



LDAN Skills and Training Event – Group Work Write Up

Groups were asked to discuss the following questions in relation to the four case studies below:

What initial conversation would you have with the client and what information would you want to ascertain?

What particular challenges would they face in accessing employment?

What training/courses or employment do you think might be appropriate? What steps would you advise?

Simon

Simon is 34 years old, lives in a Housing Association flat, has been in prison several times and has just completed a 6 month Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (with a couple of breaches), as a result of his last conviction. He left school with no formal qualifications but learnt painting and decorating in prison. This did not lead to any recognised qualification but he has done work on an informal basis. He is on a methadone prescription but continues to use street drugs on a semi-regular basis. He talks about starting a painting and decorating business but reverts to using street drugs when faced by obstacles.

Initial assessment

- What does he want to do, go straight into work or get training? What level of commitment does he have?
- Explore his current treatment, if he is using on top he may need to have his script adjusted.
- What is his housing situation like?
- Explore his social networks friends and family, are they using?
- Ask why he wants to start his own business.
- What did he enjoy about the course he took whilst in prison?
- Explore his current skills/knowledge.

Challenges

- Lack of qualifications.
- No references, as work has been informal.
- Drug use, even if prescribed, may impact on what he can do due to health and safety issues.
- If he started work he may have problems picking up his methadone script.
- Currently using street drugs, therefore is he stable enough to actually start work?
- Criminal convictions.
- Benefits may be an issue.

Next steps

- Brief psycho-social interventions to look at motivation, drug use etc.
- Stress and anxiety management.
- Soft skills training.
- Self assessment in numeracy/literacy.
- IT skills training.
- Look at working for a social enterprise or apprenticeship.
- Tenancy and benefit support.

Mark

Mark is 19 years old and started smoking cannabis when he was 15. He had intended to go to college to do Media Studies but after his GCSE's (he gained 6 A-C grades) his cannabis use increased and motivation dropped - he left college after a few months. He smokes skunk everyday, drinks alcohol regularly and uses "party" drugs sometimes at the weekend. The only thing which motivates him is rapping, which he does for a pirate radio station with friends and he'd like to get into the music industry. He still lives with his parents although they do not have a very good relationship.

Initial assessment

- Explore drug use and the impact it has on his social relationships.
- Look at family dynamics and how this affects him.
- Explore his interests, expectations and ambitions.
- Look at attitudes to work and money.

Challenges

- Drug and alcohol use, is he willing to tackle this?
- Lack of motivation.
- His peer group may be a barrier to success.
- Expectations may be unrealistic – music business is highly competitive.
- Benefits.

Next steps

- Family mediation
- Look at moving out of the family home.
- Cannabis support group, highlighting the impact it has on motivation and achievement.
- Look at peer group support and mentoring programme.
- Short courses, possibly creative writing, may focus and benefit his lyrical skills.
- Other courses that will build the base for a career in the music industry
- Approach community radio stations and private broadcasting companies about voluntary positions or work placements.
- Suggested that he looks at engaging in some outdoor activities to improve his overall health and personal motivation.
- Look at possibilities offered by the Princes Trust.

Janet

Janet is 25 years old and lives in a flat with her partner David and their 4 year old daughter Lucy. Janet had post-natal depression and developed a problem with drinking after the birth of her daughter. She has been accessing an alcohol treatment service 2 mornings per week for the past year when Lucy is at Nursery, and has now stabilised her drinking. As David works full time, the rest of Janet's time is spent looking after her daughter. Janet feels isolated and thinks that a part time job would help her to meet people. Janet has GCSEs (8 A-C grades) but no further qualifications. She had a job as a shop assistant in a clothes shop when younger but found this boring.

Initial assessment

- Find out what her interests and motivations are and what skills/experience she has.
- Ask whether there are any specific days and hours she'd like to work.
- Childcare arrangements.
- Would she be interested in further training/education in order to get a job?
- Ask whether she's getting any benefits.
- Explore what specifically she found boring about shop work.
- Is she receiving any support around her drinking/mental health issues.
- Is her husband supportive?

Challenges

- Her wages may affect her benefit entitlement.
- Need to look at childcare arrangements if she goes to work/college.
- Does she have appropriate support in place?
- Discrimination?
- Isolated, may have forgotten some social skills.

Next steps

- Get advice on benefits, especially any covering childcare.
- Look at peer mentoring or befriending.
- Look at courses that may improve her work skills.
- Look at further education as she has got good GCSE's.
- Look at types of jobs with flexible hours.
- Maybe look at job sharing or agency work.
- Negotiate childcare with her partner.
- Volunteering.

Michael

Michael is 45 years old and has lived in a homeless hostel for 4 years. He has had drug and alcohol problems and periods of homelessness since he left home at 18 years old. Michael is now not using drugs and has been stable on a methadone script for 2 years. He feels that he would like to move into employment, although he has never previously worked. Michael left school with 3 GCSEs (2C's and one D grade) and at 17 started a construction course but

did not complete this. He has previously sent off applications to a number of jobs but has not heard anything back.

Initial assessment

- Discuss his journey – what happened after school, why didn't he complete his construction course, why he now wants to work? Build rapport.
- Assess willingness to train.
- What are his interests? Goals?
- Has he identified any barriers?
- His failed job applications – what jobs were they for?
- What are his support networks? What support does he feel he needs?
- Assess literacy/numeracy.
- What benefits is he on?

Challenges

- Stigma – former drug user, currently stable on substitute medication.
- Would employers allow him time to collect his methadone?
- Current mental and/or physical health.
- Age discrimination.
- Social skills and confidence.
- Lack of experience, probably doesn't have much knowledge about the current labour market.
- Lack of CV, application and interview skills.
- Gap in CV – 27 years!
- Does he have a criminal record? Disclosure issues.
- Housing – if he starts full time work his benefit entitlement will cease and he's living in a hostel where weekly payments are higher than market rents. Also, hostel regulations may mean he has to move out if he gains employment.
- How will he cope with the day to day stresses of working life?
- Possibility that his expectations may be either too high or too low.

Next steps

- Soft skills training.
- Look at what he can do now e.g. work trials and volunteering– it will help fill the CV gap and also get him used to a working environment further enhancing soft skills such as time keeping, team working etc.
- Work with his prescriber if his methadone pick up days become an issue.
- Job hunting skills training: CVs, application process, interview skills.
- Training related to construction e.g. CSCS card.
- Access providers who support specific industries.
- Adult education, alongside work if necessary.
- Job brokerage.