

## How the Embracing Diversity Project helped John:

John lacked confidence when Bury EST's Placement Officer Tim Hall first met him and was hesitant to try new things. Tim spent several months getting to know John and building his confidence, before applying for jobs. During this time John was encouraged to attend a work skills course where he was able to develop interview skills and job search techniques.

## John Today:

When John was ready his placement officer arranged for him to do a work trial with Joseph Holt's brewery. This was a success and the following month John was offered four hours a week paid employment. Three months later this was increased to sixteen hours.

**Robert Banks, John's employer said,**

**"from my experience I would recommend Bury EST to other employers....the system works. It has been proved to work but without the back-up from Bury EST and the placement officer it would definitely not be as successful."**

Bury EST offers continued support to both the employer and client for as long as required. In this way we can be proactive in resolving any issues that may arise and both parties have the added security of knowing that we are just a telephone call away.

**John is now very settled in his job and said,**

**"I think Bury EST has been the most helpful and informative organisation I've come across during my health/employment problems and I applaud them. I have been working for some time now and consider it to be the most enjoyable 'paid' job I've had so far."**

John was referred to Bury EST by a nursing specialist who felt that due to John experiencing obsessive compulsive disorder, depression and low self esteem, Bury EST could provide him with the support he needed to find and retain employment.



**Best Practice:**

Throughout our many years of experience of working with our clients and employers we have learnt a lot. The summary below shows what we feel is our 'Best Practice' for working with someone who has experienced mental health problems.

**Apply reasonable adjustments and a flexible approach to recruitment practices:**

- Ensure that qualifications/work experience required to do a job are not a barrier to potentially suitable candidates applying for a position.
- Focus on a person's abilities to do a job rather than their qualifications or their work experience by using 'working interviews' and work trials when this is appropriate. Consider how a person's life experiences may meet the competencies to do a job.

**A healthy workforce is a productive workforce!:**

Develop active health promotion initiatives which support staff in understanding and maintaining their own mental health. This could include:

- Incorporation of mental health awareness into relevant training programmes.

Education of all staff is important to be more aware of equal opportunities and diversity policies.

- Recognise that workplace stress can affect the mental health and the work performance of an employee. Develop early intervention support services which could be provided by the employer or Primary Care Services to prevent job losses and a deterioration of an employee's mental health. This could be the utilisation of occupational health schemes.
- Provide new staff with workplace buddies to support them through induction and training.
- Use risk assessments to identify the impact of stress in the workplace and build in control measures.
- Ensure that equal opportunity/diversity policies and procedures and associated monitoring systems are in place which promote and maintain the mental health of the workforce.

**Get the specialist in!:** Develop links with an external specialist who can provide advice on;

- How to recruit and retain a diverse workforce
- Employment law.
- Access to Job Centre Plus programmes, such as Access to Work.

**Factsheet 02** ◀

# Embracing Diversity

is a funded project working to get disadvantaged people into employment and achieve greater diversity in our workplaces to reflect the communities in which we live.

If you are an employer or potential client who would like further details about what we could do for you please contact us.

Stockport Employment Services

**0161 474 5903**

Bury Employment Support & Training

**0161 761 4662**