



celebrating diversity in the workplace



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Introduction to SAY It's Workable

SAY It's Workable is a unique initiative established as a result of recommendations in the 2000 'The Same As You?' (SAY) National Review of services for people with learning disabilities. It is a unique opportunity for people with learning disabilities to design and lead their own campaign, to have their opinions heard and listened to and to change the way society see people with learning disabilities. Unless otherwise stated, anyone quoted within this brochure is employed by, or has had a work placement with, 'SAY It's Workable.'

We realise that many people reading this will never have met someone with a learning difficulty before. We hope SAY It's Workable provides the positive examples and information you need to help your business reinforce change, celebrate diversity and create future employment opportunities.

Giving people with learning disabilities a more positive profile in communities is an important step on the way to changing public attitudes. As an employer, we know you will be more supportive if you have more information.



Some of the companies currently supporting SAY It's Workable

A-Z - Rosyth Dockyard
Asda - Dunfermline & Kirkcaldy
Bannatynes - Dunfermline
Banner Business Supplies - Livingstone
Boots the Chemist - Glenrothes & Kirkcaldy
Brucefield Manor - Dunfermline
Caberfeidh - Kinghorn
Café in the Park - St Andrews
Cemtron Ltd - Dalgety Bay
Charlton Riding School - Kilconquhar
City Hotel - Dunfermline
Craigencalt Ecology Farm - Dunfermline
Davaar House Hotel - Dunfermline
Dean Park Hotel - Kirkcaldy
James Donaldson & Sons - Leven
Dunfermline Building Society
Fife College - Kirkcaldy
Fife Council
Fife Healthcare NHS Trust
Fife Primary Care NHS Trust
Fife Fire & Rescue Service - Thornton
Fishers - Cupar
Flear & Thomson - Leslie
Green Towns & Co - Cupar
Ilasco - Glenrothes
Ingenico Fortronic - Dalgety Bay
Instep Initiative - Kirkcaldy
Kettle Produce - Cupar
Keavil House Hotel - Crossford
Kirkcaldy Acute NHS Trust
Laidlaws - Kirkcaldy
Lomond Centre - Glenrothes
Matrix Fife - Dalgety Bay
McDonalds - Glenrothes & Kirkcaldy
M D Auctions - Kirkcaldy
Millennium Fitness Centre - Glenrothes
Nationwide Crash Repair Centre - Cupar
Old Course Hotel - St Andrews
Pathhead Training - Kirkcaldy
Poundstretchers - Dunfermline
Purvis Plant Hire - Lochgelly
Raith Rovers FC - Kirkcaldy
Redwells Joinery - Glenrothes
Rymouth Housing Association - St Andrews
Sainsburys - Kirkcaldy
The SAY Project - Glenrothes
Sheds Hairdressers - Dunfermline
Sodexo - Glenrothes
Somerfield Stores - Cowdenbeath
St Leonards School - St Andrews
St Margarets Hotel - Dunfermline
Stuarts - Leven
Robert Summers Transport - Buckhaven
Sinclairtown Library - Kirkcaldy
Tesco - Kirkcaldy
Villa Atina - Kinghorn
A Williamson & Sons - Milton of Balgonie ...
... **are you next.**

Change your expectations

"I want this campaign to change people's attitudes to people with learning disabilities. When they see us they just see people with disabilities. I want them to see us as people - people who work."

Jacqui

"You need to see me as a person first not just as 'learning disabilities'. It's the right thing to do. People should know more about learning disabilities and then they would understand."

Audrey

*"Society's expectations of people with disabilities are pretty low. People assume I can't do things. **It's about proving people wrong.** When you meet someone you have to see them as an individual. You can't take it for granted what someone can or can't do - you have to find out. Ask them or let them try. Things are gradually changing for people with disabilities. Now we're getting more recognition for our abilities. People who don't know much about disabilities - don't expect very much of us. Step back and let us do what we think we can do. If we prove you wrong all well and good."*

Robert

"I can do more than people expect. People are surprised at what I can do. People need to think in a different way. Talk to me and find out about me. See the person. They look at what's wrong with us first. Instead people need to treat us the same as other people."

Elaine



10 things you didn't know about people with learning disabilities

- 1 We can and do learn
- 2 We want to work
- 3 We don't just want to live off benefits
- 4 We don't need 'looking after'
- 5 We can bring our own job coach/ support worker into a job with us
- 6 We can make our own decisions
- 7 We make good work mates
- 8 We want to change the way people see us
- 9 We have a sense of humour
- 10 That's it!

People with a learning disability want more - their needs and expectations are changing. This is about people being included, better understood and supported by the communities in which they live. It is often not their learning disability that is the real disabling factor for many people, but other's perceptions of them. By encouraging diversity in the workplace, assumptions will be challenged and communities will include people as equal citizens.

People are often fearful of disability because it is unknown to them and lack of personal contact reinforces stereotypes. We all need a better understanding of people with learning disabilities and how they can contribute to the community.



The benefits to employers

1 Developing a diverse and dynamic workforce

Any truly diverse workforce will successfully include people with learning disabilities as equal employees. By encouraging diversity in your workplace, you are enabling people to have a positive profile in their community, helping to change public attitudes and enabling people to be included as equal citizens. A workplace that is able to support and empower its disabled employees will be able to bring out the best in all its employees. Businesses that have the vision and the will to welcome diversity in the workplace will prosper, and as a result society will also benefit and gradually change.

"Go into it with an open mind. Don't have any preconceived ideas on what the person will be like. Give that person a chance and you'll be pleasantly surprised."

David Summers,
Robert Summers Transport, Buckhaven

"David needs no supervision and he's very happy in his job. He doesn't come across as a 'disabled' person. The job suits his abilities

and personality. We haven't made an issue of his epilepsy - it didn't concern us at all when we were employing him."

Jocelyn Tolley,
The Old Course Hotel, St Andrews

"It's obviously made our workforce more diverse. It enables our firefighters to interact with people like Paul and it gives them a different outlook on life. From that point of view it's been very positive."

Brian Dolorey,
Fife Fire & Rescue Service, Thornton



Paul Johnstone - Fife Fire & Rescue Service

2 Good business practice

In the UK 1 in 4 people are disabled or are close to someone who is. People with learning disabilities are also important customers and consumers, as are their family and friends. Businesses which welcome diversity into the workplace will enhance their reputation and value with customers and stakeholders and deepen the values of the company.

Business will benefit from the support of relatives, colleagues, friends and carers of people with learning disabilities who will respond positively to the way companies treat disabled people.

“Stephen’s working here has opened everyone’s eyes. If he didn’t have this opportunity, he wouldn’t be like he is today. It’s given him that confidence and something to aim for. He’s accepted here - that’s a huge thing for someone with a learning disability.”
Carol Ritchie, Customer Services Manager,
Laidlaws, Kirkcaldy

“PJ has a good job, integrated into the normal workplace – taking part in the day to day functions of the business.” Brian Dolorey,
Fife Fire & Rescue Service, Thornton

3 Committed to equal opportunities and promoting social inclusion

Social Inclusion is one of the Scottish Executive’s top priorities. For many of us, working provides one of the main focuses in our lives and provides structure and meaning to our week. Being employed enables people to be usefully included in society and to participate as an equal member of the community. Businesses must work in the spirit of anti-discrimination legislation. By providing positive and successful examples of employment, you can help to change the way society sees people with learning disabilities, challenging negative assumptions and eliminating the attitudinal barriers that still exist.

“All companies that can, should provide equal opportunities. You’ll see for yourself that people with learning disabilities can do a lot more than you think. They’re capable of a lot more than people realise and they should be given a chance.”

Eileen Kermack, Stuarts Bakers, Leven

“We just see Claire as Claire – we don’t think about the Downs Syndrome.”

Susan Davie, Café in the Park, St Andrews

4 Enhance your corporate image

A positive attitude towards employing people with learning disabilities will effect positive change on your workforce, customers and society as a whole. Managing a diverse workforce is a key factor in overall business success. Tomorrow's successful companies will be those where all individuals are able to use their skills and abilities for business success. Staff morale and team development improves when businesses are seen to be good employers of people with learning disabilities. It also provides you with numerous opportunities for positive publicity.

"Scott is a key player in our company. He never lets you down. He's always on time and is keen to get on with his job and do it properly. He's very reliable and promotes the images of our company without a doubt."

David Summers, Robert Summers Transport, Buckhaven

"We involve Stephen with customers in a big way - then they see that the company's doing good, and that we're helping people in society who would maybe not get a job."

Carol Ritchie, Customer Services Manager, Laidlaws, Kirkcaldy

"Customers have been really positive. We've had quite a few letters to Head Office from people saying that they're glad to see Christie working here and that they're glad she's not doing a menial job."

Moira Hunter, Woolworths, Glenrothes



Stephen Galloway, Laidlaws

5 Reduced staff turnover

People with learning disabilities can make reliable, loyal and productive employees. Experience has shown that they are less likely to take time off work, and tend to stay with employers longer. This can reduce costs incurred in recruitment and advertising.

"I wish we could bottle Paul's attitude towards the job. He's very reliable and always keen to be in at work. He sets an example to everyone and gives 110% every day he's here."

Brian Dolorey,
Fife Fire and Rescue Service, Thornton

"I would have no qualms about employing someone with a learning disability - they'll fit the criteria you're looking for. There's definitely an area for people with learning disabilities within industry. They're keener than the people who are 100% able, without a doubt."

David Summers,
Robert Summers Transport, Buckhaven

6 Access to an untapped pool of labour

The expectations and aspirations of people with learning disabilities are higher than ever before. Expectations are changing and people with learning disabilities regard the opportunity to work as a high priority. Many people with learning disabilities have not had the opportunity to access the job market before, resulting in a vast amount of people with skills, abilities and talents that could benefit your workplace. People with learning disabilities want to work and earn money.

"Learning disabilities doesn't preclude people from the workplace at all - as long as the task is structured to the person's ability. People with learning disabilities are just as able to do a job as anyone else, given the proper training and initial support."

Anne Pearson, Matrix, Dalgety Bay

"People with learning disabilities are just as willing to work as hard as anyone else. It gives them responsibility and their jobs are just as important - there's always something for them to do. It's definitely worthwhile."

Carol Ritchie, Laidlaws, Kirkcaldy

Having a job would give me:

Confidence

Self-esteem

Pride

Experience

Strength

Friends

Happiness

Power

Money

A routine

Achievement

Skills

Independence

A place in
society

Equality

A reason
to get up in
the morning

The benefits to your employee

Equality and a place in society

Everyone has the right to contribute to society by working if they can do so. Employees with a learning disability have the same aspirations and ambitions as anyone else in the workforce and they too want jobs that are challenging and demanding. Work is about being an equal member of the community.

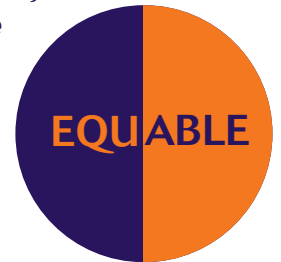
“Employment gives a person value and worth in society. It enables you to make a positive contribution to your community and changes the way that people perceive you. It’s about taking part in life.

Having a place in society can build your self-esteem, it lets people see that despite your disability, if you’re working you’re not just sponging off the state and that you’re at least trying to put something back into the community. Being involved in your community gives you self-worth. It’s something to get ready for - something to make you get up, get ready and get out. Before I worked I felt I wasn’t giving anything back. Now I’m always looking forward.”

Robert

“My employer’s quite alright with the fact that I have a learning difficulty. They see me as a good worker, doing a job, just like them. At least I’m getting off my butt and doing something. It’s good to get to know different folk. People just see me as Gary - nothing to do with having a learning disability. You just have to take your time and get to know people.” **Gary**

“Some people will like me, some people won’t but we’re all living in the same world. We’re all Jock Tamson’s bairns. But that’s just about me as a person - that’s nothing to do with my disability.” **Rob J**



Julie Allan, R T Stuarts



Money and independence

Employment allows people to prove their abilities and to make their own decisions. Independence can also be gained by having to travel to work by themselves. Earning money gives people independence, choices and power. People with learning disabilities don't just want to live off benefits - they want to be consumers.

"I want to pay my own way. It would show I have dignity and responsibility for myself. I like to do things for myself. It'd be good to earn money for myself and have my own budget. That'd show people that I could do things for myself." Audrey

"It means you're the same as anyone else working the same job - a fair day's pay for a fair days' work. It'd make you the same." Moira

"I want to have money of my own instead of depending on other people. It'd give me freedom. I'd have a reason to get out of the house every day." Elspeth



Confidence and self esteem

Working enables people to be valued and respected for their skills, abilities and achievements. The confidence gained from doing a job well has a positive effect on all aspects of life.

"I'm proud that I have a job. I'm doing something with my life." Gary L

"It's something to strive for. Now that I've got something to get up for in the morning - I feel great and I've got things to fill up my day. My placement has given me confidence not just in my work but also in my home - doing things for myself - I'm not as nervous as I was about trying new things. It let me see that I could do it. It gave me the chance. Working has had an immense effect on my life. Now I realise that I can cope with lots of things." Robert

"Doing a job well would give me confidence. People would see that I'm efficient, sociable and hardworking." Elspeth



SOCIAL

Social contact and new skills

Having a job expands life experience. Our Work is one the main places where people meet, make new friends and acquaintances, form relationships and go out socially. Working enables people to gain new skills and to develop as a person. It enables people to be seen as individuals with skills and talents that can benefit a workplace.

"I'd be a work mate instead of being someone who goes to a day centre. That'd be a good thing. If I was in work I'd get people saying 'that's my work mate' instead of 'the man who has a learning disability or epilepsy'. Most people in work go out at night or at the weekends - we should be the same. You work with that person but you're also a friend. Having work mates would make you feel more confident in your job and outside in your life. Learning new skills would give your more confidence and you'd be competent in what you've achieved." Gary

"A job widens your social outlook and the amount of people you have around you



LIKE

there's more chances for you to get invited to more things fill up my social calendar. Learning new skills would make me feel better because I'd be able to do a job without having to ask someone what to do. I'd feel so brilliant being able to do things on my own."

Robert

"It's good to go for lunch with your work mates in the canteen. You can hang about with them and talk to them about life. It's good to talk to your mates and have relationships - going to the shops or the cinema with your friends - that's not a big deal - but it'd be good fun - a good laugh."

Sarah



Claire Farquhar, Cafe in the Park

What is a learning disability

People who have a learning disability may learn more slowly but this doesn't mean they cannot learn. Learning disabilities are different and varied. Some people may have additional disabilities such as physical, mobility or speech differences and some people may find it difficult to carry out tasks involving reading, writing or money.

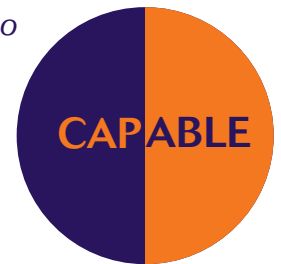
It isn't easy to tell if someone has a learning disability thus it is important to treat people as individuals - don't make assumptions about people's abilities. People with learning disabilities can and do learn and many are already making positive contributions to their communities by working. By being an open-minded and supportive employer you can enable people with learning disabilities to make an equal and valuable contribution to society through employment.

"We're more alike than different. There is no such thing as 'normal'. Everyone has the same feelings. The people who say 'normal' are always people without any disabilities. It means you are a wee bit slower at understanding things. I don't think it should matter, but it matters to some people - people who've not met you. If they've not met

you, they don't know what you could do. People who know me understand more. It doesn't worry me to have a learning disability. I'm healthy and happy with what I do." Gary

"Nobody's perfect. We all have things wrong with us. There's no such thing as normal." Moira

"We're all different from each other. We are what we are." Kenny



Scott Swinden, Robert Summers Transport

Down's Syndrome

Down's Syndrome is the most common form of learning disability and occurs at random, caused by the presence of an extra chromosome in every cell in the body.

For many people with Down's Syndrome the biggest obstacle they face is not their learning disability but the attitudes of people they meet.

Many adults with Down's Syndrome can have independent lives and are more than capable of working, and contributing to society, through employment.

People with Down's Syndrome should be treated according to their age and experience. An adult with Down's Syndrome should not be spoken to or treated like a child.

"Having Downs doesn't bother me. I'm happy in my job and it doesn't make a difference. If I'm doing a job, other people can do the same."

Hayley Binnie,
employee of Asda, Dunfermline

"The staff here don't need to know about Christy's Downs Syndrome - they treat her like anyone else"

Moira Hunter, Woolworths, Glenrothes



Hayley Binnie, Asda

Epilepsy

People with a learning disability may sometimes have epilepsy but it must be stressed that the two conditions do not automatically go together.

1 person in every 200 has epilepsy. It can affect you at any time of your life, regardless of age, sex, race, social group or ability. Epilepsy is a tendency to have recurrent seizures, but each person's experience of epilepsy is unique. Most people's epilepsy will be well controlled by medication and have little or no effect on their ability to work.

There is **no reason why epilepsy** should prevent people from working.

"When we employed Stephen his epilepsy wasn't an issue. Epilepsy could happen to anyone - you can't say that someone can't work because they have epilepsy. An employer has to make sure that their environment is safe to work in, and as long as their Health & Safety is up to standard, there's nothing to stop you employing someone with epilepsy".

Carol Ritchie, Customer Services Manager,
Laidlaws, Kirkcaldy

"David's epilepsy didn't concern us at all when we were employing him. His epilepsy is well controlled and we haven't made an issue of it. We try to suit someone's working environment to their ability, and as long as the tasks are well thought out, there is no reason not to employ someone with epilepsy".

Jocelyn Tolley,
Old Course Hotel, St Andrews



David Drummond, Old Course Hotel

Support available

Say It's Workable aims to encourage employers to provide work opportunities for people with learning disabilities, and introduces them to Fife EmployAbility Team.

Fife EmployAbility Team provide practical support and guidance to employers who employ or are interested in employing people with disabilities. By offering practical and in some instances financial support we help employers develop measures which overcome the barriers faced by people with disabilities who wish to work.

Practical Support

Practical support encompasses a variety of mechanisms geared towards ensuring that employment expectations are realised, and can include the following:

Vocational profiling: identifies a person's previous achievements, skills and abilities and areas for development to enable progression into employment.

Job matching: ensures that the requirements of the job can be achieved and sustained by the potential employee.

Job Coaching: offers on-the-job support to potential employees and provides an initial link between the person and their work colleagues at the first stages of work.

Job Analysis: assists the employer and the employee to accommodate the person's disability by looking at the duties of the post, identifying potential risks and recommending adaptations if necessary in line with current Health and Safety regulations.



Valerie Gibson, MATRIX

The support you can provide

You, as an employer can provide a number of work opportunities using the various support mechanisms already discussed. These can be:

Work tasters/placements which gives people with disabilities the chance to experience the world of work.

Permitted work enables people with learning disabilities to undertake paid work for a restricted number of hours (usually 3-4 hours) whilst ensuring that they can maintain their current level of benefits.

Part-time/full-time work (over 16 hours) can be offered and succeed with the right level of support and practical guidance. This allows people with learning disabilities to achieve financial independence.

Fife Employability Team will assist you and your potential employee to choose the most effective work opportunity according to your requirements.

Financial support

Financial support is available to employers who can offer work of more than 16 hours

per week to a person with a learning disability. There are a number of programmes which Fife Employability Team can organise.

WORKSTEP: Funded by Employment Service, WORKSTEP offers an individually tailored package of support to employees and financial Subsidy to employers

NEW DEAL Initiatives: These schemes are funded by Employment Service, and benefit disadvantaged groups in the labour market, by providing financial Incentives to employers. They can be applied according to an individual's circumstances.

Job Introduction Scheme: This is a scheme operated by Job Centre Plus and provides the employer with a six week grant (may be extended to 13 weeks) towards the cost of employing a disabled person.

Access to Work: This is a grant available to disabled people who are starting or are in work which covers and additional costs of enabling the person to sustain employment.

Fife EmployAbility Team will devise and implement the most appropriate support package for the individual and the employer.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) introduced new measures aimed at ending the discrimination faced by disabled people in society. It's main provisions were directed towards Employment, Goods and Services. In relation to employment, a general principle of non discrimination was applied, imposing a duty of responsibility on employers to make reasonable adjustments to working arrangements.

In areas such as recruitment, training, promotion and sustainment, employers are encouraged to adopt good employment practices, and ensure that disabled employees and job applicants are not significantly disadvantaged as a result of their disability. The employers duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' when accommodating a person with a learning disability may mean for example:

Allowing them longer to learn something new, providing someone to help them learn a new job or supporting them to understand and adapt to change.

Fife Employability Team provides practical solutions to allow organisations to meet their legislative and social obligations by successfully employing people with disabilities.

Working with someone with a learning disability

Don't make assumptions

"You've got to respect people. My disability doesn't bother me. That's what I am. I'm just a person. Don't see me as different. I don't feel I'm different." I'm just Audrey.

"When I'm talking sometimes people don't know what I say. Give me a lot of time and wait. Just listen to me. If you don't understand what I've said - be honest and tell me that you need me to say it again. I'm OK with that - don't be embarrassed to ask me to say it again.

There's no need to see us as special."

Elaine

"People look at me and judge me and have an opinion of me because of the way I walk. Everyone has problems of their own. Speak to me, don't have an opinion about me until you've met me."

Alison

"We want to be treated like everyone else. It wouldn't be fair on the rest of the workers if I got treated differently."

Alison

"You'll get some people who'll like you and others who don't - that's how it should be - that's just life."

Rab

"People don't know how to come forward to someone in a wheelchair and ask them a direct question. People wonder if I can manage. I'll ask for help if I need it."

Robert



Christy, Woolworths

- Treat us as adults
- Remember all that learning disability means is that I learn a bit more slowly
- Make things as easy to understand as you can
- Don't see me as different or special
- Get to know me as a person
- Respect my skills and abilities
- Treat me the same as the rest of your employees
- Don't make allowances for me or let me off with things because I have a disability
- Don't use words like 'mentally handicapped' or 'disabled' - 'learning disabilities' is fine
- Give me help to understand written information if I need it
- Give me time to talk if I have a speech difficulty
- Don't wrap me up in cotton wool - if I do something wrong then I should be pulled up on it
- Don't have your mind made up before you meet me
- If I have a wheelchair, ignore it. Speak to me and not the person behind it
- **Remember we're more alike than different**

The following people designed and contributed to SAY It's Workable:

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