Developing your disability confidence: why it’s important for your organisation

Since it began in 2009, CIH PAfD has developed a wealth of expertise, knowledge and experience on employing disabled people and making workplaces more inclusive.

Only 50% of disabled adults are in employment, compared to 79% of non-disabled adults. And when it comes to more senior posts, this disability employment gap widens to a chasm.

In addition, disabled people are over-represented in social housing as a proportion of the population and under-represented as the employees of housing organisations.

Some of the existing myths about managing disability in the workplace can stereotype disabled people as problematic, expensive to employ and not very productive. In fact, the reverse is very often true. Disabled people can bring qualities like resilience, determination, empathy, staying power and creative problem-solving to the workplace - because of their unique experience of disability.

In short, organisations benefit from the particular expertise and perspective a disabled employee can bring into an organisation. But we recognise that developing disability confidence can be a challenge.

We want to help you make your organisation more inclusive, more diverse and most importantly tap into the hidden talents that your organisation needs. Here’s how we can help you...

How we can help you raise your disability confidence through...

Professional traineeships for disabled people

Disabled people are massively under-represented as professionals in the housing sector. Giving an opportunity for disabled people to experience professional grade roles makes perfect sense if you want your organisation to be truly diverse.

- Two year professional traineeships: giving disabled people (chiefly graduates) a unique opportunity to gain the experience and qualifications that are essential to kick-start a trailblazing career in housing
- Tailored to suit your organisational needs: PAfD is a flexible service, committed to working with you to maximise opportunities for disabled people
- Expert support for trainees and staff: we provide mentoring; disability equality advice and information; and disability action training for your staff and trainees

What our clients say:

“...The PAfD trainee scheme was very successful. We were supported at every step of the way from the initial recruitment stage to advice about professional qualifications as well as an excellent mentoring scheme. The real measure of success is that both our trainees were successful in finding jobs with us by the end of the scheme."

Dorrie Sherer  
Head of Resourcing and Development  
Affinity Sutton
In-house mentoring schemes
Mentoring disabled staff can really help them to nurture untapped talent. We can help you to set up an in-house mentoring programme and manage it for you. Non-disabled mentors can learn about the barriers disabled face, developing and embedding disability confidence within your organisation.

- Help you to recruit up to 8 pairs of mentors and mentees from within the organisation.
- Offer disability equality action training to all mentors
- Make recommendations for any necessary reasonable adjustments for mentees
- Convene and facilitate three events per programme cycle to ensure the programme is effective and to promote mutual learning
- Offer a specialist advisor with expertise in disability equality issues to mentors

Tailored coaching for disabled staff
Disabled people are seriously under-represented at the managerial level in many organisations, but often have the skills and experience that your organisation needs. We can help your disabled employees to develop their potential and think about their future career path in a positive way.

- One to one expert coaching input for disabled staff
- Identify blocks to personal development and offer solutions
- Maximise career potential

Improving your services for disabled people
We can help you to ensure that your services are inclusive and accessible for all your customers.

- Policy and procedures healthcheck to meet obligations to disabled people under the Equality Act 2010
- Disability access surveys: to make sure your buildings and customer facing services are as inclusive as possible, with pointers for improvements
- Disability equality action training for staff and tenants
- Practical advice on engaging disabled tenants and residents

What our clients say:

"I would definitely recommend the PAfD scheme to other disabled people. Doing this scheme has given me the opportunity to work full time for an ethical organisation doing stimulating and rewarding work and earning a good wage. I’ve also gained a post graduate qualification. Before I started this traineeship I didn’t think I would ever have a ‘proper’ job."

Eileen Barron
former PAfD trainee, now working for Aster Group

"The access survey carried out by CIH … was very useful indeed. Not only did it highlight some of the physical barriers we had to overcome within the buildings themselves, but it was also an introduction to a whole new way of thinking about disability. Thought-provoking, sound advice from a critical friend!"

Stephen Cook
Chief Executive, Valleys to Coast Housing

"The training and guidance provided by PAfD have been invaluable. For me, the important first step was recognising that we all have preconceptions around disability that must be challenged. Graham provides this in a supportive and perceptive way, inspiring further thinking about the way we deliver services and support our staff."

Mark Harrison
Diversity Strategy Manager, Metropolitan

For more information about our services, please contact:
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PAfD offers a range of services that start at £500 for our disability improvement services. Please contact us to find out how we can tailor a package of services to suit your budget.