Employer engagement – back to basics and benefits of partnership working

Kathy Melling, Alicia Moyles and Helena Jennings
Understand your offer

What are you offering employers?

A recruitment service!
Information, guidance and support
Ongoing training & support

Analysis & creativity
A focus on solutions
Reliable and prompt customer service
Credible service
Strong reputation & track record
The business case

Recruit from a wider availability of labour
Reduced recruitment costs
Supported selection process gives accurate job-client match
Improved retention
Improved image & external reputation
Teambuilding & internal reputation
Diversity-improved services and products
Corporate social responsibility
Reflecting local communities

= Improved profitability
Marketing your “brand”

Understand your audience
Develop a recognisable brand
Market in the right places
Use easy language – no jargon
Avoid walls of print
Use testimonials and case studies
Signpost to detailed online info
Back up using social media
Get out and about – employer forums
A customer focus

Employers are key customers of our services with their own needs

What drives repeat business?

• Reliable outcomes
• Customer service
• Attention to detail

© BASE
## Equal Opportunities vs. Diversity Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Managing Diversity</th>
<th>Equal Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensures all employees maximise their potential and their contribution to the organization</td>
<td>Concentrates on issues of discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one is excluded</td>
<td>Perceived as an issue for women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrates on issues of movement within an organisation, the culture of the organisation, and the meeting of business objectives</td>
<td>Less of an emphasis on culture change and a meeting of business objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A concern for all employees, especially managers</td>
<td>Seen as an issue to do with personnel and human resource practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not rely on positive or affirmative action</td>
<td>Relies on positive action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contacting employers

Broad brush or targeted approaches?

CIPD / FSB
Sector initiatives
Business directories
Economic Development Units
Labour market Information (LMI)
Newspapers, websites and media
Local shops/supermarkets
Cold calling - Hit the road!
Verbal recommendations & personal experience

Remember supply chains
Partnership working between providers

Working with other providers on employer engagement to promote quality and create opportunities.

• Helena Jennings – Skillnet Group
• Alicia Moyles – Strategic Manager, Kent County Council
• Charlotte Burford – Team Co-ordinator Kent Supported Employment, Kent County Council
Group Exercise

Discussion around benefits and concerns of partnership working with other providers.

In groups, take 5 minutes to identify:

• 4 benefits you can see from working with other providers
• 4 drawbacks / concerns you have about partnership working
Aim:

To effectively engage with employers in order for them to value the talent and potential of employing a member of staff with a learning / physical disability or disadvantage.
Effective Employer Engagement - Institutional Analysis

What were our strengths:

• Good reputation
• Excellent outcomes
• Positive success stories
• Strong relationships

What were our weaknesses:

• Disorganised approach
• No joined up working
• No shared best practice
• (systems, processes and quality)
Effective Employer Engagement

Objectives:

Create an effective way of dealing with employers which compliments their needs

Devise and implement a process for making the engagement process simple for the client, the employer and supported employment service.
Effective Employer Engagement
- Systems and Processes

Changes implemented:

• Single point of contact for employers - no more random phone calls from different members of staff

• Generic processes for use with employers - consistent paperwork, flowcharts and expectations

• Quality standards - consistent approach to engagement, shared practice between partners
Working in partnership in Kent

Kent Supported Employment (Kent County Council) and SkillNet.

• Sharing good practice- we understand the clients and their needs, completely client centred

• Sharing good quality processes to achieve positive outcomes- we understand the importance of professional supported employment and not compromising on behaviours
Next steps:

• Sharing employers - understanding clients needs and matching them with appropriate employers we have knowledge of

• Looking at a memorandum of understanding between the two companies to look at a commitment to quality, integrity and best practice.

• Professionalising the supported employment model.