

Illustrative Examples

Debbie

Due to circumstances in her past (very bad circumstances), Debbie found it difficult to open up to people about her condition including her previous work coaches and employers and this had resulted in her losing employment due to absences and being sanctioned due to missing appointments. Debbie has Bi-Polar / Disassociation Disorder.

Pat gradually built up trust and understanding and Debbie was able to open up for the first time ever about her health condition.

Debbie was on a long waiting list for counselling so Pat suggested she looked at the MIND sites, and referred her to some local mental health services. Pat reviewed her Claimant Commitment and included these as steps as voluntary activities.

Debbie's confidence and trust grew over the next few appointments. Pat arranged for Debbie to attend interview practice sessions and asked her to research interview techniques and common questions. Again, Pat reviewed her Claimant Commitment and included some of these as mandatory work preparation activities. As Debbie's confidence grew they agreed she would research job specifications which fit her skills, experience and qualifications. To do this she agreed to search for jobs online for 10 hours per week and submit her CV to relevant online recruitment sites.

When Debbie was selected for interview with an airline which was her dream job, they supported her throughout the stressful application process. Debbie had got the job but she was scared to tell them about her condition. Pat went through all the Disability guidance and phoned the employer whilst Debbie was with to disclose her symptoms. The employer was fantastic and agreed she wouldn't work at all on a night during first 2 months to allow her to settle in, and then do it only occasionally when business needs demanded it.

In addition to this they supported her with funding through Flexible Support Fund to help her pay for her travel costs as she would have been unable to fund this herself.

When Debbie was finally accepted for the position she was like a totally different person from the timid young lady they originally saw.

Peter

The new claim interview took a long time to conduct as Peter was quite upset, distressed and agitated. The work coach listened for some time and just let him get it all out.

Peter just wanted to work, but had recent sanctions against him for Actively Seeking Employment (ASE) and Failure to Attend (FTA). They knew there were additional problems and managed to eventually find out that Peter at the age of 50 years could not read and write. Yet, he had previous sanctions and statements that stated he should write his job search down and was given written appointment letters telling him when to attend and what jobs to apply for.

Peter did not trust providers, but he was very capable of work, having worked on construction sites for many years.

They agreed with Peter that he would attend a skills assessment for English and Maths which would increase his work options and benefit him with his day to day life. They tailored the support given to Peter from day 1, doing interviews, face to face, side by side on the computer in the office. They helped him to produce a CV and Peter applied for jobs in the construction trade while sitting with the work coach when he was in the office.

Peter never gave up and took all the advice they could give. He was on time for all his appointments and demonstrated that anything is possible. He trusted his work coach, telling them about this very embarrassing problem that he has kept quiet for years.

Peter is now doing a part-time course in basics skills at the library. Peter is also in full time work earning £350.00 per week and very, very happy.

Peter phoned his work coach recently and made him cry as he stated that they were the first person in his life that had shown him real compassion and empathy, listening to him and giving him the help he needed.

Jane

The work coach had been working with a lone parent on Universal credit who was previously claiming income support for many years. She had been a carer for her husband, then widowed with two children to support. She was providing a Statement of Fitness for Work (SOFFW) stating not fit for work due to depression and anxiety.

Initially the claimant was not engaging and had a history of failing to attend appointments. The work coach supported Jane by in maintaining contact and tailoring the way they communicated making use of telephone and journal and she started coming to see them on a regular basis.

They discussed provision available to assist with her anxiety and sourced local provisions that could support her to manage her condition and they identified activities together to build her confidence and experience. She found this very useful.

They built up a good rapport with this customer and as her confidence started increasing they promoted how work can be good for our health and wellbeing and started to discuss the benefits of working for example, meeting new people, giving her routine and providing her with stability and security.

They demonstrated how her finances would improve if she worked by completing an Entitled To calculation with her. She was pleasantly surprised with the results.

They agreed realistic job goals and how she could spend time each week researching suitable local jobs. She acknowledged that time spent now would help prepare her for the future.

She attended a Work Capability Assessment but before a decision was reached she had already started working 15 hours weekly as a cleaner. She is

looking for more work hopefully in the retail sector. She said she cannot thank them enough for being so patient and encouraging with me. They helped me focus and provided support enabling me to plan for my future and improve my life.

Annabelle

The work coach first met Annabelle in December at her first Commitment meeting handing them a Statement of Fitness for Work (SOFFW) showing substance issues and a detoxification regime. After this first conversation, they were sure Annabelle was determined to turn her life around but her entire focus was on other things and wasn't ready to think about looking for work yet.

She was having Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and taking medication. They decided that they should use Health and Work Conversation About Me tool to identify more clearly how she was feeling about work and her employment strengths. They asked Annabelle to have weekly/fortnightly appointments with them as they thought this was the best way that they could build rapport and she would start to trust their advice and support. They asked her to draft her CV and bring it to the next meeting. Annabelle supplied a 6-page CV and they gave her advice on how to condense it. She'd had a successful career which suddenly ended.

Over the weeks it was clear Annabelle was making excellent progress and instead of referring her to our provisions they used the appointments for encouragement and positive conversations. As Annabelle's therapies increased and her medication decreased they started to talk about returning to work which really worried her at first. They used Health and Work Conversation My 4 Steps to help to identify what thoughts and fears she was having which was stopping her applying for the jobs she could do. They identified the strategies she could use to make sure that she went ahead with the plans she had made and didn't get cold feet at the last minute

They sent Annabelle a journal entry telling her of vacancies. She applied and was offered an interview. She was concerned about how to explain her sudden absence from the workplace; again they chose not to send her to interview techniques but to talk through questioning scenarios with her. Annabelle had also been offered a place on a peer mentorship programme to work towards an accreditation.

They were pleased to hear from Annabelle that she had been offered a job and had also been invited for an interview for another job. They encouraged her to attend despite the job offer. Annabelle contacted them again to say she'd been offered the other job too! Annabelle asked them what she should do. They spoke about the positives and negatives of both and they simply asked what her gut instinct was.

Annabelle said: the second job as the work schedule and hours fit better with her health condition making it more likely that she could cope with the job and stay in it. At the same time it would allow her to pursue the peer mentorship accreditation to counsel people who were in her situation.

They are extremely proud of Annabelle and the fact that UC didn't force them to put her into a box, but gave her the freedom to work with her how they felt best.