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BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY'S READY FOR WORK PROGRAMME IMPACT STORIES



Proudly funding Business in the
Community's Ready for Work
programme



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Business in the Community's (BITC) Ready for Work Programme

Operating across the UK, BITC's Ready for Work programme helps provide employment opportunities for some of society's most disadvantaged people.

The Ready for Work programme works with businesses to support those who have faced homelessness and multiple barriers to work, helping participants re-enter into employment through the delivery of a supported two-week work placement.

The programme is collaborative, with businesses offering the varied opportunities and support that our participants need and employee volunteers value. Ready for Work provides the infrastructure and support for businesses to offer life-changing opportunities to people who are excluded due to experiences of homelessness, the care system, long-term unemployment, criminal convictions, substance misuse, health issues and more.

Ready for Work is supported by 150 businesses in 16 locations and allows businesses to create stronger links with the community, build an increased diverse talent pool and provide personal and professional development for their employee volunteers.

57% of participants that complete a work placement go on to gain and sustain employment, significantly outperforming similar national programmes. Participants also report many other positive outcomes from the programme, including gaining access to further education and new training opportunities, as well as an increase in skills and confidence.

The following Impact Stories provide real-life experiences of those who have successfully completed the programme and the momentous impact it has made in their lives.

Please get in touch with your relevant BITC contact for more information on how you can support BITC's Ready for Work programme and truly make a difference.

Impact Story

GAINING VITAL SKILLS

2019



"It was nice to get back into work, feel part of a team and have something to do."

**GOWLING WLG**

For more than 3 years, Tom,* a long term unemployed over 40 male facing the threat of homelessness, struggled to find work. He explored all recruitment avenues including digital recruitment platforms, without success.

Tom became involved with Crisis, the UK national charity for homeless people. The charity offers year-round education, employment, housing and wellbeing service and are supporters of the Ready for Work programme.

Sam, a Crisis support worker guided Tom through the various Ready for Work training opportunities matching his skill set. Sam was able to give Tom positive feedback, assure him he was doing all the right things and that job applications just needed patience. The training helped to increase Tom's confidence particularly around attending interviews.

Tom is now permanently employed by Gowling WLG, a multinational law firm. To Tom's credit, the company wanted to employ him from the first week of his Ready to Work placement, as his good performance and adaptability was evident from the beginning.

Now Tom is positive about his future. He lives in a new flat and his health is improving. Tom's life is now productive and settled.

* To preserve anonymity Tom is a pseudonym.



Impact Story

RETURNING TO WORK

2018



“My confidence is back, I am able to provide for my son and add additional experience to my cv. The support came at the right time as I was in a low state of mind at that period.”

In 2018, Maria, based in Manchester, found out about the Business in the Community (BITC) Ready for Work programme from a friend who had also participated in the programme.

Maria had been out of work for a long time and also had a young son. She desperately wanted to find paid work, but her confidence was very low. She was even volunteering for the type of position she wanted, but it was such a competitive environment.

With the help of BITC, Maria received a customer service position with Waitrose, which is a supporter of BITC's Ready for Work programme. Before starting her position, Maria and other programme participants were trained in various employability skills that would be needed, including team building activities.

Maria's confidence has now returned and she is delighted to provide for her family and add the additional experience to her CV.

Maria's main driver behind participating in the programme was that she witnessed other people's experiences first hand. From her first day, BITC's staff were there to support her every step of the way and keep her motivated.

“I was impressed with how positive and highly motivated BITC staff were. They facilitated the opportunity and went the extra miles to check on my progression and asked for feedback.”

WAITROSE
& PARTNERS

Impact Story

OPENING DOORS TO ALL

2018



"I believe a combination of all the support that I have had from the charities and staff of KPMG has really opened me up and made me realise that you are never alone. There is always someone there to help, all you have to do is ask."



Dermot had become homeless after a difficult couple of years, in which he had attempted to take his own life and suffered a family bereavement. He was living in a hostel (previously sleeping on the streets) when he discovered Business in the Community's (BITC) Ready for Work programme.

The Ready for Work programme provided Dermot with an opportunity to turn his life around. In February 2018, he took part in a two-day course which involves group activities to build confidence and practice interview techniques. This was then followed with a two-week, unpaid work-experience placement.

Dermot's work experience took place with KPMG, supporters of the Ready for Work programme. He felt confident in the environment and was able to speak openly with his colleagues. By the final day of his placement, Dermot's manager had submitted his application for a role as team secretary.

Dermot now uses his volunteering time and some of his holiday from KPMG to give back to BITC and the Booth Centre based in Manchester, by attending their training courses and telling his story about how the programme has changed his life.