



NCVO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Good employment practice case study: Recruitment

Glen Walker, Head of Human Resources at Action for Blind People kindly donated the following case study.

Action for Blind People is a dynamic national charity founded in 1857. It is the third largest charity in the UK working with blind and partially sighted people to enable them to transform their lives.

It provides practical support to blind and partially sighted people through work, housing, leisure, and support.

Its mission is to inspire change and create opportunities to enable blind and partially sighted people to have equal voice and equal choice. Every year Action for Blind People provides direct support for more than 20,000 people.

If you would like to find out more about Action for Blind People, please visit their website at: www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk.

What happened?

Introduction and promotion of work placements within Action for Blind People for service users.

Who was involved (e.g paid staff, volunteers, trustees)?

Employees and service users.

How was it implemented (e.g was any support needed)?

The service user was referred to the Employment Development Team (EDT) under the Work Preparation Programme, in order to develop his/her job-finding skills. The service user had the ability to be an excellent employee, but lacked confidence and experience.

The EDT worked with the service user to update and revise his/her CV, provide interview practice and develop confidence.

When one of the managers requested a work experience placement for the Self Employment Team, the service user seemed the most appropriate person for the job.

The service user was introduced to the Self Employment Team in August 2005. There were lots of changes going on at the time, which generated additional work.

Originally, the service user undertook a five-week work placement, working three days a week. However, the Team were so impressed with the service user's commitment and attitude that they asked if the post could be made more permanent. The service user was placed on the WORKSTEP Scheme, which meant that there was no cost allocated to the Team's budget.

What went well?

The promotion of work placements within Action for Blind People.

What did not go so well?

Robust monitoring systems need to be in place to allow all parties the opportunity to feedback on the work placement.

What would you do differently?

Ensure that the needs of all the parties involved are met and specific training and/or skill needs are identified and the development is monitored.

What has been the overall impact?

The change in attitude, with the correct support, has led to work placements being seen as an asset rather than as a burden.

The Self Employment Team Administrator, commented, "The service user has become a great asset to the Self Employment Team, in helping to lighten our workload...If anyone asked me whether having a work placement would be beneficial, I would answer with a resounding YES."

Are you planning any future developments to maximise the impact of this process?

The employment team are visiting all of the departments within Action for Blind People to encourage the use of work placements, whether for specific projects or day to day work.

What one piece of advice would you give organisations in a similar situation?

Ensure that you have buy in from the managers that you want to take placements. Ensure that you have adequate support mechanisms in place for the work placement and the manager.

About HR and your workforce

How many paid employees do you have?

389 full time; 131 part time

How many trustees sit on your board?

11

How many volunteers do you have (non-paid staff, excluding trustees)?

82 part time

Does your organisation have an HR Strategy?

Yes

Does your organisation have a recruitment policy?

Yes

Does your organisation have a diversity policy?

Yes