F-TEC – Open Minds

F-TEC Newsletter September/October 2026

What is F-TEC Open Minds?

Welcome to Open Minds, a bimonthly newsletter from F-TEC promoting awareness, wellbeing, and shared values in our community.

In this edition, we focus on resilience, responsibility, positive choices, and looking ahead. We explore realistic goals, healthy routines, effective communication, and supporting your wellbeing at work and in learning. Through practical advice and real-life examples, we aim to help you stay motivated, make positive choices, and move forward with confidence.

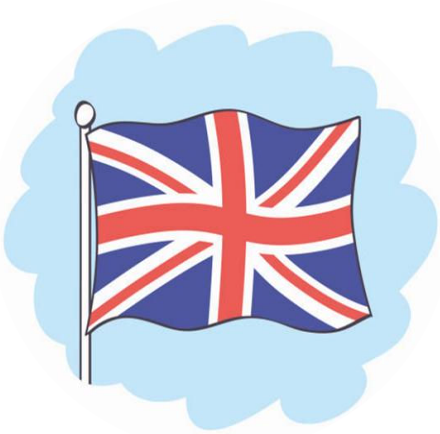
Our aim is simple: to keep you informed, support wellbeing, celebrate diversity, and create a safe, inclusive environment for everyone.

Fundamental British Values

British Values guide how we treat others, make decisions, and create safe, respectful communities at F-TEC, in the workplace, and beyond. They are shown through our everyday actions and behaviours.

Democracy in Action

- Speak up respectfully and listen to others
- Take part in feedback, meetings, or reviews
- Support fair decision-making



Rule of Law in Action

- Follow workplace and training rules
- Take responsibility for your actions
- Report concerns through the correct channels

Individual Liberty in Action

- Express yourself safely and respectfully
- Make informed choices about your behaviour
- Respect others' rights and identities

Mutual Respect in Action

- Speak politely and professionally avoiding offensive language or jokes
- Respect boundaries, consent and treat everyone fairly

Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs in Action

- Be open-minded toward different cultures and beliefs
- Avoid assumptions or stereotypes
- Support inclusive environments and work respectfully alongside others

Living by these values helps create a safe, positive environment where everyone can learn, work, and succeed.

Fresh Starts & Positive Mindset

September can feel like a new beginning. You may be returning to a familiar routine, starting a new stage of your apprenticeship, taking on different responsibilities, or thinking about what you want to achieve next.

A fresh start does not mean everything has to change at once. Small, realistic steps can make a big difference.



Starting Strong - A positive start can include:

- Setting a few realistic goals
- Getting organised for the weeks ahead
- Being open to learning new things
- Asking questions when you are unsure
- Identifying what you want to improve
- Recognising what you are already doing well

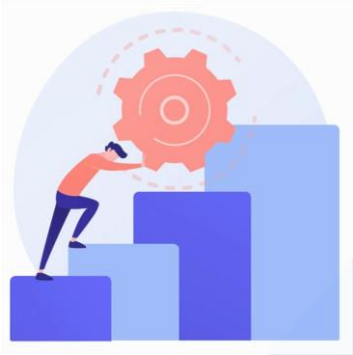
You do not need to have everything figured out. Progress comes from taking one step at a time.

Building Resilience

Resilience is the ability to cope with challenges, recover from setbacks, and keep moving forward. Everyone experiences difficult days, mistakes, disappointments, or situations that do not go according to plan. Resilience does not mean pretending that everything is fine. It means finding constructive ways to respond.

You can build resilience by:

- Learning from mistakes rather than focusing only on them
- Talking to someone when things feel difficult
- Breaking larger problems into smaller steps
- Staying focused on what you can control
- Recognising your achievements and progress
- Giving yourself time to adjust to change



A setback does not have to define what happens next.

Try this - Think about one challenge you have faced recently. Ask yourself:

- What happened?
- What did I learn?
- What could I do differently next time?

Reflecting on experiences can help turn challenges into learning opportunities.

Taking Responsibility

As you develop in your apprenticeship and workplace, taking responsibility becomes increasingly important. Being responsible is not about being perfect. It means understanding your role, following through on commitments, and recognising how your choices affect other people.

Responsibility at Work - This can include:

- Arriving on time and being prepared
- Completing tasks to the best of your ability
- Communicating if you are going to be late or unable to complete something
- Following workplace procedures
- Looking after equipment and resources
- Accepting feedback professionally
- Asking for help when you need it



Being reliable helps build trust with colleagues, supervisors, and other people you work with.

Healthy Routines & Wellbeing

Our routines can affect how we feel, work, learn, and manage pressure. A healthy routine does not need to be complicated. Small habits can support your physical and emotional wellbeing.

Simple habits that can help

- Get enough rest where possible
- Eat regularly and stay hydrated
- Make time to move and be active
- Take breaks when appropriate
- Keep a manageable routine
- Make time for things you enjoy
- Stay connected with people you trust
- Give yourself time to switch off



Looking after yourself is not a distraction from success. It can help you have the energy and focus to manage everyday responsibilities.

Managing a Busy Week

When everything feels like it needs doing at once, try making a short list and deciding what needs attention first.



Urgent: What needs dealing with today?
Important: What needs planning?
Later: What can wait?

Breaking things down can make responsibilities feel more manageable.

Communication & Positive Relationships

Good communication is an important part of work, learning, friendships, and everyday life. Communication is not only about what you say. It also includes listening, body language, tone, and how you respond to other people.

Communicating Well - Try to:

- Listen without interrupting
- Ask questions if you do not understand
- Think before responding
- Be respectful, even when you disagree
- Choose appropriate language
- Give others an opportunity to speak
- Explain concerns calmly



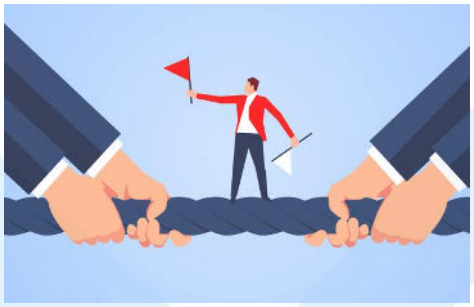
You will not always agree with everyone. Respectful communication helps people work through differences without making situations worse.

Managing Conflict

Disagreements can happen anywhere. A small issue can sometimes become a bigger problem when people do not communicate clearly.

If you find yourself in a difficult situation:

1. Take a moment before reacting.
2. Try to understand what has happened.
3. Speak calmly and respectfully.
4. Focus on the issue rather than attacking the person.
5. Look for a practical solution.
6. Ask someone you trust for support if needed.

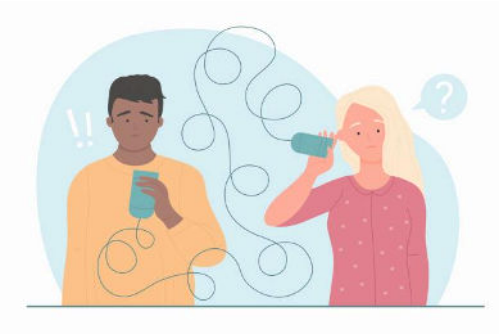


If a situation feels unsafe, inappropriate, or serious, use the correct reporting or safeguarding channels rather than trying to manage it alone.

Jack's Story: Learning from a Difficult Conversation

Jack noticed that a colleague had become frustrated about how tasks were being shared at work. Instead of ignoring the situation or responding angrily, Jack decided to have a calm conversation.

Jack explained how the situation appeared from his perspective and then listened to the other person's concerns. He realised that there had been a misunderstanding about who was responsible for certain tasks. After discussing it, they agreed on a clearer way of communicating responsibilities in future.



Jack learned that difficult conversations do not always have to become arguments. Listening, staying respectful, and focusing on finding a solution can help prevent a small problem from becoming a bigger one.

Good communication is about being heard — but it is also about being willing to listen.

Looking Ahead: Your Goals & Future

It can be easy to focus on what needs to be done today and forget to think about where you want to go next. Your apprenticeship is an opportunity to develop skills, gain experience, and learn more about your strengths and interests.

Think About Your Next Steps - Ask yourself:

- What skills would I like to improve?
- What am I enjoying most about my work?
- What would I like to learn next?
- What feedback have I received?
- What could I do to prepare for my next opportunity?
- Where would I like my career to take me?



Your plans may change as you gain experience. That is okay. Having goals gives you something to work towards, while staying flexible allows you to respond to new opportunities.

Small Steps Can Lead to Big Progress

You do not need to achieve everything at once. Choose one goal and make it specific.

Instead of: "I want to get better at work."
Try: "I will ask for feedback on one task this month and use it to identify one area I can improve."

Small, achievable actions can help turn an idea into progress.

Wellbeing & Support

If you're feeling unsure, pressured, or affected by anything in or outside of work, it's important to remember that support is available. Reaching out for advice, asking questions, or talking to someone you trust can help you make informed and safe decisions.

Mental Health & Emotional Support

- **Samaritans** – Free, confidential support, 24/7
  116 123 | samaritans.org
- **Shout** – 24/7 text support if you're feeling overwhelmed
  Text **SHOUT** to **85258**
- **Mind** – Mental health information and support
  mind.org.uk

Money & Scam Support

- **Citizens Advice** – Advice on money, scams, and personal issues
  citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Action Fraud** – Reporting fraud and cybercrime
  0300 123 2040

Online Safety Support

- **Internet Matters** – Advice about online safety and digital wellbeing
  internetmatters.org
- **UK Safer Internet Centre** – Online safety information and reporting support
  saferinternet.org.uk

Respect, Bullying & Relationships

- **Victim Support** – Support for people affected by crime or difficult situations
  08 08 16 89 111 | victimsupport.org.uk
- **Respect** – Advice about healthy relationships and behaviour
  respect.uk.net

Designated Safeguarding Lead –

Arizona Sykes
Emergency Mobile: 07425 783919
Office: 01793 384449
Arizona.Sykes@f-tec.org.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead –

Wendy Cooke
Office: 01793 384449
Accounts@f-tec.org.uk

