

Right at Home (Derby): Getting the right match through the application process

Introduction

Right at Home (Derby) provides companionship and support to enable people to lead quality lives in their homes and access services in their local community. Their recruitment needs are established by customer requirements and potential customers who make enquiries about their services.

What they wanted to achieve and why

“As we’re a domiciliary care provider, we’re constantly recruiting because we can’t take on a new customer without having a new care worker. It can be very challenging to recruit the right people and workforce planning is an everyday conversation,” said Niki Long, Registered Manager.

Right at Home focus their efforts on getting the right match and have adapted their application process so that a person’s values can be identified. It’s important that applicants have the right values, beliefs and personality traits to suit their client base and they use a comprehensive client and carer matching system.

They work towards a ‘controlled growth plan’ which aims for a target customer/client ratio of 1:1.

What they did

They adapted their application process and now focus their recruitment efforts on encouraging people with the right values to apply for vacancies. The values someone has, takes priority over their skills or qualifications.

Job boards

All applicants are routed through Right at Home’s jobs board and applicant management system which displays their company culture, vacancies and the application process.

“Candidates must have the right values and beliefs. If they have the values, we can teach the skills” said Niki.

Online support

Right at Home have an online chat facility on their website where there’s someone available to answer questions at any time. This is then followed up with a phone call the next day.



Niki said: “We’ve found that by having a personable approach and making direct contact with potential candidates makes them feel important. It gives a good impression of our organisation even before they start working here.”

Application form

The application journey focusses on the person’s values rather than the skills and qualifications a person has. It’s made clear from the outset that Right at Home will provide comprehensive training at induction and that there’s the opportunity to undertake further qualifications.

They ask applicants to complete an application form in the office to test people’s ability to complete documentation to the required standard for the role.

As part of applying to work at Right at Home, candidates are also asked to complete a psychometric profiling exercise designed specifically for the care sector. It looks at characteristics such as values, commitment, ethics, compliance and honesty which are extremely important to any role at Right at Home. Understanding that applying for job and a new career can be a daunting process, they support candidates to feel as comfortable as possible.

Niki recalls, “We had a lady who came in to complete the profiling exercise, and I could see she was nervous. I made her a cup of tea which made her feel a bit more relaxed and then she just started chatting, and straightaway we knew which customer she’d work well with.

“To bring out the best in an applicant, and get to know their personality, sometimes a small gesture to make them feel at ease can go a long way in getting them to open-up so you can get to know them and discover if they’ll be a good fit.”

After the application process, if the candidate shows potential, they’re then introduced to the registered manager or owner for an informal chat and then an interview.

What they achieved

Niki said: “Since putting more emphasis on recruiting people for their values, we’ve managed to recruit some great staff who’ve got the right beliefs, behaviours and personality traits. This provides more options when matching clients to care workers, leading to better quality relationships between staff and the people they support. This also helps to maintain a customer/client ratio of 1:1. It also means that we can take on more clients as we’re more confident that we have people that would be a good match.

“We recently had a recruit who’d just been made redundant from a teaching assistant post. She started the role and loved it. She won the best newcomer award



within her first six months, and I've got to say she's one of the most amazing carers I've ever met in my life.

"We've now got a customer waiting list because we won't just take on any staff, they have to be the right people whose own values and our beliefs complement those of our organisation."

Conclusion

Right at Home (Derby) won Skills for Care's 2019 Accolade award for the 'Best recruitment initiative'. This goes to show what a difference using a values-based approach to recruitment can make to the quality of staff that are employed.

Using values-based recruitment to get the right match has resulted in a vast amount of positive feedback from the people they support. Here's an example of what one person had to say:

"I needed a live-in carer while my husband was recovering from surgery. I wanted a carer who could drive me to my sailing and other activities, and who would fit in with my family and not feel like a stranger. "I was worried at first about the person Right at Home would match me with. I was sent carer profiles which were really detailed and helped me to decide who to choose. The person we chose was amazing and the perfect match! We had lots of fun together and she made the entire time feel so much easier for us both."

Key learning points

Here are the top three learning points from Right at Home which might be useful to other adult social care employers who want to recruit and retain the right people.

1. **Get the right match** – if you recruit the right person with values that match your organisation and those of the people you support, they're more likely to stay. This leads to effective communication, high-quality care, support and continuity.
2. **Experience isn't always needed** – it should be made clear in all aspects of the application process that a person's values are a key aspect, and not just what skills or qualifications they have (unless this is an essential job role requirement). Reassure candidates that they'll receive training and support to gain necessary skills.
3. **Make applicants feel important and comfortable** – regular communication is very important. Being responsive to enquires keeps the applicant interested and shows them that they're valued. Do what you can to make them feel comfortable and relaxed as this will bring out the best in them. It also demonstrates that your organisation has good values and will be a great employer.



More information

Skills for Care has practical resources to help you to get started recruiting people for their values:

- use Skills for Care's online profiling tool '[A Question of Care](#)' which is an online, interactive quiz which uses scenario-based videos and questions to assess people's values and behaviours
- visit the '[Application process](#)' section of the Skills for Care website for more information and to download free resources.

Visit our website: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/applicationprocess