Year of foundation</i></p>	<p>1987</p>
<p><i>No employees 2006</i></p>	<p>40</p>
<p><i>Annual turnover 2006 (in EUR)</i></p>	<p>3.6 M Euros</p>

<i>Website</i>	www.happy.co.uk
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Good practice description

<i>Issue(s)</i>	<i>See the table below</i>
<i>Description</i>	<i>what actions did we take and who was involved (max 2.000 characters - no spaces)</i>
<i>Why did we take action and business benefit</i>	<i>in bullets (max 300 characters NS)</i>
<i>Benefit for society/stakeholders</i>	<i>in bullets (max 300 characters NS)</i>
<i>Awards, standards</i>	<i>Connected to CSR</i>
<i>Communication with public</i>	<i>Whom and how we communicated our CSR activities (max 1.500 characters NS)</i>
<i>Plans for the future</i>	<i>regarding CSR activities (max 1.500 characters NS)</i>



Auxiliary table: ISSUES, COVERED BY CASES OF GOOD PRACTICE

<p><i>Marketplace issues</i></p>	<p>Five years ago we looked at how to maximise our impact and decided the best route was through leveraging our skills and resources. We have since carried out a range of projects to use our skills to bring wider benefit. One example is working with the homeless unemployed. If we worked directly with them, we would have limited impact (and we don't have experience of dealing with the challenges of this client group). So instead we provided a free training programme to trainers in six charities working with the homeless unemployed. We increased their IT knowledge and developed their training skills with the aim of ensuring a homeless unemployed individual in central London would get the same quality of training as a city executive.</p> <p>We are now focused on intensive one day activities to help small charities make the most of their IT, as trainers found it hard to arrange longer projects. Charities sign up on the Happy web site, stating the help they need. Any time there is a cancellation or a trainer has a free day, the operations manager gets the trainer to select a charity from the waiting list (based on skills match and which they are personally motivated to help) and the day is delivered.</p> <p>We are currently delivering 5 timebank days a month, with real impact on the charities involved. For the trainers it is taking them out of thinking about software in theory and seeing the live uses and challenges organisations face. All who have taken part have found it strongly motivating:</p> <p>"It was an invaluable insight of how people use software to do their job. It gave me a different perspective of the software in a "live" environment and was a really useful exercise." Chris Baxendale, trainer</p> <p>Each project completed by a member of staff is also reviewed in their six monthly appraisals, to assess the skills and benefits learnt and how we can improve things for the future.</p>
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<p><i>Workplace issues</i></p>	<p>We actively support the governments' campaign to get people back onto public transport and cycling. To this end we provide season ticket loans, have a cycle allowance for all members of staff who cycle to and from work, mileage allowance for cyclists and people are able to purchase bikes through the company at a reduced cost. The only car parking spaces we have at our offices are reserved for disabled visitors.</p> <p>We use local and environmentally friendly suppliers. We use fair trade products wherever possible, all our drinks are fair-trade, our water supplier for our drinks cooler are a charity and chocolate at exhibitions We regularly review our energy suppliers and actively encourage staff to switch off lights and pc's that are not in use. Sadly, we are not aware of any fair trade computers yet!</p> <p>Our positive impact on society is at the core of everything we do, and not just a community programme based on a % of profit. For Happy, the real test is including that positive impact in our core business decisions.</p> <p>The greatest impact most companies have on society comes from how they treat their customers, their staff and their suppliers. Happy has proven (in national awards) to be among the very best for customer service and for creating a great place to work and we ensure we treat our suppliers well and seek to pay them ahead of time. Also, we have a programme to benefit the community beyond our core business but it is on the basis of our holistic approach, covering every aspect of the business, that we are nominating ourselves for this award.</p> <p>We also undertake a range of charity activities to both benefit the community and Happy, normally in skills development of our people, from donating 4% of our profits in cash to sending trainers to Africa to create sustainable training centres to intensive days with local charities to support and impact their use of IT. We aim to thus maximise the effect we can have and to help our trainers with real-life experience that will make our course even better.</p>
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Community issues

Our core belief and the focus of our management is that 'people work best when they feel good about themselves'. The Financial Times rated Happy as the best company for work/life balance in the UK. Despite growth and increased profitability, it has been crucial to maintain the same positive environment.

We focus on making sure we really are improving people's abilities. We return to clients three months after a course to survey whether the new skills have impacted on their job (in 96% of cases they have, with students reporting an average 17 minute-a-day productivity gain from a one day course.). We have developed a new framework, Learner Focused Training, to focus all our trainers on the needs of our learners.

Accessibility, too, is a core part of our service, from redesign of our online learning to employment of a deaf trainer to deliver in British Sign Language as well as training of blind trainers.

The commitment to positive impact comes from the top of the company, and especially from the founder and Chief Executive Henry Stewart. He advocates this approach externally and internally, in the fortnightly email to all staff and in the weekly staff meetings.

When Happy took on an external investor, two years ago, the investor included a clause in the agreement limiting the contribution to society to 10% of profit. We argued that all our contributions are on the basis of mutual benefit and to limit our contribution was to limit the benefits to the business. The clause now only limits cash contributions.

In every decision we make at Happy we seek to take account of the impact on society. To hit home this message, the Chief Executive joins new recruits at the Induction day to play corporate scruples. Staff is presented with real-life challenges and discusses what to do, the message being that at Happy you take the principled approach.

There are no separate positions for corporate responsibility, as it is expected to be part of everybody's work. A dedicated team is responsible for ensuring the success of the time bank. All managers are upwardly appraised, and both quality of service and how supportive they are of others are key elements.

Positive impact is integral to our business plan, which was developed by a group of staff with discussion and agreement at the weekly staff meeting. New staff is trained in our principled approach and how this affects all our work.

Example: One fairly new member of staff recently felt confident to say no to Esso as a client (on the basis of their negative impact on climate change) without even seeking approval. Other companies that we have refused to work with include Nestle and British American Tobacco.

The first four elements in our current (nine point) business plan are 'customer service quality', 'changing the world of work', 'community' and 'accessibility': all relate to positive impact on society. The community element aims to 'be an example to others' and to 'make a difference in the world'.

Over 50% of Happy's clients are charities. These receive a 35% discount on our standard price. Our core business is therefore making charities more effective by better use of their IT.

One non-charity example is our ECDL project in the NHS. There we have carried out online surveys to measure the impact of our training. Nurses who have taken part have gained 8% in productivity from their new skills. It is estimated that if every nurse in the UK went through this programme (as the Royal Society of Nursing is encouraging) then the productivity gain would be the equivalent of

<p><i>Environmental issues</i></p>	<p>One target is, for this year, to achieve 10% of profit directed at the community.</p> <p>In 2002 and 2003 Happy's contribution (using the % Club framework) represented 43% and 26% of profits respectively. However our profits were not too high at that time.</p> <p>With profit set to reach 12% of turnover this year, a sum of £250,000, reaching this % is more of a challenge. The aim this year is to contribute 10% of profits (4% in cash, 6% in-kind) with a longer term target of returning to 20%. And profits are targeted to double in 2006.</p> <p>Our key stakeholders define our approach. For example, in the Timebank project, each charity states what it needs. We discuss this and deliver to meet the IT targets they have set for their organisation and for this work.</p> <p>Through the fortnightly Chief Executive's email and the weekly staff meeting, trainers' meetings and timebank feedback meetings. In the African visits, trainers have emailed regular diaries and on their return we hold a whole-company meeting for them to present on their experience.</p> <p>Happy works closely with other partners to learn and develop its approach. RNID has been crucial in our BSL-delivery project (see below). BCAB has helped us with understanding the needs of blind trainers. PADEAP has enabled us to deliver great projects in Africa. We are clear where we are the experts (understanding how people learn) and actively learning in all other areas. Happy donates 4% of profit to charities. This amount has increased hugely in recent years as profits have risen. In the last year this has included £1,500 for rainforest endowment, £3,000 to Childline and a commitment to match fund-raising projects from staff. In addition a £75 charity cheque is given to each member of staff for them to give to a charity of their choice.</p> <p>The aim here is not focus on one charity but to maximise involvement and commitment of staff.</p> <p>Happy has been paying the equivalent of a carbon tax for 16 years, long before the concept gained wide acceptance. This takes the form of an endowment of one acre of rainforest for every 50 courses run. This was initially with the Programme for Belize, then the World Wildlife Fund and, for the last three years, with the Rainforest Foundation.</p> <p>We are currently actively reviewing energy use, waste and other environmental impact to seek further improvement.</p> <p>Happy now ensures all our computers are recycled for community use. In the last year ten computers have gone to three small local charities and around 55 to a social enterprise that plans to distribute them to poor households in Tower Hamlets and Newham.</p> <p>We have also influenced suppliers. Our hosting company Rackspace has set up free hosting for charities, launched a timebank similar to Happy's and is actively engaged with local charities as a direct result of the inspiration from Happy.</p>
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