



DCAAG
Disability Confident Action Group



disability
confident



The Value of Disability Confident in Croydon

BASE Conference

Emma Shepherd & Matt Wood

November 2019

Delivering for Croydon |

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Disability Confident Scheme



What are your barriers?



What is the



DCAG
Disability Confident Action Group

Board Constitutes of

Employers
Council
DWP
Councillors
Disabled People
Support Services
Training Providers

Presentations

Matthew Taylor - Taylor Review
Liz Sayce – Switching Focus
Hammersons
Books Beyond Words
Matt Wood – CEO @ Millwood

Action Plan

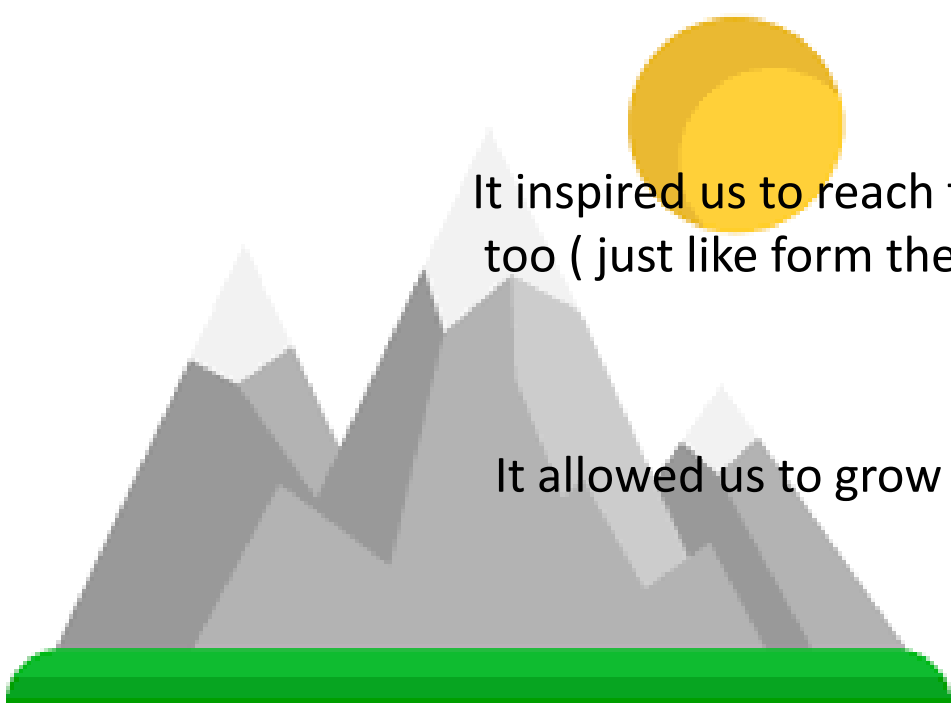
1. Awareness and events
2. Work with schools and Transitions
3. Work with employers & organisations
4. Intelligence of local demography
5. Implement solutions for employment opportunities

Events

Reverse Jobs Fairs
Training
Conferences
Supported Self Employment
Take Over the Council



How has the DCAG helped an employer?



It inspired us to reach for the Summit but encouraged us to ask for help too (just like form the Sherpas)

It allowed us to grow and to ask for help along the way.

It gave us a foundation or a 'base' to start our unknow journey from.



Time Line

July 2017

Disability
Awareness Training
for employers

Nov 2016

1st Reverse
Jobs Fair

Feb 2016

Raising Aspiration
Event

Oct 2015

1st Event for
employers



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Time Line

Feb 2018

Yes I Can
initiative with
DWP

Nov 2017

DWP Proof of
Concept

Oct 2017

2nd Reverse Jobs
Fair

Sep 2017

Supported Self
employment Academy



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Time Line

Jun 2019

Take Over the
Council Day

Nov 2018

3rd Reverse Jobs
Fair

August 2018

All About Me

July 2018

Disability Awareness
for Employers



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Time Line

Dec 2019

Turn Town Hall
Purple

Nov 2019

4th Reverse Jobs
Fair

Oct 2019

Supported Self
Employment Academy

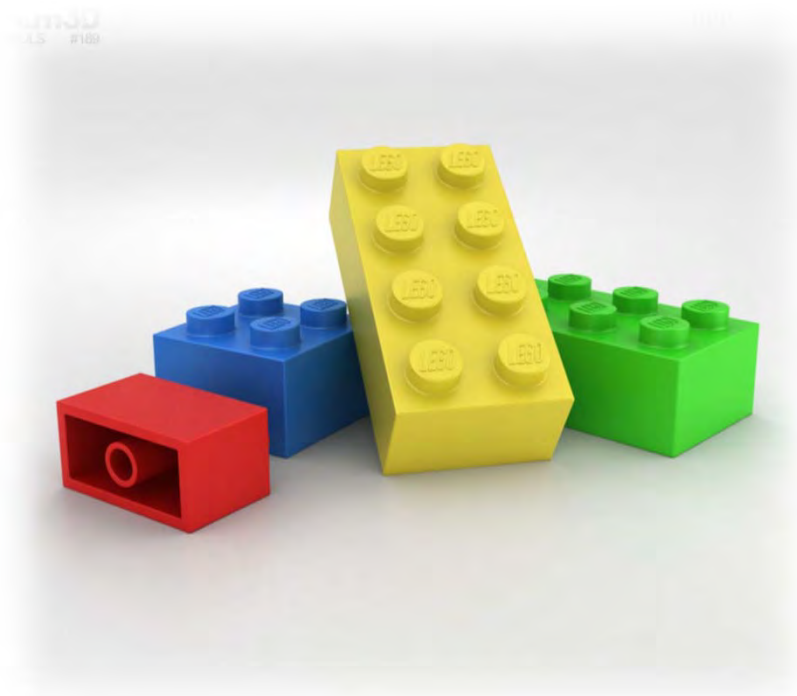
Sep 2019

All About Me



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How would you build a DCAG?



Time
Budget
Passion
Innovation

So, what have we done?



Disability Awareness Training for Employment



Case Study

Case Study: Croydon

Disability Confident Action Group

Croydon Council signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme that supports employers to realise the benefits of a diverse workforce. They developed a Disability Confident Action Group made up of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, service providers and the DWP with the aim of increasing the number of disabled people in employment by providing a coherent offer to employers.

They ran a series of events for employers and disabled people, the most recent one being a 'reverse jobs fair' where employers approached potential candidates. Twenty employers attended the event and five job offers were made on the day, one of which was an apprenticeship as well as offers of interviews and work experience.

Values - why is this important?

Disability Confident is a scheme from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) which has replaced Two Ticks symbol. Disability Confident supports employers to make the most of the talents that disabled people can bring to the workplace. More and more businesses are signing up to Disability Confident every week, and there are now over 3,000 employers signed up. The scheme helps employers think differently about disability, and improve how they attract, recruit and retain disabled workers.

Disability Confident helps business to realise the benefits of a diverse workforce which includes disabled people. These include:

- Drawing from the widest pool of talent;
- Securing and retaining high quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard-working;
- Saving time and money on the costs of recruitment by reducing staff turnover;
- Keeping valuable skills and experience;
- Reducing the levels and costs of sickness absences;
- Improving employee morale and commitment by demonstrating that they treat all employers fairly.

The scheme has 3 levels designed to support employers with employers progressing to become Disability Confident Leaders, acting as a champion with their local and business communities. Croydon Council became a Disability Confident employer in 2013 and is working towards becoming a Disability Confident Leader.

What are the challenges?

The employment rates for disabled people in the UK is very low (48%) despite the country experiencing the highest levels of employment since comparable records began. People with mental health conditions, learning disabilities and / or autism are even further disadvantaged as their employment rates are much lower, which is resulting in employers missing out on valuable talent (32%, 24% and 32% respectively). Croydon's current rates of employment for these individuals reflects the national picture.

Solution

Croydon Council has a skills and employment plan which set out the agreed priorities for Croydon in terms of raising the skills levels within the borough's communities, creating sustainable employment opportunities and increasing the overall borough employment rate.

Their plan sets out how they aim to achieve this by working in partnership across the public, private and community and voluntary sector to ensure those most marginalised in employment are offered the best support, which includes disabled people.

They are also keen to ensure that they are offering Croydon employers a more coherent offer in providing a strategic framework for the key organisations involved in the delivery of skills and employment services in Croydon, reducing duplication and improving the customer journey of local jobseekers, and easing the burdens of local employers.

Croydon Council established a Disability Confident Action Group (DCAG) in 2015. It is made up of public and voluntary organisations with a stake in supporting disabled people in Croydon towards and into employment, chaired by the Council's Gateway Employment Support Service.

The group developed an action plan to ensure they are co-ordinating their activities, sharing information and working in partnership to provide a coherent offer to employers to support them to employ greater numbers of people living with a disability or long-term health condition in the borough. They ran a series of successful events resulting in an increase of employment rates of disabled people in the borough.

The DCAG organized their first Disability Confident event in May 2015, which was held at Fairfield Hall. It was attended by a number of employers as well as disabled employees to encourage employers to understand the

true benefits of being an inclusive employer, ensuring they were accessing the untapped talents and skills of Croydon residents with a disability.

Personal experiences were shared, and the DWP provided a presentation about Access to Work, highlighting the support that can be provided to costs associated with recruiting and retaining disabled staff. Pledges were made by employers and these were followed up to ensure they were supported by the partnership to recruit more disabled talent.



Shaun Lohinger of Hissarve along with Julie Brickley and David Aherne addressing delegates at the Disability Confident Event in February 2016

A second event took place in February 2016 addressing the need to raise the career aspirations of young disabled people. Further pledges were made by employers who attended regarding the changes they would make to their recruitment processes to ensure that they were not missing out on the valuable talent of disabled people.

The next event was an innovative approach to running a Jobs Fair for disabled people called a Reverse Jobs Fair. Instead of potential candidates approaching employers for possible jobs, the process was turned on its head with employers seeking to recruit, approaching potential disabled candidates. Twenty employers attended the event, and five job offers were made on the day, one of which was an apprenticeship, as well as offers of interviews and work experience.



Emma Shepherd, Mayor Wayne Lawler, Terry Smith, and Cllr Andrew Rundle at the opening of the Reverse Jobs Fair

The DCAG went on to host three half days of Disability Awareness Training for 250 Council staff and local businesses in July 2017.

They covered the Equality Act, reasonable adjustments, mental health, learning disabilities, autism, visual impairments and Access to Work. This in turn fed into the next Reverse Jobs Fair that they held in November 2017 which prepared employers to have a better understanding of employing disabled people.

A number of events have been planned for later this year including more disability awareness training, another reverse jobs fair and 'Yes we Can' events enabling local businesses to meet up with local job seekers to understand more about their barriers.



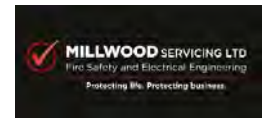
What have Croydon done well?

- An 'Excellent' Supported Employment team that scored 95.8% at audit, which is quality driven
- The creation of Disability Strategy Lead for Employment role
- Referrals for the service from many sources
- The 'Network' held monthly
- Two awards in 2018
- Highest amount of disabled people into employment in 2018/19
- BASE Associate for supported Employment



British Association for
Supported Employment

- A strong sense of focus on having more structured and meaningful conversations with employers
- New signups from employers and contractors (due to procurement obligations).
- Employers feel more encouraged to have conversations around employing disabled people and less nervous about starting up an initial conversation.
- A real sense of inclusion for applicants during the recruitment process.
- Employers actively wanting to support disabled people into employment utilising the resources the DWP supply



What do we intend to do next?

Virtual Reality for
vocational profiling

Mental Health First
Aider training for
local employers

Disability
Leadership
Programme

Disability Proud

Learn from what
employers want
from the survey

TAKEAWAYS



We would love to hear from you..

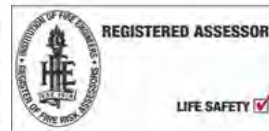
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