

‘Getting the best from your PA’ training for individual employers

Organisation name: Leeds Centre for Independent Living (CIL)

Date of case study: May 2019

ULO funding 2017/18 and 2018/19

Leeds CIL used funding from Skills for Care to work with Shulmans Solicitors to develop a ‘Getting the best from your PA’ workshop for individual employers. The workshop covered some of the key aspects of being an employer, including employment contracts, managing PAs and grievance and disciplinary processes.

Aims

Leeds CIL wanted to support individuals to be better employers through dedicated workshops. They hoped that this would improve the relationship between individual employers and their PAs and improve the longer-term retention of PAs.

The project

In 2017/18, Leeds CIL worked with Shulmans Solicitors to develop a number of workshops for individual employers about employment law, including:

- contracts of employment
- managing your PA
- grievance and disciplinary procedures
- ending the employment contract.

Although the training was well received, they cancelled a few workshops due to low attendance or last minute cancellations.

In 2018/19 they decided to review the workshops, and made the content more generalised around ‘getting the best from your PA.’ They developed a single workshop that covered some of the common challenges that individual employers might face, such as:

- understanding employment documents
- how to manage underperforming PAs
- implementing disciplinary procedures
- ending employment.

The workshop was delivered by a qualified solicitor, so individual employers could ask questions about their personal situations. They also encouraged their own staff to attend, to improve their knowledge.

They promoted the workshop to individual employers through:

- an A5 leaflet in the centre and in their meeting packs which are given to new employers
- social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- newsletter
- website
- training calendar sent out to registered members with their payroll statements
- word of mouth through independent living advisors
- phone calls to new employers.

Individuals who were interested could book onto the training through an online form on 'Eventbrite'.

The outcome

As a result of attending the workshop, employers said that they learned how to make better decisions when managing their PAs, which has improved their communication and working relationship, and ultimately their care and support. They also felt more confident in their role, which has decreased the amount of support they need from Leeds CIL staff.

Participants found it useful to network and share their experiences with other individual employers on the training and get advice from a qualified solicitor. Here's what two participants said about the training.

"It offered valuable advice about the day to day experience of being an employer."

"I feel more confident with the new information."

The success of these workshops has encouraged more individual employers to contact the service for further training.

Leeds CIL staff who did the training said that they felt more confident when advising individual employers and colleagues on employment law issues, especially around grievance processes. Independent Living Advisor, Tom Harris, said:

"The employment law workshops were extremely helpful and they have given me a surge of new knowledge in relation to employment contracts and how to deal with customer grievances."

More information

If you're a user led organisation, you can apply for funding to deliver and/or commission training for individual employers and PAs. It's distributed annually, subject to funding from the Department of Health and Social Care. [Sign up to our quarterly newsletter](#) to keep up to date.

User led organisation funding Case study

Individual employers can apply for funding to pay for training for themselves and their PAs. The funding can pay for a range of courses and qualifications, and cover travel costs and the cost of a replacement PA. [Find out more here](#).