

Workshop 2

Facilitator Pack

The role of the facilitator

What a facilitator does is plan, guide and manage a group event to ensure that the group's objectives are met effectively, with clear thinking and good participation.

This facilitator pack is designed to support the facilitator to effectively deliver a group workshop. You should read the information and supporting tips about how this workshop can be effectively delivered.

Importance of environment

People are positively impressed by tidiness, not because they like tidiness but because it often indicates control and fitness for purpose. These messages are the reverse for untidiness.

Always attempt to view your environment and set up prior to claimants arriving. This will create the organised and professional image of the workshop.

As professionals our claimants expect us to be well organised and able to focus on them while we're coaching.

Whether this means moving a computer or a desk to prevent it becoming a barrier between you and the claimant, this should be done in advance of any workshop getting underway.

Throughout the duration of the event you have a duty of care and responsibility to each claimant. It is vital that you make yourself familiar with the health and safety procedures in your location. In the event of any alarm or need to evacuate you must ensure that all claimants are aware of what action to take and that you are able to safely and securely ensure their safety.

Professional dress

Research has shown that coaches who use formal business attire in interactions with claimants increase the desired results. This may be down to the principle of 'authority'. Professional dress increases the perception of being an expert and consequently a credible source of guidance. It has been shown that people are more likely to follow the instructions of an expert.

Any sign of stains, scuffs, un-tucked shirts or mismatched clothes can make a long-lasting negative impression.

Make Eye contact

Eye contact acknowledges the claimant as an individual and signals honesty. This behavior makes any coaching interaction more productive and acknowledges the other person's presence, implying that the conversation is personal to them.

In a group environment it is vital to establish and maintain a level of eye contact with all claimants to retain their attention and keep them engaged in the topics you are discussing.

Smile

When entering a new environment or meeting people for the first time, to some extent subconsciously we're always on the lookout for danger!

When meeting people for the first time the quickest way to signal to another person that there is no danger or it is "safe" is to smile.

It's something we already do, consciously or subconsciously. Smiling sincerely the first time you meet someone is a fast, powerful and effective signal that can cut through apprehension.

A smile tells the other person that we're open and approachable - very appropriate when first meeting a claimant.

Body language

Be aware of your own body language. Using your own body language can be an effective way to control the dynamic of the room. It can also help claimants to feel at ease and encourage discussion if you display open and approachable body language. If you display negative body language then claimants are far less likely to respond to you positively or engage with what you are saying. If you don't look interested in what you are delivering why would a claimant?

Stop talking and be patient

When asking somebody else to talk or share their thoughts it is vital that you listen to what they are saying, don't interrupt, talk over them or finish their sentences for them. When the person has finished talking you may need to clarify to ensure you have received their message accurately or involve other members of the group to expand on what has been said but you must always give the person time to speak where you have asked them to.

A pause, even a long pause, does not necessarily mean that the speaker has finished. Be patient and let the speaker continue in their own time, sometimes it takes time to formulate what to say and how to say it. Never interrupt or finish a sentence for someone.

Prepare Yourself to Listen

Relax and put other things out of mind. The human mind is easily distracted by other thoughts – what's for lunch, what time do I need to leave to catch my train, is it going to rain – try to put other thoughts out of mind and concentrate on the messages that are being communicated.

Put the claimant at ease

This can be supported by the positive first impression you will have made with the claimant. Remember how important it is to smile and create the right environment. These things will help the claimant to feel at ease and therefore more relaxed and willing to speak. Remember their needs and concerns. A 'verbal nod' or similar gestures can be used to encourage them to continue. Maintain eye contact but don't stare – show you are listening and understanding what is being said.

Pay attention to the room – what can you see?

Are claimants listening to what you are saying? To determine this there are a number of techniques and things to be aware of. These include:

Verbal and non-verbal cues – a claimant is not required to speak in order to be engaged in a discussion. Be aware of non-verbal cues which could be in the form of a nod or taking notes. If so these are clear signs of engagement that the claimant is paying attention and wants to retain what you are sharing.

Is there anything distracting the group? This can be considered when you initially set up your environment. If you have a room with posters or visual aids, ask yourself, are these distracting the group more than supporting? If you can see out of the room is there anything outside which could distract? For example - heavy traffic or public pathways.

As well as your own body language you should also be aware of the claimant's body language. Is the claimant maintaining eye contact with you? Are they sat upright rather than slouched? Are questions being asked? Body language is also a good indication of participation a claimant displaying positive body language is more likely to actively participate when asked to then a claimant displaying negative body language.

Setting the scene

Introductions

Introduce yourself to the group and explain your role as facilitator.

Domestics

Ensure claimants are aware of toilet location, drinks facilities, no smoking policy etc...

Timings

Confirm that the timing for this workshop is 90 minutes but does require claimants to undertake and complete a number of activities following the workshop.

Ground Rules

Ground rules are an important part of any group workshop. They form an agreement between the facilitator and claimants about the behaviours and rules that can be expected from each other.

It is suggested that you pre-prepare a flip chart which, once agreed, by all claimants can be displayed in the room as a visual reminder of the commitment by all to abide by the ground rules.

Suggested ground rules are shown below:

- Participate and contribute to the workshop
- One person speaks at a time
- Listen to what other people are saying
- Respect the opinions and input of others

As well as the suggested ground rules you may also wish to ask the group if anybody has any other ground rules they would like to be included. If a claimant suggests any further ground rules you should facilitate to seek agreement from all being mindful of the 90 minutes allocated to complete the workshop. When you are finished you should ensure the group agree and are willing to abide by these ground rules.

Make sure you get the claimants to actually say "Yes" out loud. It makes a difference and is a positive acceptance of the ground rules.

Generic workshop objectives

- The aims of the workshops are to provide a structured and broad range of work focused activities in order to help claimants prepare and successfully secure a positive employment outcome

Group workshop 2 activities

As the workshop progresses claimants may be surprised by the amount of work required following the workshop but this amount is not unreasonable. Don't apologise for level of activity, this is reasonable and will ensure that if completed to a high standard will help the claimant to be a successful independent jobseeker.

My Work Search Areas

Looking at a greater work search area increases the number of vacancies available to the claimant and therefore provides a greater chance of them securing work.

Many people commute for more than 70 minutes each day – in fact many people travel over two hours each way to work.

Claimants should be encouraged to understand that in order to maximise their chances of securing work they must be actively seeking opportunities at least up to 90 minutes away.

Introduce and promote activity

For this activity there are some key objectives:

- Claimants to understand what the 90 minute travel to work means for them and understand how increasing the 'geographical range' of their job seeking will increase the number of available opportunities.
- Claimants to understand how using a travel planner can quickly and confidently establish how they can get to specific employers.
- Claimants to undertake job search in each new 'travel area' to demonstrate and understand how this will increase the number of opportunities available.



Issue handout UC436 to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

In order to ensure claimants are able to take advantage of these increased opportunities, this activity demonstrates the capability to use a travel planner and work search in these areas.

Alongside this activity claimants should complete the 'My Work Search Areas – Job Applications' activity, the purpose of this activity is to ensure claimants have completed a comprehensive work search in the new locations and have applied for suitable vacancies.

How to complete

In order to complete this activity, the claimant needs to complete a job search and use the travel planner in 5 new areas (ideally within 70 – 90 minutes of their home address).

The selected locations should be tailored to the individual claimant circumstances, e.g. if the claimant wants to work in retail then the locations should reflect where retail opportunities are located (e.g. shopping centres and retail parks).

There are numerous travel planners available online, e.g. www.transportdirect.info for the claimant to choose from to support them widening their work search activity.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My Work Search Areas – Job Applications

This activity seeks to build on and can be used in conjunction with the work undertaken by the claimant in the previous “My Work Search Areas” activity.

Introduce and promote activity

This activity requires the claimant to complete a work search in each ‘location’ identified in the ‘My Works Search’ activity. The claimant should then list the suitable vacancies they have found.



Issue handout UC435 to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

How to complete

In order to successfully complete this activity the claimant must apply for a minimum of 5 vacancies.

Advise the claimant that when they have completed this activity they should review the information and ask themselves the following questions:

- Have you identified a range of locations where opportunities are available?
- Are the locations tailored to their job goals?
- Do these locations offer greater opportunities compared to more local areas you have previously researched?

These are things that the claimant should always consider when undertaking their work search. You should ensure the claimant is aware of and understands the importance of conducting a wide range of work search, spanning the 90 minute travel to work area, and is committed to searching and applying for jobs in a wider geographical area.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My Work Search Diary

In order for claimants to improve their prospects of getting into work they should view looking for work as a full-time job. To achieve this it is important that claimants plan the activities that they intend to undertake in advance.

The use of a work search diary will ensure claimants are able to not only complete but also record a wide range of activities, therefore increasing the number of opportunities available to them.

Introduce and promote the activity

In order to record what activities you have not only undertaken but plan to undertake, you should maintain a 'Work Search Diary'. This will help you maximise the time you have available.



Issue handout UC437 to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

How to complete

Claimants are required to identify a range of job seeking activities they will complete for the following week (e.g. searching and applying for jobs on Universal Jobmatch).

It is important that the claimant plans the best time for them to complete (e.g. consider when you will have access to a computer, what day does the local paper get published?).

Complete the diary with the activities you will complete and when you will do them. Each day, claimants should work through the diary aiming to spend approximately 60 - 90 minutes on each activity.

Once completed, the claimant should tick the completed box. Claimants should also answer the questions on the back page as this will help them consider how they can improve aspects of future work search.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My Recruitment Agencies

Recruitment agencies can be really useful in finding both temporary and permanent work. Successful jobseekers use recruitment agencies in order to gain both valuable experience which can be a fundamental way to improve their CV as well as secure work.

Introduce and promote activity

Many employers use recruitment agencies to advertise their opportunities, by registering with a wide range of recruitment agencies claimants can increase their chances of securing work in the profession or industry they want.



Issue handout UC438 to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

Below are some things claimants should consider in order to maximise their chances of securing work through a recruitment agency.

- Recruitment agency consultants are generally busy so they won't be able to contact you with every new suitable vacancy. Be pro-active and contact them at least once per week to identify any new vacancies.
- Continually seek feedback and advice from your recruitment agencies. They are experts in recruitment and will be able to offer advice on how you can improve your chances of securing work.

How to complete

This activity is solely focused on the claimant registering with a wide range of recruitment agencies in order to increase the opportunities available to them.

The claimant should register with and record the details of as many recruitment agencies as possible. The more agencies claimants are registered with the higher their chances are of securing work.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My Speculative Applications – UC440

Claimants can increase their chances of finding work by sending speculative applications containing a personalised covering letter and CV to potential employers. Up to 70% of jobs are never advertised so sending proactive applications to employers can be an effective way of widening their job search.

Introduce and promote activity

This activity requires claimants to consider and detail a number of employers they would like to work for together with their location and specific industry. This information will help the claimant to tailor their application to the specific employer they will be submitting their application to.



Issue handout UC440 to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

How to complete

The first step in successfully using speculative applications is to identify employers that you would like to work for.

To complete the first stage of this activity claimants are required to:

- Identify a list of employers that the claimant would like to work for. When making this list claimants should consider employers within and throughout their geographical work search area based on their individual job goals. Business directories such as the Yellow Pages or the internet maybe useful for this.
- Think about the type of organisation they have chosen, how does the claimant see their personality and skills fitting in to the organisation. How could their skills be useful to the employer?

Once completed the next stage of the speculative application process is to research the chosen employers.

To complete the second stage of this activity claimants are required to:

- Research and identify a contact name within each employer they have listed. To maximise their chances of success, identify the person who deals with employment for your chosen organisation, and contact them directly wherever possible.
- Detail what specific qualities, skills and experience they can offer which will benefit the organisation.
- Review answers to ensure qualities, skills and experiences are specific to the chosen organisation and not simply generic statements. Remember each organisation
- Follow up their application. This is an opportunity for the claimant to build up rapport with an employer even if they do not currently have any vacancies. An employer may be able to suggest other organisations that are recruiting or suggest how a claimant can improve future applications. Try to do this around ten days after your application.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

Once all activities have been issued you should check claimants understand what has been explained to them during the course of this workshop together with what is expected of them following in order to complete the activities you have set them.

You should advise the claimant that their coach will discuss the workshop, their participation, their understanding of what is expected together with what they can expect to happen next.

Finally you should bring the workshop to a conclusion by thanking claimants for attending and ensure that they hand back any visitors passes and leave the building safely.