

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**2nd February 2022****CASE STUDY EXAMPLES AND EMPLOYER FEEDBACK**

Case studies included outline mentoring support provided to young people by RCT's employment support grant funded programmes staff which led to a Kickstart Job Outcome.

Email feedback from employer included who has received support from RCT to access funding through the Kickstart scheme.

Case Study 1**Summary**

This Case Study demonstrates the support given to a participant that is undergoing gender transition, and who successfully gained employment through the Kickstart scheme, which fitted around his other interest of writing.

Background / What is ...?

Client A (CA) was referred to the project by his work coach back in August 2021. After being triaged and allocated to me, I conducted my initial appointment with him over the phone. He had not worked since 2018 but had been completing a degree in Modern Languages and Translation until the summer of 2021.

The engagement...

During my initial conversation with CA, he explained to me that he was born a girl but that he is going through the transition to become male so would prefer to be referred to as "he/him". This was not a problem throughout the whole time working together.

CA explained that his long-term goal was to become a writer as he enjoys writing fiction and had almost completed a novel. His short-term goal was to get into any sort of employment that he could work around his writing. He had some previous experience of working in warehouse settings and he would be open to going back into this type of role, but he was also open minded to trying other things too.

I invited him to a Kickstart job matching session over Microsoft Teams which was also attended by two work coaches. In the session, we read through job descriptions of roles we all agreed would be suitable for him and he was referred for 3 vacancies. I was then able to review his CV after the session and support him with his cover letters. He didn't need a great deal of support as he has strong writing skills but he was thankful to have another pair of eyes checking over his work.

CA attended 3 interviews during our time working together and I was on hand to offer help and advice whenever needed. CA was offered a position in his local SPAR and this was ideal for him as it was so close to home and the hours also meant he had time to work on his novel.

Good Practice Shared / Lessons Learned

Being understanding and compassionate towards CA's gender transitioning was vital in ensuring we built a good relationship and I also wanted him to feel that I was someone he could trust and could work with without fear of judgement. Utilising the kickstart scheme and good working relationships with the JCP was also very beneficial.

Outcomes

CA has now gone into employment through the kickstart scheme with SPAR.

Information provided by: CfW Youth Employment Mentor

Case Study 2

Summary

Client B (CB) joined CFW in June 2021 after being referred by a local Job Centre. CB and his family resettled in RCT after fleeing Syria. There were language and transport barriers to overcome but following support, CB will be starting a Kickstart job placement with a local employer at the end of January.

Background / What is ...?

I met CB in person; abiding to Covid19 restrictions due to a language barrier that made virtual support more challenging. We relied upon 'google translate' to converse. Whilst CB had some basic spoken English, written, reading and comprehension skills were limited.

CB stated that he would like to gain employment in production having previously worked in a clothing factory in Syria.

The engagement...

I supported CB to complete a CV and explained the role and value of a CV when applying for work in the UK. In June 2021, a colleague at Porth Job Centre recommended a clothing production role in Treforest, the client was interested and I supported him to complete a tailored cover letter.

CB attended the work location and passed the interview, myself and my colleague at JCP liaised with the employer to support the commencement of employment. CB completed his first shift but was unable to sustain the employment any further as the travelling was up to 3 hours a day via a local bus. The client was naturally disappointed though was grateful for our efforts.

In October 2021, I made a joint appointment with one of RCTs Employer Liaison Officers, whereby we both met with the client to discuss potential employment opportunities, again using 'google translate' from the client's mobile phone. My colleague identified a potential opportunity with a local employer. Through liaising with the employer further it was established that an exam would need to be passed prior to starting the role. Whilst the client already attended weekly college ESOL classes, he didn't feel he possessed the skills to sit a written exam. CB was unable to take up the opportunity at this time but we liaised with the college and arranged to increase CB's learning time.

Some weeks passed and at a weekly Kickstart meeting with the JCP office, I became aware of an opportunity at a local Community Centre, whereby the successful candidate would be responsible for completing a range of tasks to support the day-to-day running of the centre. The location of this post was also within walking distance of CB's home.

In January 2022 I spoke to the Centre's kickstart Project Co-ordinator who stated she was happy to meet the client at the Community venue and assess his suitability. We both met with the Co-ordinator and agreed that the client would be a good addition to the team, bringing different life experiences, enthusiasm and a great work ethic.

CB went on to pass a formal interview showing his enthusiasm and gratefulness for the opportunity to develop his skills whilst being a positive part of the team. CB is due to commence his employment at the end of January and is grateful for the opportunity to learn and be accepted as a part of the community.

Good Practice Shared / Lessons Learned / Outcomes

Continue to provide support to a client throughout setbacks and keep encouraging to find the right job opportunity for them. Provide additional support to overcome barriers faced. Links and joint working with other team colleagues, JCP staff and partners.

Outcomes

CB will be going into employment through the kickstart scheme with a local employer.

Information provided by: CfW Youth Employment Mentor

Case Study 3

Summary

Client C (CC) was referred to the mentoring programme from Job Centre Plus as was looking for support to complete a CV and application forms, while hoping to secure employment quickly. Her confidence was low, and she was concerned employers would not consider her applications due to lack of experience. CC wanted to secure employment close to home as she relied on public transport and would also feel more comfortable.

Background / What is ...?

On initial contact with CC we identified she would ideally like to gain employment in the retail sector. CC had previously worked at a hotel as a housekeeper, however, had to finish due to ill health. CC has spent time concentrating on her health and now feels ready and fit to find employment again. It was clear that CC struggled with her confidence, however, she was determined to go back into employment.

The Engagement...

An initial mentoring session was booked, which was carried out via the telephone. We initially discussed Kickstart opportunities via Job Centre Plus - CC had recently considered possible opportunities with her work coach. CC felt anxious that she needed to create a CV and cover letters to apply for these opportunities, I reassured her that I would support with this either through telephone calls, online Teams calls or face-to-face. An online Teams session was planned with CC, myself and Job Centre Plus staff to identify roles that she would like to apply for. Following this session CC had selected a number of roles, which included retail and admin. I supported CC with her CV and cover letters through telephone calls and Teams calls and she applied for a number of positions.

Within a couple of days CC had been contacted by a number of employers and had 3 interviews planned. It was agreed that I would meet CC for a face-to-face appointment to complete some interview prep. CC was contacted by all 3 interviewees and was offered employment with them all. She now needed to make a decision as to which role she wanted to accept. We discussed this over a telephone call and CC wanted to accept the retail position with McColl's as this was closest to home. She felt she would be more confident in this role and would be able to walk to work and wouldn't need to rely on public transport or family members to get to work.

CC accepted the role at McColl's and the employer let her know she was able to start immediately, however, she did not have the correct documentation. CC needed a copy of her birth certificate which she did not have. I supported CC to order this online and selected next day delivery to ensure she was able to start work as soon as possible. CC started employment in October 2021 and was transferred to the In Work Support element of our employment support programme. I continued to stay in regular contact with CC and she let me know that she had been awarded with an exceptional Customer Service award by her employer. CC had settled in quickly in her new role and her confidence improved rapidly. Regular contact was maintained throughout between myself and CC and it has been a pleasure to provide support to her.

Good Practice Shared / Lessons Learned / Outcomes

Maintaining weekly contact was highly beneficial and CC was fully aware that she could contact me at any time for support.

Partnership working – jointly working with Job Centre Plus to identify Kickstart opportunities for CC.

Outcomes

Entered employment, sustained employment

Quote from HA

“Whilst I was under Communities for Work Plus I received all the help I could have asked for and more. Whatever I needed help with Laura was always at the other end of the phone giving me advice, which I really appreciated. Laura always messaged to check I was ok and if I needed any help even if I hadn’t spoken to her, I felt really supported and she helped to ease my nerves when deciding and choosing which job I wanted to go with. Thank you Laura I can’t thank you enough for all your help. You have helped me and helped to gain my confidence back again since having my new job”.

Information provided by: CfW+ Employment Mentor

EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

Email feedback received from an employer who was supported by RCT to access funding through the Kickstart scheme.

“The kickstart scheme has allowed us to give the opportunity to the 18-24 category to support their social skills along with helping their well-being. It’s been great that we could participate as we very much believe in being an equal employer who offers opportunities to all. It’s been particularly great timing during COVID that hit hospitality very hard and our pub in particular has benefited along with our Brewery. The support from particularly Ceri Anne and Matthew has been personable and the financial support on offering accredited courses has been excellent. We would very much like this to continue if there was any opportunity to do so.

On the note of what could work better is that on times it’s been tough getting the referrals to send in CVs and we have tried different angles by inviting candidates to the job centre and arrange interviews that way, this did work. I also think it would be beneficial for work coaches to understand the employer and role a lot more and that way it would help the candidate when making their choice on whether their skills would fit the job role.

Thank you Ceri-Anne on a great partnership”.