



Case Studies



Retail – Coles improves stock order process

A Coles Store Manager in Sydney created a customised job for a person with an intellectual disability.

The customised job focused exclusively on sorting stock that had been placed into waste tubs. This task was not completed reliably each day before the employee with an intellectual disability was engaged. Items that can be saved or re-sold at a discount price are identified and waste stock (e.g. out of date or damaged items) is recorded by category. The waste sorting task is performed each day before close of business, so that the stock order is accurate.

The Coles Store Manager reported that having this task performed by the new employee reduced waste costs in the store by 40%. The savings generated exceeded the wage of the person with disability.

Customised jobs are not so common in the workplace. This example of Coles, working with Jobsupport shows how customising a job at the store or department level can reduce business costs and lead to greater efficiency.

FGW Corporation - Costs really are reasonable

Gary Davidson owns and runs a small manufacturing business, FGW Corporation Pty Ltd, with nine employees in Perth. The business has recently employed a number of people through EDGE EMPLOYMENT, a DES provider operating in the Perth region.

The recruitment cost was just the price of one phone call to EDGE. To fill Gary's most recent vacancy, the DES provider forwarded him three applicants and he chose one young man with an intellectual disability who lived close by and was really keen to work.

The first few weeks of work were subsidised through Employment Assistance Fund and the DES provider provided on-the-job training. By week 4 the new employee was up to speed and basically unsupervised other than a regular monthly contact.

There were no extra workers compensation costs. The insurance premium is set at a standard industry rate per employee without any additional amount for people with disability. Gary has said he would have no hesitation in employing someone else with disability should another position arise.





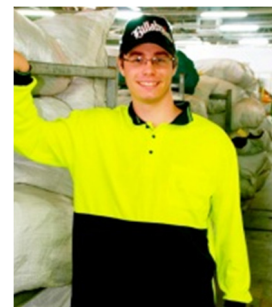
ACT Health – good team players

ACT Health has worked with a DES Provider, AP, for around five years, and currently employs ten people with disability in the mail room at The Canberra Hospital. The arrangement has worked well providing significant benefits for the employer and the employee.

Staff and supervisors working in the mail room at the Canberra Hospital report working in a friendly and supportive environment with less problems than in other teams across the department. Staff all relate well which enhances efficiency and improves morale.

Several staff members, including those with disability, have received awards for demonstrating exceptional commitment to providing quality service and exceeding benchmarks for best practice.

ACT health gets support from AP when needed.



Local Turf Club shows barriers can be overcome



Through the DES provider Workskills, a possible job opportunity as a grounds keeper at the local Turf Club was identified. Workskills identified a local 47 year old indigenous man with a number of mobility issues who had not worked for 17 years as a potential candidate. He also had significant language, literacy and numeracy issues. Workskills assisted the candidate and the turf club through the recruitment and engagement period which saw the turf club offer the position to the Workskills candidate.

Workskills also assisted the turf club in applying for funding to cover workplace modifications to the value of \$9,000, which assisted him with the physical aspects of his job and allowed him to work independently. Some of the more significant pieces of equipment included:

- Self-propelled lawn mower
- Light weight brush cutter with harness and face guard
- Garden cart trolley – to lifting, carrying and moving items around the track
- Electronic bin lifter – to assist with emptying heavy garbage bins

Workskills provided transport to and from work each day, which also provided the candidate with the ongoing mentoring and support which he needed to maintain his employment. Workskills also provided significant off-the-job support, helping him with Centrelink, financial and housing issues.

The turf club has been very impressed with his work ethic and attitude and has offered him ongoing employment. To assist him with becoming more independent, Workskills purchased him a push bike so that he could get to and from work by himself.



FACTSHEET 1

Employer Checklist for Interacting with Disability Employment Service (DES)¹

Employment phase

A DES should...

Pre-Application

- be able to demonstrate a knowledge of the industry in which you operate and have an understanding of your business
- analyse work duties and identify tasks that could be performed by a jobseeker with disability
- design jobs that meet the needs of the employer and a person with disability

Application

- Present a professional resume which is tailored to the job on offer and lists current referees
- Describe the candidate's competencies and how they meet the inherent requirements of the job
- Explain any changes to job duties the candidate may require as a 'reasonable adjustment' – and what assistance is available to the employer and the candidate in facilitating this
- Prepare the candidate for the interview
- Provide information on how the candidate will be supported once placed in employment – and what type of support will be offered
- Provide advice on government incentives and subsidies as appropriate

¹This information has been reproduced with permission from WorkFocus Australia - National Disability Recruitment Coordinator, Working Effectively with Disability Employment Services Fact Sheet



Appointment

- Agree tasks that the candidate may need support with
- Provide a copy of the candidate's Employment Support Plan – outlining the nature and timing of support to provide to the candidate and the employer at various stages of the employment lifecycle
- Provide a briefing to the line manager regarding effective communication and workplace adjustments should these be required

Induction

- Identify tasks where support may be required
- Agree with manager on when and how support will be provided
- Discuss how and who will provide feedback to employee
- Agree to a reasonable response time for queries
- Schedule support for the Probationary Period
- Inspect and review workplace adjustments
- Brief/Train co-workers as required
- Review employee's initial progress (skill acquisition and rate)
Hold regular feedback sessions

Probationary Period

- Schedule support for the retention and support period

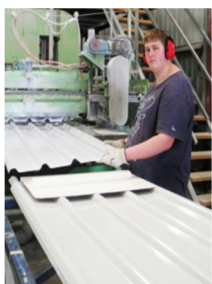
Retention & Support

- Be available for weekly or fortnightly feedback sessions as appropriate
- Review support given and modify as required
- Confirm support arrangements over the next 6 months or so
- Provide clear information about what to do and who to contact should additional support beyond what is outlined in the Employment Support Plan be required



FACTSHEET 2

Interacting with People with Disability





The golden rule:


"It's common courtesy"¹

Interaction with people with disability can be an unfamiliar and sometimes threatening experience for many people. Avoidance behaviour can occur. Training can help staff deal with these issues.

Interacting with people with disability requires common-sense and simple sensitivity. A few key points need to be stressed:

- Good service behaviours such as active listening, a service orientation and a results focus work equally well with people with disability as with all other people.
- Think of the person first and the disability second. Sensitive use of language can help reinforce the "person first" attitude. Reference to "people with disability" rather than to "disabled people" helps maintain this stance.²

SAY 	DON'T SAY 
Person with disability	Victim, disabled person, suffers from, deformed
Person with physical disability	Cripple, crippled, invalid
Person who uses a wheelchair	Wheelchair bound
Person with a hearing impairment, hearing loss or total deafness	Deaf mute, deaf and dumb
Accessible parking, accessible toilets	Disabled parking, disabled toilets

DO 
Look at the person when speaking to them
If appropriate, shake hands, when greeting them
Ask them the best way to communicate if you're unsure
Speak directly to them, even if they have a carer or someone providing assistance with them
If you know their name, use it
Offer assistance if necessary, but don't assume they need it

¹ This guide has been reproduced from <http://www.openroad.net.au/access/dakit/disaware/handout5.htm>

² This table has been reproduced from information provided by JobAccess <http://jobaccess.gov.au/Home/Home.aspx>

The Business Case for Employing People with Disability



- Accept people with disability as individuals. People with disability may have in common disability, but the consequences of their disability will vary considerably from person to person. Factors such as the degree of impairment, duration, individual coping strategies and styles, support structures available and a host of personality traits will all combine to influence the nature of the individual's needs. Don't generalise about all people with disability from your knowledge of a few.
- Listen to what people say. Don't assume you know what they want or what is best for them. People with disability are no less capable of thinking for themselves than anyone else. There may be challenges in communicating their needs, but assumptions that they cannot decide what they need are also offensive.
- Be yourself, be natural, and don't force enthusiasm. Do not patronise or be inappropriately solicitous.
- Disability is not necessarily an illness. Do not treat people with disability as though they are sick. Treat them as healthy individuals. Research indicates that people with disability take fewer sick days than other employees. Their impairments cause inconvenience and disability in particular areas of activity, but they are rarely dysfunctional.
- Treat people in a manner that is appropriate to their age. It is neither appropriate to talk to people with disability as if they were children, nor to refer to them as children. Terms such as "girlie" or "sonny" are not appropriate for adults with disability.
- Speak directly to the person, not to their carer or other third party. People with disability often have carers. However, the carers are there to assist in specific ways. Do not assume that they are the mouthpiece or the advocate for the person with disability. It is insulting to talk in the third person about a person who is present.
- If the person with disability has a communication problem they will usually let you know and indicate a preferred method.
- Disability is an inconvenience in certain situations, but it is not necessarily a tragedy which dominates a person's life and makes fulfilment impossible. Individuals find their own ways of adapting.



FACTSHEET 3 - Guidelines for Recruitment and Selection



If seeking to recruit for a new position yourself, the Australian Human Rights Commission has developed some fact sheets for employers which are located on their website:

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/info_for_employers/index.html including guidelines for very small businesses. Ensuring a non-discriminatory approach is taken can be achieved and these guidelines can assist.

Some highlights from the *Best practice guidelines for recruitment and selection* include:

- Before you start, think about the job specifications and identify which parts of the job are must have skills and experience and which skills and experience are 'nice to have'.
- Make sure you do not include requirements based on stereotypes and that you are specific about what you are looking for. Specific job criteria mean less potential confusion and possible misinterpretation for both the employee and the employer.
- Ensure the information in the ad matches the selection criteria and that you use non-discriminatory language.
- Check if there is a need for any specific arrangements [e.g., physical access, interpreters, etc.].
- Ask all applicants the same questions and give them a fair chance to say what they can do for your business.
- It is appropriate to ask people with disability whether they require any adjustments to perform the job.
- Do not ask invasive and irrelevant questions [e.g. 'do you intend to have a family?']. If necessary rephrase to gain the essential information you require and ask of all applicants [e.g., 'Can you commit yourself to the organisation for two years?'].
- Treat applicants equally in making a short list, using the same criteria for everybody and ensuring essential qualifications come before desirable qualifications.
- Keep records of questions and answers and the reasons why you made decisions.
- Do not request a medical examination unless it directly impacts on the job and you would ask the same question of all successful applicants.¹

¹ Australian Human Rights Commission, http://www.hreoc.gov.au/info_for_employers/best_practice/recruitment.html accessed 4 May 2012