

## NHS Business Services Authority help staff through restructure with EDI's Employability Skills qualification

***The NHSBSA is helping to build confidence among staff through a new Employability Skills qualification from EDI ([www.ediplc.com](http://www.ediplc.com)) designed to provide transferable skills for the workplace.***

Following the implementation of a streamlined computer system for processing NHS prescriptions, staff at NHSBSA (NHS Business Services Authority) within PPD Business Division were offered voluntary redundancy. During a time of uncertainty for these employees, some of whom have been working in the same role for over 30 years, the NHS wanted to provide support and build staff confidence. An outplacement programme to support staff during their change of career was developed across the organisation.

Denise Smith, Corporate NVQ Assessor Co-ordinator, NHS Business Services Authority, chose to work with leading awarding body and assessment specialist EDI to offer staff the opportunity to gain a Level 2 Certificate in Employability Skills as part of the outplacement programme. This nationally accredited qualification enables learners to gain a better understanding of the skills required both to enter new employment and to work to their full potential within their role. Covering the transferable skills necessary within the job market, the certificate is not specific to any sector and is suitable for a wide range of job roles and industries.

The Level 2 Certificate in Employability Skills focuses on skills that help people gain and retain jobs, in any role and in any sector. These skills encompass health, safety and security in the workplace, essential communication and interpersonal skills, team skills and how to build positive working relationships.

Denise explains: "It is really important that staff going through redundancy recognise that they have a whole host of transferable skills to take to other jobs. We worked with staff to establish their existing skill-set as well as to identify areas where they need some extra practice. For example, a number of staff didn't have much experience of presentations which has now become a common requirement at interviews."

Through developing such skills, learners will not only have an improved knowledge of their role in the workplace but also have the confidence to be more effective within it. With personal effectiveness a key element of the certificate, candidates learn to analyse individual behaviours, such as how to manage stress and personal feelings and how to respond to challenging situations and conflicts in the workplace. Successful communication is key to success in any role and this certificate enables learners to focus on their verbal and written skills, from body language and voice tones to active listening and presentation skills.

"The qualification has really helped to relieve stress at a difficult time. During the six week course we build staff morale and confidence as well as giving them a focus in their last few weeks at work."

The qualification is assessed through an assignment and a multiple choice test and Denise explains, "Some of our staff haven't taken a test for some time and being able to achieve a qualification through completing one gives them a new found confidence in their ability to succeed. The outplacement



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programme available to all staff facing redundancy included interview practice so they really are fully prepared and feel confident in taking steps towards a new role. This was also part of the qualification.”

Over 60 NHSBSA staff have now completed the Level 2 qualification in Employability Skills with targets set for over 100 staff by March 2009. Denise concludes, “The feedback has been so positive we are hoping to roll out the qualification to more candidates generally across the NHSBSA in 2009.”

*For more information about EDI's Level 2 Certificate in Employability Skills, please visit [www.ediplc.com](http://www.ediplc.com) or telephone the enquiries team on 08707 202909.*



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