

National Disability Workforce Project

Pilot Site Report

Workforce Pilot Project



Interaction Disability Services Ltd

NDS Workforce Pilot Project

Workforce issues targeted:

Our goal was to increase our pool of part-time and casual staff from an older demographic living in the surrounding suburbs.

Our assumptions:

Our assumptions were that:

1. Our current recruitment practice was not effective — the process was daunting and designed to meet the organisational need rather than the individual skill and ability, that is, we wanted to attract the “unconscious competent”.
2. We will reinvent our advertisements, which were pitched at the wrong level to attract entry level mature staff, and pitch them at a candidates understanding, skill and ability.
3. We will attract people who have not considered working in the disability sector.

Strategies trialled:

The strategies we trialled were:

1. Create a proactive way of recruiting which is systematically different from our current practice. This means:
 - Design and word ads pitched at the needs of potential entry level mature workers
 - Utilise only the local press in areas surrounding our sites
 - Review and reword Social Educator Position Descriptions into plain English
2. Develop Information Sessions that will:
 - Give an overview of disability work as a sector
 - Give an overview of IDS, its values and ethos
 - Include staff who have come into the sector from other areas
 - Include clients
 - Provide information on training and development
 - Develop a shortlist

3. Establish a Working Party to engage current staff in the project
4. Establish a “Driver” of the project

The outcomes and outputs we sought from these strategies were to have:

1. A plain English reworded Social Educator Position Description
2. A very different advertisement placed in local papers
3. An Information Session designed and delivered
4. Data collection
 - Number of inquiries
 - Number of attendees ant the information sessions
 - Number of applications received
 - Number of interviews
 - Number of contracts offered
 - Number of staff commenced
 - Number of staff retained after 3, 6 and 12 months

Previous Criteria in Job Advertisements

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

- Certificate IV in Community Services (Disabilities) or a willingness to obtain within one year of employment.
- Commitment to the rights of people with a disability.
- Ability to work flexible hours including weekends, evenings and sleepovers.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Current NSW Driver’s License & a reliable car.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

- Experience in supporting people with an intellectual disability.
- Experience in supporting people with challenging behaviours.
- Experience in implementing Individual Program Plans.

New Job Advertisement

A Caring Job for Caring People

Apply Now if you:



- want a career change or want to get back into paid work
- want to be valued for your life skills and experiences
- want to feel like you 'made a difference' at the end of a day
- want routine but want it to look different every day
- can drive and have access to a reliable car
- can cook simple food and help organize someone's day

If you answered yes to any of the above, and would like to know more before embarking on a new journey, then we invite you to attend an information session on "how you will make a real difference to people's lives".

Please call 1300 668 123 and speak with Maria Cheatham to register your interest or to receive further details.

You will have the opportunity to meet some of the people whose life you will enhance and it will be a wonderful opportunity to explore the options available to you before you apply for any of our positions vacant.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Interaction Disability Services Ltd

ABN 23 002 979 928

Results:

The Advertisement was published on the 29th of November 2008.

Data:

- We had a 168 inquires! This was significantly more than we anticipated, which had been 20 to 30 applicants
- The single information session we planned became three. One in the morning, one in the afternoon and one in the evening.
- 70 applications were received after the sessions
- After strict culling, because of the numbers, 29 applicants were invited to attend an induction on 5 December.
- Culling again took place and 19 applicants were invited to attend interviews with program managers
- 10 candidates were offered positions with two commencing immediately

Anecdotal:

- We received positive feedback from all involved, including those people who were unsuccessful.

- For a number of applicants there was disappointment at missing out on continuing the process. These people may be the right people to look at in the future. Again, the number of applications forced us to revert to interview based selection, which was not our intention in the beginning.
- We received positive feedback concerning communication throughout the process. As it took longer than anticipated, it was important to maintain communication.

Conclusions:

- The User Friendly advertisement attracted:
 - People from culturally diverse backgrounds
 - Migrants with medical backgrounds
 - Mature males (21)
 - People seeking a career change
 - Applicants working in the Aged Sector seeking to transfer their skills
- The Information Sessions were able to deliver concise information on the nature of disability work, IDS as an organization and values and ethics.
- Applicants were able to meet staff and clients as part of the formal presentation and also meet them informally at the refreshment stage. This provided valuable information to the applicants and also allowed us to monitor how the applicants responded to clients and the work.
- Applicants were able to self cull from the process
- We had to combine part of the old style interview with program managers to further cull applicants because of the numbers received. This was not what we wanted.
- For IDS and for the applicants this was a unique way of doing things.
- Because of the volume of applicants the process took much longer than anticipated
- It is vitally important to keep in touch with the applicants and to let them know what is happening at every stage. This became a real positive in the process
- The importance of a single point of contact and feedback is vital. Our Human Resources Manager, Maria Cheatham, did an outstanding job in managing this process. The Driver of the project is vital.
- Key points on the information Sessions were:
 - Limit participants in sessions to 20
 - Invite interested participants to make interview times at the conclusion of the sessions
 - Reduce the process time from information sessions to offer of contract – two weeks