

LSIS funded Improving training and related services for employers

PROVIDER END OF PROJECT REPORT

Project title: Training and learning together

Section 1 : Introduction

(Give a brief introduction to your organisation and the project.)

Baldwin Training Centre (BTC) is an independent work based learning provider established in 2003 by Andrew and Lynette Baldwin, in Eastbourne East Sussex. After 17 years of experience gained working within the Health and Social Care sector in roles ranging from cleaner to manager/trainer, Lynette wanted to provide an outstanding, responsive and accessible training and assessment service, which understood and responded to the needs of employers, and developed the skills care workers require to meet the needs of the service user. They are now working with over 100 employers across Sussex but their aim, now shared by a team of twenty, remains central to all they do. Before the project employers were consulted about the training they required but then had very little input into delivery and assessment. The project aimed to develop a training model based on the combined skills and knowledge of the care expert practitioner and social care trainer. It included work shadowing and training to enable trainers and practitioners to achieve both the training and vocational skills needed to deliver skills required by the industry in a more cost effective manner.

Please explain how and why the project emerged?

The face of health and social care is rapidly changing and new skills are required by the new type of worker working with an increased elderly population, with often very specific and complex needs. Trainers working within the organisation needed to “up skill”, as they did not all have the up to date working knowledge and experience needed to deliver and assess the required training and skills.

BTC also wanted to ensure their contract value was maximised and supplemented increasingly by employer contributions for training which meets the needs of the learner in greatest need, and ensures training has the required impact within each organisation. This is, though, becoming increasingly difficult in the current economic climate. With the cost of providing a greater degree of care rising above income received, the training budget of care employers, should they still have one, is being stretched. This had an impact on BTC as the number of learners coming through the centre was reducing each month and staff were facing possible redundancies.

What are you trying to achieve within the project?

The project aimed to:

- develop an innovative cost effective training model based on the combined skills and knowledge of the social care expert practitioner, working in partnership with trainers working within the sector;
- enhance the relevance of learning to meet employer requirements;
- raise awareness of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and the role it has in ensuring the care worker has the specific skills required by the service user within social care; and
- develop the vocational and training skills of both care practitioners and BTC staff.

Section 2: Activities

Who has been involved? (Departments and/or job roles)

Every member of BTC has been involved in the project in some way.

- Two Directors.
- Three management members.
- Ten trainers/assessors.
- Two marketing/administrative staff.
- Two quality assurance staff.

The BTC team have been training and learning with:

- thirty care employers in Sussex;
- two sector skills councils for social care;
- two Skills Academies;
- three Jobcentre Plus (JCP)/welfare to work staff; and
- sixty learners.

The project has been communicated to:

- twenty other business leaders in the town including its MP;
- ten care employers at the Care Showcase event including Surrey/Brighton and Hove;
- six consortium partners from other sectors; and
- one consortium partner from the care sector.

What's happened so far?

Events

Care Training Conference

BTC held a Care Training conference for employers and other stakeholders to share the work BTC is doing through this project, as well as their other initiatives. It was attended by 16 care organisations, seven BTC staff, and the area Skills for Care representative.

During the day participants looked at ways in which training providers can work in partnership with employers within the Health and Social Care sector, to deliver the skills required by the industry, in a more cost effective way.

A Showcase for Social Care

BTC had a stand at the Showcase for *Adult Social Care 2012: Making a difference in Adult Social Care* event. The showcase gave BTC the opportunity to share the work they are doing through this project. Detailed information was given to ten employers from Surrey, East and West Sussex and Brighton on how they could work in partnership with the provider to deliver bite sized learning which met specific skills gaps within their organisations.

Dissemination of project to other sectors

BTC gave a ten minute presentation to 20 key business leaders on how investing in the development of skills can be beneficial for the town (Eastbourne). The work they were doing on the project was shared. The way this work could be developed across the town in a variety of other sectors, which are central to the economy of the town, was discussed.

The Linking of pre-employment work to this project and Apprenticeships

Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and the prime contractor G4S have been briefed on what employers want and the training BTC do. This information helps to identify and refer people from the work programme on to BTC's care pre-employment courses. The pre-employment training gives potential employees the specific skills required by employers. This then gives BTC learners the opportunity to progress onto Apprenticeship programmes, where they already have the skills training employers require. Employers very often have a set training budget for the year. The amount saved on training new staff is then able to be invested by them in training for other staff. They are also investing more in training because they have had an input into the training which is giving them the required impact.

Training and learning together

Three training days have been held for both BTC staff and care home staff. Participants have worked well together to share experiences and look at how they can work together to train and assess workers within the workplace. They explored using a much wider range of assessment methods, including resources they have developed between them as a result of what they have learnt during the training days and work shadowing in the workplace.

Staff Development Week

Eighteen of the 19 staff employed by BTC participated in a staff development week. During the week, progress on the project and how it could be developed was shared with staff from across the whole organisation. Individual meetings also identified and planned for developing? knowledge and skills not currently being utilised or required. The project originally focused on training for care trainers, but now includes the up skilling of all members of staff. The literacy and numeracy trainers want to develop

their knowledge of health and social care so they can more effectively embed the skills for life required by employers. They have worked previously with learners with mental ill health and acquired brain injury. Trainers are going to work on resources for units in these areas. Other staff will then be able to work through these units to update their own knowledge where necessary in literacy and numeracy as well as in the specific vocational area.

It is hoped that as employers see the impact of developing literacy and numeracy, as well as vocational skills, they will start to invest in further skills for life training.

Section 3: Success factors and challenges

In this project what have been the critical success factors (up to three) and why?

Critical success factors

1. Think out of the box.
2. Identify and utilise the skills and experience of all participants.
3. Take time to communicate with all participants to establish the required outcomes and impact.

More traditional work based learning models are often not cost effective and do not make effective use of available resources. With limited financial resources available for training, it is even more important to take time to establish the outcomes and impact required from all training, and to be creative in the way training is delivered and assessed. The project encourages all participants to think out of the box.

What particular challenges are there with training staff within individual organisations?

No two organisations are the same so each training solution needs to be tailored to meet individual needs. Every member of the BTC team was involved in the project and their skills were identified and utilised. For example administration staff answering the phone promoted the project. Directors, managers, quality assurance staff and trainers, from every sector, are taking advantage of knowledge only units now available in the QCF for their own continual professional development. They are also work-shadowing within the sector to see the knowledge being put into practise by the care expert practitioner.

Employers are looking at the skills their employees have or could develop, and BTC are training them alongside their own staff. They are learning the principles behind learning and assessment within the classroom, and seeing it being put into practise by BTC staff, so they can gain the skills required to support learners within the workplace. Utilising the skills within their organisation is, for employers, proving to be a more cost effective way of contributing to training.

Employer engagement staff have worked closely with employers to establish both the training required, and the desired impact. Employers are paying for bite sized chunks of learning which meet the skills gaps within their organisation.

What have been the key challenges? (up to three)

1. Getting employers on board.
2. Sustainability of project after initial positive response.
3. High cost of unit delivery.

And how did you overcome the challenges?

We decided to invest more in the project so we could upscale what we were doing. We realised that to get employers to give up time to attend a meeting which told them about the project would be difficult, as they would not easily see the benefits to them. We looked at general difficulties they were experiencing within their businesses. This included recruitment of staff and understanding requirements that they needed to meet under the Care Quality Commission. Instead of a meeting at our premises for six organisations, we arranged a one day workshop/conference which included lunch in a pleasant location with easy parking. It was attended by 22 care practitioners. We linked information about the project to other work we are doing with unit trials and employability. The regional representative from the sector skills council for Care spoke about accredited training that the Care Quality Commission was requiring. We covered with a representative from the work programme how we were able to support recruitment of staff with the skills required to enter the industry. Employers were able to see the whole package we were able to offer, and the benefits to them of investing in training with us.

The training offered was also up scaled from one day of training to the delivery of both assessor and trainer qualifications. Employers will then have the staff trained to support learners within the workplace on a bigger scale in the future. Employers with trained assessors/trainers will be able to benefit from an alternative charging structure we are introducing for employers that contribute in kind.

The high cost of unit delivery remains a challenge but we are hoping that when the Awarding Bodies' see how the volume of bite sized unit training is increasing in comparison to full diplomas, they will negotiate with us as they will not want to lose our business. In the meantime we are reviewing all paperwork to see where this can be reduced. Currently there is nearly as much paperwork for one unit as a full diploma. The administration of units is costly.

Section 4: How has something changed?

What difference has the project made?

At a time when other providers are having difficulties engaging with new employers, we have engaged with 13 new employers and three employers have returned to us after not working with us in recent months.

At the start of the project we were looking at staff redundancies but have needed to employ four additional staff. Two of the staff employed has been out of work for several months due to illness. In line with the provider's equality and diversity policy, they are being given extra support to get back into work.

Employers are investing in Induction training as they can see how the course provides a good basis on which to build future training. The course is on a rolling basis so new staff can join at anytime. There were two people on the first day, four on

the second day and currently seven booked on the third day.

What impact has the project had so far (for learners, staff, employers) - or what impact might it have?

- Increase in commercial training.
- More cost effective training model for training organisation and employers.
- Training resources to enable bite size learning to be built on from Induction to level three.
- A training model based on the combined skills of participants.
- BTC trainers confident to deliver training in required areas.
- Social care experts confident to support learning in the workplace.
- Raised awareness of the QCF and how practitioners can support learning within the workplace.
- A clear progression route for learners from induction to level three which is supported by health and social care employers and trainers working in collaboration to maximise resources.
- Employers are able to see the overall package, including areas where we are able to support them with funding, as well as areas where they will need to invest.
- Raised level of care acknowledged by the Care Quality Commission Inspectors.
- 100% satisfaction from all participants on the project.

How are you measuring the impact?

- Evaluation forms are being completed after each activity.
- Individual meetings were held with each member of staff during staff development week which included personal development and action plans linked to the project. These will be reviewed in full in three months time, and on a monthly basis at staff mentoring meetings.
- Work shadowing and the development of resources is continuing and will be reported within staff/senior management meetings.
- The project manager is completing a full report each month after reviewing and updating the project action plan.

Section 5: Reflections on learning

What changes did you make as you went along and why?

As mentioned earlier the project was completed on a much bigger scale as it was considered the additional investment was necessary in order to get the required impact.

We are leading by example and employers, our consortium partners and other providers will, we hope, be able to see how personal investment in training will support the sustainability of future business.

What has worked well?

- The one day conference.
- Linking the project to the other work we are doing.
- Involvement of a wide variety of partners and the utilisation of their skills and knowledge.

What needs improving?

- The administration of bite sized learning.
- Employers support with Apprenticeships as well as with bite sized units of learning.

If you did this project again what changes might you make?

- Work with another provider from within another sector doing a similar project.
- Have more of a focus on the Apprenticeship delivery model.

Section 6: What learning and outcomes from the project could be shared with the wider sector?**What else could be useful to capture what is coming out of the project?**

How the Qualification and Credit Framework needs to be used to tailor training and assessment to the needs of the individual learner and organisation. Prior learning needs to be built on, not repeated, and learners need to be able to see a clear progression route for the future, not just the present time.

What resources will be created that would be useful to share?

BTC are planning to produce a DVD which includes interviews with participants on the project, and a poster which displays the main outcomes. The project lead is happy to share BTC experiences through presentations to other providers.

How could we use the learning from the project to drive forward the Further Education and Skills sector?

BTC currently have their own Skills Funding Agency contract which is used by them and their consortium of partners. The partners all work within different sectors but to be part of the consortium they have to share the same values. High quality training which meets the needs of their industry and the learner being central to all they do is an essential requirement. What we have learnt from the project needs to be taken forward by other sectors, something we have already started to do.

We all need to be able to think “out of the box” and provide training in partnership with employers, in a cost effective manner, which meets their needs. If we do not, there is a danger that when minimum contract levels are increased many of the smaller providers delivering what the employers needs will no longer be able to stay in business.

Section 7: Future planning*What next?*

BTC hope to expand the project into other sectors and areas of the business by taking the following actions.

- Building on working with key businesses in the town to develop a customer

service qualification which focuses on the requirements of the elderly and disabled, and brings increased business to the town.

- Supporting partners within the consortium to develop their provision.
- Adapting their Apprenticeship model to include greater input from employers.
- Linking the project to commercial training specifically aimed at the over 50's.

What is the legacy?

Employers will invest in training if it has the required impact.

Section 8: Further information

Please supply contact details to help people who want to know more about the project.

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