

Helen Sanderson Associates

Using values-based recruitment to recruit the right people for new wellbeing teams

Helen Sanderson Associates is a social enterprise that works on projects to achieve social change through person-centred practices.

Helen Sanderson and Dr Rod Kersh developed the concept of 'Wellbeing Teams' to support people who need care at home, inspired by the Buurtzorg model.

This approach involves a team of no more than 12 people that work together to provide person-centred, co-produced, home-based care to people who live in a particular area. Support is organised around what matters to the individual and enables them to design their own care and choose their own team.

These Wellbeing Teams are built around the principles of self-management so require staff to have values that align to supporting people in a person-centred, self-managed way.

What we wanted to achieve

In self-managed teams, all decisions are kept as close as possible to the individual receiving care and support. This means the team can work more flexibly, respond to changing care needs and achieve the best possible outcomes for the individual.

For self-managing teams to work, it's crucial to find staff with individual values that are in harmony with person-centred support. To do this, we wanted to create a new approach to recruitment that looked beyond their CV or interview skills.

What we did

Pinpointed the values we wanted people to identify with

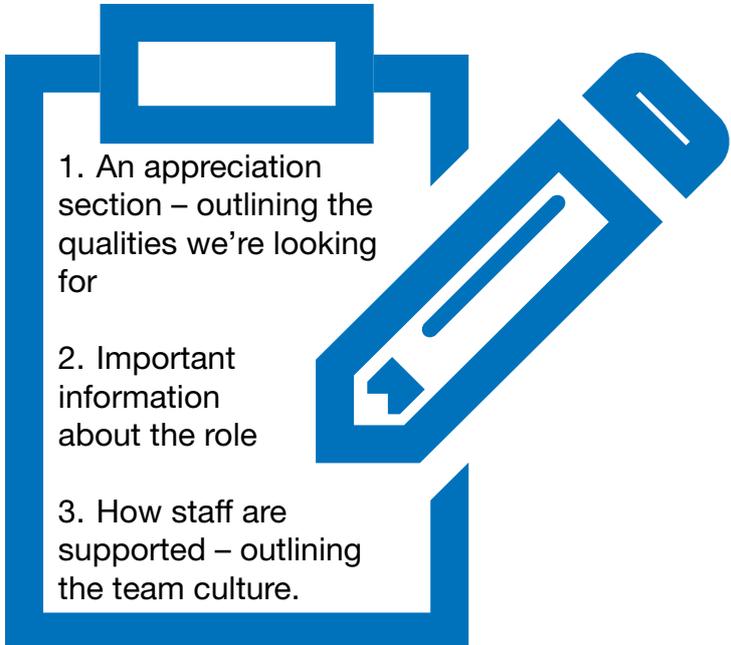
We worked with values expert Jackie Le Fevre to identify the values we wanted people to align with. We then listed 10 ways that these values could be seen in practice; this became a list of what matters to us as an organisation.

Developed a different kind of job description and person specification

We used our values and what matters to us to develop a job description and person specification.

We wrote the person specification as a one-page profile called 'Could this be you?'

There were three sections to the profile:

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1. An appreciation section – outlining the qualities we're looking for
 2. Important information about the role
 3. How staff are supported – outlining the team culture.

The job description summarises the ten ways that workers fulfil their role.

Looked for values first, not experience or qualifications

We didn't ask people to send their CV; we asked people interested in the role to get in touch and talk to the registered manager. This means the first impressions of people were based on a conversation, and shortlisting was based on direct personal connection.

There were some questions asked in the conversation such as 'what excites you about this role?'

People who were warm, friendly and excited about the role were invited to attend a workshop day. Before this day they were sent a recruitment pack containing

- information about one page profiles and a guide and template so they could write their own
- a map, reminder to bring lunch to share and a request to confirm their attendance
- request to bring work history information for a DBS check and references.

Ran workshop days that were co-produced with older people who need care and support

We included older people who need care and support in the assessment day. They were involved in making notes on candidates, being on the welcome desk and helping with exercises. They were also equal decision makers on final selection.

Explored values during workshop days

These days ran between 10.00 and 14.30. They involved exercises to explore people's values and behaviours including how they work with others, problem-solve and use their initiative.

Exercises included values-based questions to prompt conversation, providing hand massages to demonstrate personal connection through physical contact, and building a structure as a team using marshmallows and spaghetti.

Used specialist values profiling tools

When new staff accepted their offer of employment, we asked them to complete a values profiling exercise to identify what matters most to them as an individual. Then we explored the values that people prioritised with the core values of Wellbeing Teams to ensure they aligned.

The degree of alignment between the values of the new staff and our values was a measure of the success of the recruitment process.

What we learnt

The workshop days differentiated people who were excited for the role and those who didn't think it was right for them. Doing the workshops meant we found people whose values were congruent with becoming wellbeing workers, rather than people who would have shone in an interview and then later realised they weren't right for the role.

We were thrilled to find we had attracted and selected staff who, individually and collectively, prioritised values that aligned powerfully with our own: including human rights, human dignity, care, health and wellbeing, and equality.

Read more about the work Helen Sanderson Associates do at www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk.



Skills for Care Recommends

Skills for Care has lots of resources to help social care employers with their recruitment and retention challenges.

Finding and keeping workers

This online resource bank has lots of information to help employers find and keep workers for their organisation.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/finderskeepers

Values based recruitment toolkit

This online toolkit has lots of useful guidance and templates to help employers recruit workers with the right values, behaviours and attitudes.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/values

Think Care Careers

This website provides careers advice for people interested in working in social care. Employers can use it to promote careers in social care.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/thinkcarecareers

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