

Report of the First Speed Networking Event 22 October at the Holiday Inn Express, Newbury Park

This event was in danger of being cancelled as poor take-up of places especially by care employers. Although care employers were asked if they feel that they would benefit from such an event at quarterly information events, they was low interest. However, the event however small the number, was a great success and delegates anonymously indicated that they found it to be very good use of their time.

In the end five representatives from care providers and fourteen representatives from training providers attended, of which seven set up their business display up around the room.

The group started with an Icebreaker/game to warm up the voice and feet (!) and then Katrin Kruger summarised what Networking means, why it exists and the do's and don'ts of networking.

And then it got fast a care employer was match with a training provider and they had four minutes to introduce themselves and tell each other their main programmes or training needs. Business cards and leaflets were exchanges and many, many smiles. This carried on (with breaks) until all care employers had an opportunity to discuss their needs with each training provider.

In terms of the feedback forms completed (all delegates completed!) the following delegates had to say about this event.

The majority (12) felt that the suitability of the venue was very good and that the refreshments were very good. (8).

The majority rated the facilitator as very good (14)

16 delegates admitted that they prepared for this event.

Comments on what worked on the day:

- The fact that for the four designated minutes both parties were focused on the job in hand it made it very quick, efficient and productive afternoon
- Meeting everyone face to face and hearing from the Care Providers point of view
- I managed to meet a few Training Organisations and will be useful to use them for our services. Very friendly and approachable facilitator (keep up the good work)

- Meeting people from different organisations
- Meeting and networking excellent. New contact – learning about needs of employers
- Small numbers! Was just enough for 2 hours
- Meeting both providers and employers
- Being able to meet providers and try to assure or reassure them that there are good Training Providers as there were many complaints about bad Training Providers
- Meeting providers in person and having literature
- Contact with varying training providers to cover all aspects of our work
- Meeting and discussing training needs with Care Providers
- Meeting employers and providers
- Opportunity to meet Care Providers / Employers face to face and learn about their training need and explain our work
- I had an opportunity to air my difficulties and concerns about Training Providers I have used. I found it very interesting meeting and discussing about training needs of my staff
- Meeting Care employers face to face
- I got the opportunity to meet other Training Providers which is good then we can choose which one we would be interested in, so we get to contact them “say you get many choices”
- Marketing training services, meeting employers, networking with Training Providers
- Information gain are very useful

Suggestions on what could have been better:

- Nothing I can think of apart from trying to get more employers onboard but that, I know is not through lack of trying
- Allow more than 4 minutes per provider
- Bring and display a banner
- Location is far

They seem to have made some good contacts on the day and have some ideas on how they will follow these up:

- 4 or 5 I have promised to contact or pass their details onto other providers who can help them (Fran Fleming)
- Will make sure I call and email every contact that were made (Tahmina Ali)
- We have met 2 people that we feel we can work with. I will be following them up with a phone call and email
- Will follow all up, telephone – email / arrange meeting with my project manager
- 3-4
- 6
- All of them by email initially
- All contacts would be followed up
- Yes

Any other comments made:

- Very good opportunity – thank you. I'm sure interest will grow especially if evidence can be provided in the future of working relationships that were initiated here.
- This is a great opportunity to have employers and training providers networking. Well done to Katrin and Jackie
- Good, please keep it up

All in all it was a very interesting and speedy (1) event! Thanks for those who attended and made their valuable contribution. Let's hope we will see you again at the next speed networking event!