

Framework Skills Plan

Sueno

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1. Introduction

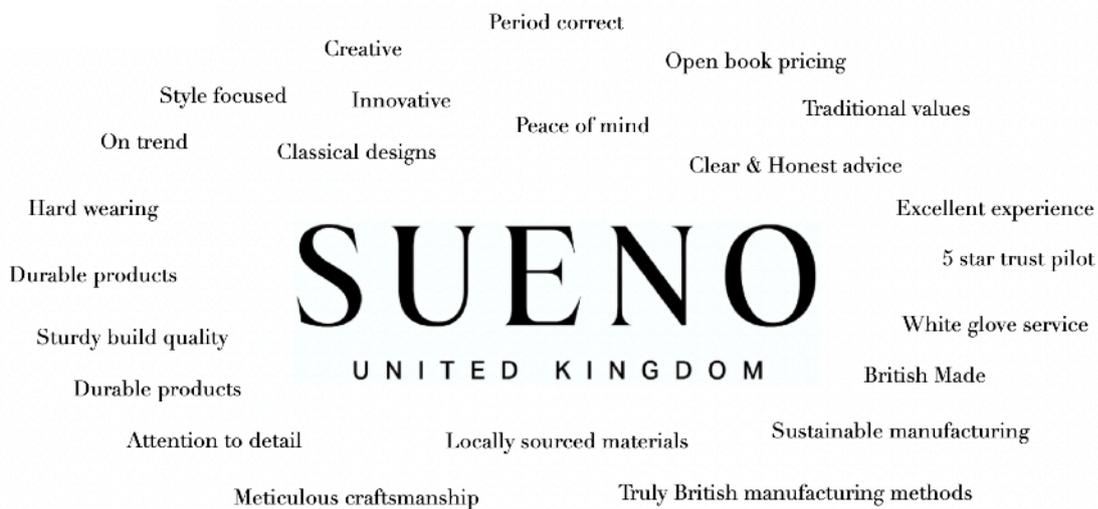
The Sueno Skills Framework sets a vision of realising the potential of Sueno’s old and new team by transforming skills, employability and aspiration, resulting in higher levels of business growth, employment and income.

Sueno is committed to fostering a positive change for our team and the local residents of our community by developing Sueno as a vibrant organisation in which people love to invest, work and visit. This Framework is a starting point for achieving that ambition. However Sueno cannot achieve this by working alone and is committed to work with the key public, private and community partners to tackle the challenges ahead.

2. Sueno, the brand

Sueno is a growing independent, family run business that has been handcrafting beds and mattress in the heart of Yorkshire for over 30 years, up to the devastating fire in 2021, was one of fastest growing bed e-tailer in the UK.

Sueno’s ethos celebrates unique style and showcases who our customers are and their expression of individuality. Taking pride in designing and tailoring quality bedroom furniture for our valued customer.



3. Sueno, the team

Asif Ayub, a dynamic entrepreneur and the creative director behind Sueno Beds, Matza & Co Ltd, and the Highgate group of companies, commands a successful enterprise deeply rooted in the vibrant landscape of West Yorkshire. Hailing from the region, Asif's journey is a seamless blend of his artistic flair and entrepreneurial drive, a fusion that defines his distinctive approach.

The genesis of Sueno is a testament to Asif's commitment to quality craftsmanship and serves as a prime example of his role as the driving force behind its ascension to excellence in the online beds space. By marrying his artistic sensibilities with astute business acumen, Asif has strategically positioned Sueno as a pioneering force within its industry.

Sueno's success is underscored by its adept delivery of innovative solutions, particularly in the realm of bed e-retailing. The company's unwavering commitment to quality, coupled with Asif's keen understanding of market trends, propels it ahead in a competitive landscape.

Beyond the confines of the boardroom, Asif emerges as a proactive advocate for community engagement and corporate social responsibility. His initiatives extend beyond mere business success, enhancing the enterprises' standing in the business world while solidifying Asif's reputation as a forward-thinking leader dedicated to artistic expression and the betterment of West Yorkshire's local community.

Ebrahim Sacha, fondly known as Johnny, assumes the directorial role at Sueno Beds Ltd, drawing inspiration from his upbringing in the close-knit community of Dewsbury. Johnny's ascent in the bedding industry traces a diverse career, beginning in the fast-paced world of fashion and culminating in managerial positions at the prestigious luxury retailer, Harvey Nichols.

Today, at the helm of Sueno Beds Ltd, Johnny not only orchestrates the operation but also exhibits exceptional leadership and management skills. His dynamic approach encompasses spearheading innovative marketing campaigns and meticulously overseeing production, logistics, and delivery, ensuring Sueno Beds stands out prominently in the online retail landscape.

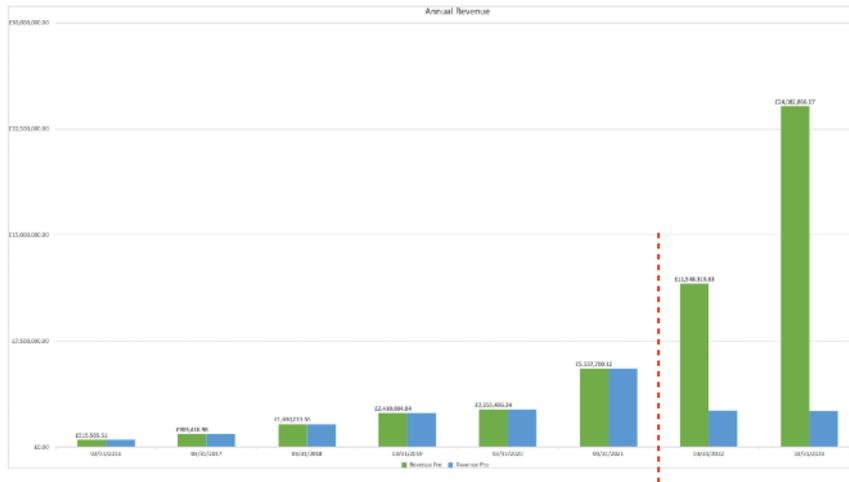
Johnny's dedication to quality, deeply rooted in Dewsbury, manifests in the bespoke products curated by Sueno Beds, symbolising both entrepreneurial triumph and community pride. His dynamic leadership extends beyond elevating the company to new heights, establishing him as a respected figure in the dynamic realms of e-commerce and bespoke craftsmanship.

4. Timeline



5. Business Growth Plan

Growth has been intentionally staggered due to the post- fire circumstances.



Sueno Growth Plan Jan 2021

Objective: Position Sueno as a market leader in the UK bed and mattress industry through strategic expansion, enhanced customer experience, and increased market share as a direct-to-consumer (DTC) e-retailer.

1. Product Diversification and Innovation:

- Introduce a diverse range of bed and mattress products to cater to varying consumer needs and preferences.
- Invest in research and development for innovative, high-quality sleep solutions that set Sueno apart in the market. Work on this has already begun by engaging in conversation with University of Huddersfield for a Knowledge Transfer Partnership.

2. Digital Experience Enhancement:

- Optimise the online platform for seamless user experience, focusing on mobile responsiveness, intuitive navigation, and a user-friendly interface.
- Implement augmented reality tools for virtual product try-outs, providing customers with an interactive and personalised shopping experience.

3. Marketing and Branding Strategies:

- Launch targeted digital marketing campaigns to increase brand visibility and attract a wider consumer base.
- Leverage social media platforms for engaging content, customer testimonials, and influencer partnerships to enhance brand credibility.

4. Customer Engagement and Retention:

- Implement a robust customer relationship management (CRM) system for personalised communication and targeted promotions.

- Introduce loyalty programs, referral incentives, and exclusive offers to foster customer loyalty and repeat business.

5. Supply Chain Optimisation:

- Streamline the supply chain to ensure efficient production, inventory management, and timely deliveries.
- Explore sustainable sourcing practices and communicate eco-friendly initiatives to resonate with environmentally conscious consumers.
- Work closely with Jenny Hill, Kirklees Business team, who will make the introduction to RTC North and the new Supply Chain programme to benefit from free and advice on supply chain and sourcing.

6. Enhanced Customer Support:

- Invest in customer support infrastructure to provide timely and effective assistance to inquiries, concerns, and post-purchase support.
- Implement live chat, chatbots, and 24/7 customer service to enhance accessibility and responsiveness.

7. Partnerships and Collaborations:

- Form strategic partnerships with home and lifestyle influencers, interior designers, and home décor brands to expand Sueno's reach. For example, Laura Hammet and Sophie Patterson interiors.
- Collaborate with other businesses for cross-promotions and bundled offerings to create added value for customers.

8. Data Analytics for Informed Decision-Making:

- Implement advanced data analytics tools to gather insights into customer behaviour, preferences, and market trends.
- Utilise data-driven decision-making to refine marketing strategies, product offerings, and operational efficiency.

9. Community Engagement and CSR Initiatives:

- Engage with local communities through charitable initiatives and community partnerships to foster a positive brand image.
- Communicate Sueno's commitment to social responsibility and sustainability, aligning with consumer values.
- Work with Jenny Hill to work with the Councils Third Sector and Active Places & Citizens team to help make local connections with charities and community interest groups.

10. Continuous Adaptation and Agility:

- Stay attuned to industry trends, technological advancements, and changing consumer behaviours.
- Maintain a flexible and adaptive business model to swiftly respond to market dynamics and capitalise on emerging opportunities.

This comprehensive growth plan positions Sueno as a dynamic, customer-centric, and innovative direct to consumer e-retailer, fostering sustained success in the competitive UK bed and mattress market.

6. Identifying the skills shortage

In the UK bed manufacturing labor force, particularly in Kirklees, there is a notable skills shortage that hampers the workforce's full proficiency. Sueno addresses this challenge by providing in-house training to its staff, covering various essential skills. However, several areas still exhibit deficiencies:

- **Basic Literacy and Numeracy Skills:** A significant proportion of workers lack fundamental literacy and numeracy skills, posing challenges in tasks that require reading, understanding written instructions, and basic numerical abilities.
- **Technical Skills in Upholstery Crafts:** this specific gap is detrimental for Sueno, there is a need for enhanced technical skills in this specialised field.
- **Digital Skills:** In an era dominated by technology, there is a noticeable gap in digital skills, impacting various aspects of the manufacturing process, particularly for an online retailer like Sueno.
- **Management Skills:** The shortage extends to management skills, indicating a need for improvement in leadership and organisational abilities among supervisors and managers.
- **"Soft" / Interpersonal Skills:** The workforce exhibits a gap in soft or interpersonal skills, emphasising the importance of effective communication and collaboration within the team.

Historically, the bed manufacturing industry has faced a high rate of labor turnover. To counter this, Sueno implemented a comprehensive plan to empower its workforce. This strategy involves minimising skills gaps through training and shadowing opportunities across all facets of the business. This initiative has significantly reduced employee turnover in the past year, demonstrating its effectiveness. Sueno aims to build on this success, continually refining and expanding the approach to address evolving challenges.

All staff stand out as needing improvement in functional literacy and numeracy. Addressing these foundational skills is crucial for ensuring smooth operations on the manufacturing floor.

Furthermore, there is a pronounced lack of proficiency among managers, impacting business performance and overall workforce management and development. This gap becomes particularly critical during a growth phase, requiring Sueno to be more effective in responding to major challenges.

The prevalence of skills gaps in computer literacy and basic IT skills is notable, especially for an online retailer like Sueno. Bridging this gap is essential for managers and professional-level staff to enhance their effectiveness in an increasingly digital business environment. As Sueno continues to navigate challenges, addressing these skill shortages remains a priority for sustained growth and success, and aims to do this this work with the support provided by Council Employment & Skills

team. The team presently provides Literacy & Numeracy upskilling and is set to introduce a digital skills program.

The Council are also currently working with Kirklees College to deliver an apprenticeship specifically for the bed industry. Can you add a commitment that the business will help guide and shape this with the other partners.

7. Development Plan

Sueno envisions a transformative development strategy. This strategic approach integrates investment in skills, training, and education, coupled with robust employer support, fostering a diverse, inclusive, and highly skilled workforce. The ultimate goal is to catalyse sustained improvements in the quality of life for all involved.

Quality Technical Education: Sueno recognises the importance of technical education and is committed to providing clearly defined pathways that align with the evolving needs of employers. This ensures that individuals have meaningful choices, setting the stage for well-informed decisions that support personal ambitions.

Great Education Connected to Business: Sueno understands the crucial link between education and business. Learning experiences are intricately connected to the needs of the industry, preparing individuals for seamless integration into the workforce. Locally rooted careers information serves as a source of inspiration, guiding individuals toward informed choices that align with their aspirations.

Accessing and Progressing in Good Work: Sueno is dedicated to ensuring that everyone possesses the skills necessary to access good work. Through a commitment to equal support for workplace training, individuals are empowered to progress and develop transferable skills, fostering an environment of continuous learning and professional advancement. An example of this is how the current manufacturing workforce all have received training for all the different job functions.

Creating a Culture of Investment in Workforce Skills: The Council is collaborating with Kirklees College to introduce a bed industry focused apprenticeship. Sueno is committed to participating in this initiative and ensuring a collaborative effort by contributing valuable insights and expertise to foster a skilled workforce and support the growth of industry-specific apprenticeships.

Employer Skills Plans: Sueno stands at the forefront of a culture of investment in workforce skills. Every employee within the organisation adheres to a comprehensive skills plan, facilitating strategic investments at all levels. This commitment not only addresses reported skills gaps but also significantly enhances productivity at the firm level.

Driving Innovation and Productivity Through High-Level Skills: Sueno recognises the pivotal role of high-level skills in driving innovation and productivity. The company is dedicated to increasing the qualification levels of its staff, fostering a culture of enterprise and innovation. Resulting with a diverse and skilled workforce capable of meeting the demands of a dynamic market.

In summary, Sueno's development plan is intricately woven into the fabric of the community and industry it serves. Through strategic investments in education, skills, and workforce development, the company not only aims to meet the requirements of Section 106 and the Local Planning Authority but also contributes significantly to the creation of a thriving, inclusive, and skilled community, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for all.

7.1 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

A bi-annual update report will be made on the progress of work and achievements against the ESP (Employment and Skills Plan), to include the following:

- a) a review of the Sueno's achievements against the original ESP
- b) evidence of efforts made to achieve the goals, and
- c) any additional value-added contribution that Sueno was able to deliver as an enhancement to the contract ESP.

This progress monitoring report will be discuss and reviewed with the council Employment & Skills team every six months. These meetings will aim to monitor progress, make any adjustments if necessary and ensure that targets are being met.

8. Opportunities for new recruits

Approximate number and type of jobs that will be created AFTER the construction of the development.

	Job Objective	Job Roles	Approximate Number of New Jobs			
			Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Total New Jobs			14	25	58	29
Furniture Upholsterer	Develop and carry out upholstery skills to a high standard.	Prepare, cut and sew Identify, mark and resolve faults Quality checks to meet industry standards Written and verbal communication skills Meet budgets (materials and time) Define materials, construction methods and product specifications	6	10	20	10
Bed Framer	Develop and carry out bed framing skills to a high standard.	Prepare, cut and sew Identify, mark and resolve faults Quality checks to meet industry standards Written and verbal communication skills Meet budgets (materials and time) Define materials, construction methods and product specifications	3	2	5	3
Quality Control Analyst	Ensuring maximum output and efficiency whilst maintaining quality standards	Ensure 5S is implemented and sustained Understanding off quality Assurance systems knowledge HS&E standards and legal aspects	0	1	2	1

	Job Objective	Job Roles	Approximate Number of New Jobs			
			Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Supply Chain and Warehouse Operator	Develop skills required within a manufacturing and warehousing environment	Operate and handle equipment safely and efficiently Comply with regulations and processes for safely moving, handling, packing Maintain a high level of housekeeping and manage waste effectively; check for damaged or missing items Work effectively in a warehousing team	1	3	10	3
Tele Sales Customer Service Advisor	Develop skills to ensure high levels of customer service in any business setting	Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication skill Realise and manage customer expectations Provide clear explanations and offer options in order to help customers make choices. Organisational skills, prioritising workload to meet deadlines	0	2	5	2
Retail Sales Advisor	Provide advice and product knowledge	Provide advice and product knowledge	0	2	4	5
Driver	Transport and assembly of goods to customer homes	Transport and assembly of goods to customer homes	2	4	8	4
Office Administration	Administrative tasks	Administrative tasks	2	1	4	1

An average of 20% of the new jobs created will be offered as apprenticeships.

9. Opportunities for current workforce

Sueno can effectively upskill the current workforce through a targeted and comprehensive approach that addresses the specific skill gaps identified within the organisation. See below;

1. Comprehensive Assessment:

Conduct a thorough analysis to identify specific skill gaps within the workforce, focusing on areas such as technical skills, digital proficiency, management, and interpersonal skills.

2. Tailored Training Initiatives:

Develop customised training programs that directly address the identified skill gaps. These initiatives should accommodate different learning styles and levels of expertise within the organisation.

As mentioned above, working closely with the Kirklees Business team to guide and shape the new bed manufacturing apprenticeship among other projects.

3. Diverse Training Methods:

Utilise a combination of in-house resources, external training providers, digital learning platforms, and on-the-job training to offer a varied and comprehensive learning experience.

4. Promote Learning Culture:

Foster a culture of continuous learning and professional development within the organisation. Encourage participation in mentorship programs, conferences, workshops, and industry events.

4. Feedback and Recognition:

Establish mechanisms for continuous feedback, evaluation, and recognition. Monitor the impact of upskilling efforts, reward active participation, and create clear career paths for employees who acquire new skills.

Through these focused strategies, Sueno can elevate its current workforce, ensuring they possess the necessary skills to excel in the dynamic landscape of bed manufacturing and retail while fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth.

All current Sueno employees will be provided these opportunities, this includes the following job roles:

- Bed Framer
- Quality Control Analyst
- Supply Chain and Warehouse Operator
- Tele Sales Customer Service Advisor
- Driver
- Office Administration

10. Employment and Training Measures

For both new recruits and current workforce:

- Workforce Training
- Staff Development/Upskilling via in-house training schemes
- Adult Learning
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Work Placements
- Vocational Training (NVQ)

At least 25% of the workforce shall be on a training/certification programme after 3 years.

Please see below number of employees expected to participate in the training and educational support measures.

Employment and training measures	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Workforce Training	30	20	60	40
Upskilling	4	10	20	40
Apprenticeship	6	12	25	30
Work Placements	2	4	6	8
Vocational Training (NVQ)	2	5	10	15

New employees:

- Recruitment through Jobcentre

The Council's Employment & Skills team can help to upskill the workforce by identifying any potential skills gaps, advising on how these can be filled by upskilling and developing the teams.

We will work closely with this team first to identify recruitment paths & candidates in the local area to continue bring a diverse workforce to the business. They will support the business in recruiting new employees to the workforce.

List of Training and Learning providers

Kirklees College

Contact: Employer Engagement Team

Call 0800 781 3020 Email employers@kirkleescollege.ac.uk

Kirklees Council Employment & Skills Team

Contact: Matthew Johnson

Email Matthew.Johnson@kirklees.gov.uk

Preliminary apprenticeships:

- Business Administration Apprenticeship Level 3
- Customer Service Practitioner Apprenticeship Level 2
- Customer Service Specialist Apprenticeship Level 3
- Digital Marketer Apprenticeship Level 3
- Furniture manufacturer (level 2)
- Human Resources Support Apprenticeship Level 3
- Furniture Manufacturer Apprenticeship Level 2: Modern Upholster
- Furniture Manufacturer Apprenticeship Level 2: Wood Machinist
- Supply Chain and Warehouse Operator Apprenticeship Level 2 (In Year Start)
- Supply Chain Practitioner Apprenticeship Level 3
- Supply Chain Warehouse Operator Apprenticeship Level 2
- Team Leader / Supervisor Apprenticeship Level 3

Training and certification :

- Coaching and Mentoring Certificate Level 3
 - Certificate in Principles of Customer Service Level 2
 - Certificate in Principles of Team Leading Level 2
 - Digital Marketing Techniques CIM
 - Essential Digital Skills for Work (Entry 3)
 - Managing Brands Level 6
 - Microsoft Office Specialist - Excel
 - Microsoft Office Specialist Accreditation – Level 3
 - Microsoft Office Specialist - Word
 - Microsoft Office Specialist Accreditation – Level 3
 - Microsoft Office Specialist - Powerpoint
 - Microsoft Office Specialist Accreditation – Level 3
 - Essential Digital Skills for Work (Entry 3)
 - Principles of Business Administration
 - Principles of Leadership and Management L3 Award
 - Professional Digital Marketing Certificate Level 4
-
- Kirklees Council/college Bed Manufacturing Project

West Yorkshire Combined Authority : School Partnership

Business volunteers (Enterprise Advisers) are connected to local schools and colleges to enable businesses to play a central role in shaping skilled workforces for the future.

Knowledge Transfer Partnership

<https://www.ktp-uk.org>

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) are dynamic collaborations between the business and academic world. Sueno will be partnering with University of Huddersfield to drive innovation.

11. Sueno commitments

- commit to providing apprenticeships
- commit to providing graduate placements
- commit to maximising the number of roles offered to Kirklees residents

- commit to working with the Council and partners to support Apprenticeships, Sector Based Work Academies and other initiatives to optimise access to employment opportunities for local residents
- commit to engaging with local schools to raise awareness of relevant career pathways and other initiatives to raise aspirations, and to working with the College/Uni to shape future curriculum development
- commit to working with local suppliers