

Case study: developing motivation

Seetec

John, 55, had been unemployed for six years when he joined stage 3 of Flexible New Deal (FND) in Manchester. John displayed very low self esteem and confidence. Initially he was unable to maintain good timekeeping when asked to attend appointments with his adviser, Danny. At first John also needed encouragement when in conversation, preferring to give one word answers.

As John's motivation was very low, Danny had to work hard with him in the early stages of the programme. Danny took a tough but sympathetic approach with John, letting him talk when he was in a 'chatty' mood, but also refusing to see him if he was more than 20 minutes late and re-booking the appointment for the next day.

Danny made it clear that being on FND was a stepping stone to work and John needed to see the link between preparing for work and employment itself. This meant John demonstrating that he could meet the needs of an employer, including arriving on time.

John soon started arriving for appointments on time. He also began wearing smarter attire to reflect his new commitment to finding work. Danny helped John to overhaul his CV completely; this allowed Danny to chat with John about his skills, abilities and desired job goals.

As Danny showed John more and more job possibilities, based on John's transferable skills, John's motivation really took off. Soon he saw each job that he applied for as a possible chance to practise his interview skills, develop confidence and become well versed in handling competency-based questions, as well as a job opportunity.

Danny believed that John made such early progress because he was treated as an individual and worked better in a one to one setting than as part of a group. Danny worked on making sure John felt as though he was the only customer on his caseload and that someone believed in him and his skills. Soon John was applying for at least 10 job opportunities a week, rather than one or two.

John had previously worked for a local youth and community centre, helping people from underprivileged backgrounds. He had given this work up to look after his brother who had become ill. John decided that as he had looked after his brother, care could be a new career for him. It soon became apparent however that despite his personal experiences he was not being

selected for interviews as he had no qualifications in care and was without a driving licence.

This setback hampered John's motivation as he couldn't understand why his enthusiasm and experience obtained through looking after his brother wasn't good enough. Danny again worked closely with John to understand what it was about a job in care that interested him. After breaking down elements of the role it became clear that John was keen to apply himself to helping others, something that he found very rewarding.

Once he understood this, John started to look at many different types of work and Danny helped emphasise the community and environmental nature of John's hobbies. The next time Danny saw John, he had been offered an interview as a Neighbourhood Assistant, helping to patrol local car parks and pick up litter, etc. John was very excited about this role as he wanted to demonstrate his 'community conscience'; he was subsequently successful at interview. John has been working for five months now and is also doing overtime. His supervisor is keen for John to progress in work.

John is convinced that it was Danny taking the time to treat him as an individual that made all the difference as he had previously attended other programmes where he had been left sitting in a room doing job search on a computer or with the local paper. "I never thought I'd work again but Danny helped me see the different things I could do and really made the time to get to know me and find out what I wanted to do. All the other courses I went on made me feel I just had to go through the motions – Danny made me see I still had something to offer employers, this made me confident enough to go to interview and tell employers what I could do."

Flexible New Deal (FND) is delivered in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and the European Social Fund.

Key learning points:

- Adviser can use techniques to instil good work practices such as time keeping
- Treating customers as individuals can increase their motivation
- Customers can become de-motivated by attending multiple programmes
- Helping the customer identify transferable skills