

Case 5: Customer care for hospital cleaners

Employer: Facilities management provider (contract-holder at NHS acute hospital trust)

Staff group: Hospital cleaners, many from overseas

Aim: Deliver customer care training to shift workers

Learning: Communication skills, teaching & learning strategies

Domains: Customer care, supervision, quality assurance

What happened: Employer agreed trial to bring customer care training to shift staff unable to attend company's mandatory training. Facilitator consulted staff, managers & training & quality manuals to create bite-size customer care programme delivered by supervisors at start of shift; trained & supported supervisors to implement the approach. Participating staff & supervisors achieved NOCN accreditation through the programme.

Value added: On-the-job learning system created that enabled employer to deliver customer care training to shift staff unable to attend company's mandatory training

Difficulties encountered: Lack of access to corporate management, lack of access to supervisors as a group for preparatory training, staff shortages, operational pressures related to national NHS initiatives (hospital 'deep clean')

Determinants of success: Management endorsement (based partly on perception of cost-effectiveness), work group commitment (incl managers & supervisors), quality of materials (accessible, workplace specific), flexibility with timescales, facilitation

Approach

- Secure agreement with employer
 - Research work routines to identify key activities, behaviours required of staff & performance problems typically associated with activities
 - In consultation with training/quality managers, supervisors & staff create bite-size on-the-job customer care learning programme facilitated by supervisors, offering NOCN accreditation to both staff & supervisors; programme materials include guidance on facilitation & mentoring for supervisors, workbooks for on-the-job staff learning
 - Train supervisors to deliver programme
 - Support training/quality managers to implement supervisor-led programme
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Employer's view: *The customer care training would not have happened with this group of workers without the LtW project. The supervisors are better equipped and rounded than when they started.*

(Cleaning manager & training manager, FM contractor)

Mentors' view: *We have been impressed with the idea of the course and the way it has worked. This approach seems to work better than previous training methods. We can see a difference in the quality of work and communication of those we are mentoring. They are more likely now to identify problems and raise this with the supervisors. Their confidence has grown and they are talking to patients and nurses. This enables them to develop better working relationships. There is a visible effect on work performance that is attributable to the project. It has changed my attitude to learning.*

(Hospital cleaning supervisors, FM contractor)