Life Path Trust

SUPPORT FOR LIVING

Value based recruitment review

Contents

Introduction

Life Path Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee. Our vision is

'To enable people with learning disabilities to live their lives to the full'

Since the charity started in 1973 we have grown and now support over 120 people with a learning disability and employ 250 people. We have always put the people with a learning disability that we support at the centre of our work.
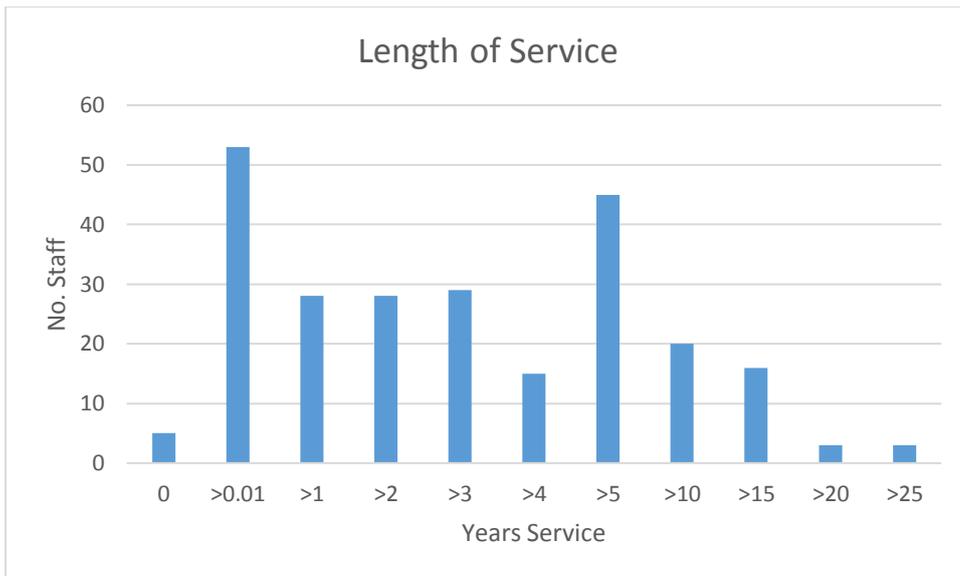
Summary

Using a values based recruitment process can have a positive impact on the staff joining an organisation. New staff are more often:

- Seen by managers as good or very good staff
- Taking less days sickness each year
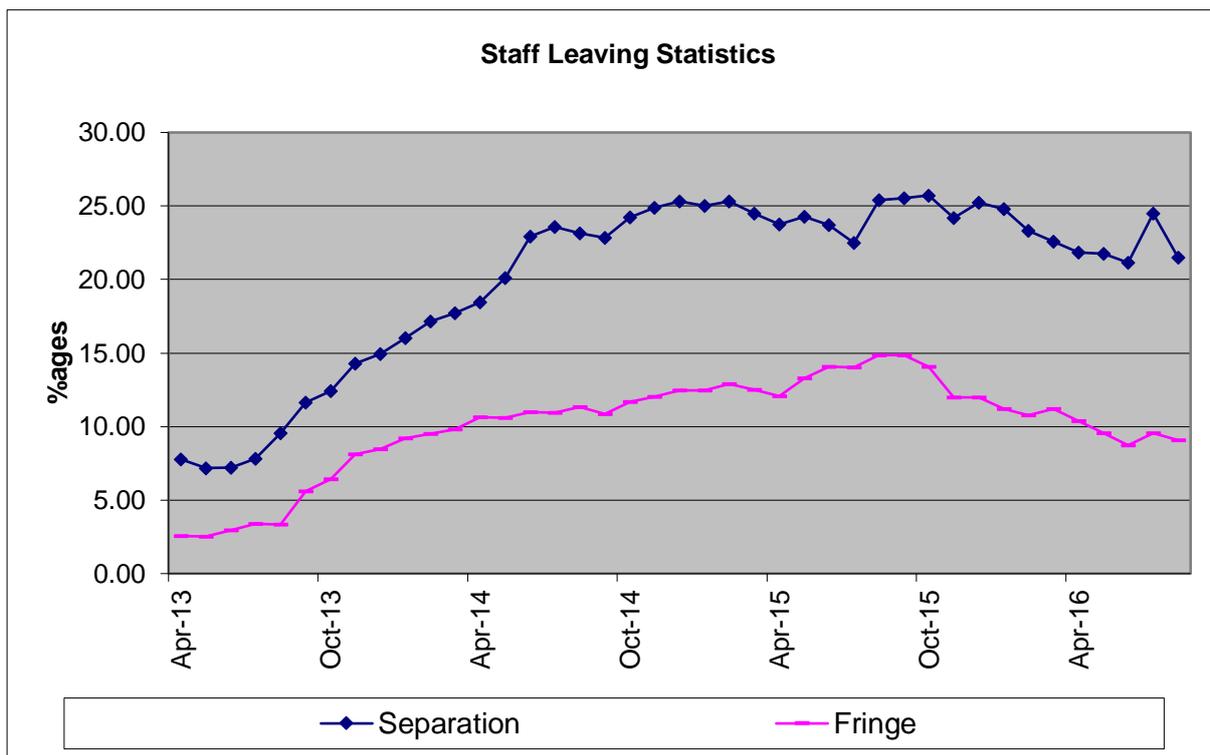- Attending 100% of the training courses

There has also been a reduction in the organisations staff turnover rates.

History – why Life Path needed to change

Recruitment of care and support staff is a difficulty for many providers. Life Path Trust has several times in its history had difficulty recruiting staff and in 2013/14 it was becoming an issue. Life Path Trust was increasing the number of people we support but staff were also leaving the organisation. Although staff were leaving, there is also a large number of staff who have worked for the charity for many years. 35% have worked for more than 5 years with 3 people having served more than 25 years.

Length of Service

No. Staff (y-axis): 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60

Years Service (x-axis): 0, >0.01, >1, >2, >3, >4, >5, >10, >15, >20, >25

We identified a need to look at the issue of recruitment because we had for many years kept detailed information about staff turnover. The graph below shows how in 2013 the turnover rates started to rise.

Staff Leaving Statistics

%ages (y-axis): 0.00, 5.00, 10.00, 15.00, 20.00, 25.00, 30.00

x-axis: Apr-13, Oct-13, Apr-14, Oct-14, Apr-15, Oct-15, Apr-16

Legend: Separation, Fringe

Many people put the high turnover in the social care sector down to the low wages the sector pays. However, research continues to show that pay is not the prime factor. The main factors are:
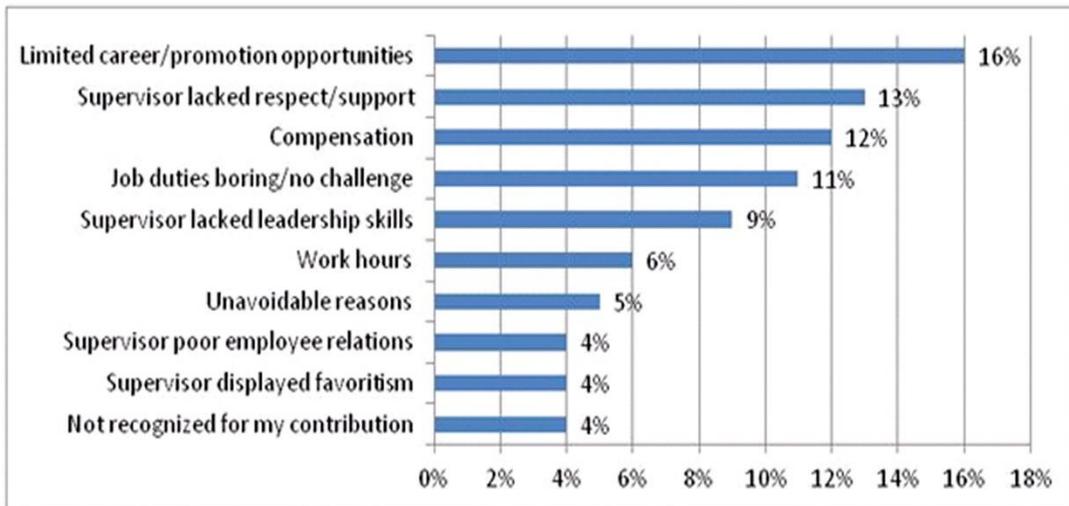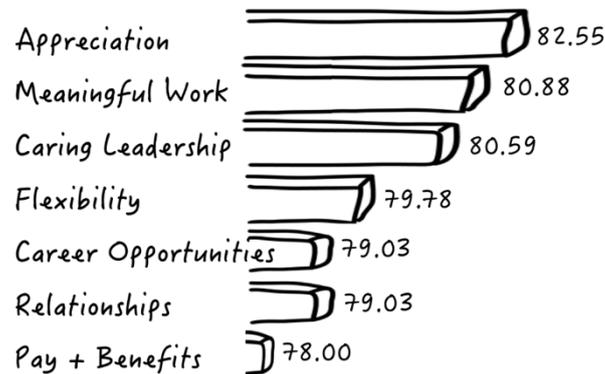
As reported in (2005), The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave by Leigh Branham, page 21, Figure 3.1[i]

In Life Path Trust there were 23 leavers who completed exit interviews between 1 January 2014 and October 2016, which is not a large enough sample to reach any reasonable conclusions. The main leaving reasons given were:

Reason for leaving	No.
Leaving country / moving	4
Not satisfied with role	4
Personal health issues	2
Education	2
New job	2
Personal	2
Provide caring role in family	2
Pay	2
Retire	1
Change of profession	1

Another more recent study by Sticky People about what matters to care staff reached a similar conclusion that pay is not the top issue that matters to people working in the sector.[ii]

What Matters to Care Staff?

Category	Value
Appreciation	82.55
Meaningful Work	80.88
Caring Leadership	80.59
Flexibility	79.78
Career Opportunities	79.03
Relationships	79.03
Pay + Benefits	78.00

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sticky people

We clearly needed to do something to stop the staff turnover trend continuing to rise.

Value based recruitment introduction

As Life Path Trust management was considering what to do to improve our recruitment and retention, Oxfordshire County Council asked for providers who would be interest in taking part in a pilot project to evaluate Value Base Recruitment.

History

During the 1990's and 2000's it became clear that staff supporting vulnerable children and adults in the care sector needed to be recruited for more than their skills. It started with the Warner report that looked into staff of children's homes in 1992.[iii] Then in 2010 the Government asked Robert Francis QC to look into the failures of Mid Stafford Shire hospitals and his report published in 2013 one conclusion was "Enhance the recruitment, education, training and support of all the key contributors to the provision of healthcare, but in particular those in nursing and leadership positions, to integrate the essential shared values of the common culture into everything they do;"[iv]

In 2012, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust embarked on a project to introduce Value Based Interviews (VBI) and assess their impact. The final report[v] of the project was published in 2015 and concluded that VBI had a positive impact. The key finding were:

- 99% of values-interviewed staff said their interview was fair versus 74% of staff who had non-values interviews
- 98% of values-interviewed staff said they understood how their role contributed to the delivery of Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust's mission versus 78% of staff who had non-values interviews

- 93% of values-interviewed staff agreed or strongly agreed that Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust was a good place to work versus 72% of non-values interviewed staff.
- 93% of values-interviewed staff agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust as a safe place for treatment versus 82% of non-values interviewed staff.
- Values-interviewed staff planned to stay with the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust on average for 6 years and 7 months versus non-values interviewed staff who planned to stay for an average of 4 years.
- 7% of values-interviewed staff planned to leave Oxford NHS within a year versus 17% of non-values interviewed staff.

The positive benefits seen in Oxford University Hospital prompted Oxfordshire County Council to run a piolet project between September 2014 and July 2015 to evaluate the impact that Value Based Interviewing could have in the adult social care sector. The project was evaluated in November 2015 and concluded:

"This evaluation report has acknowledged that while the pilot group of organisations and the study of VBR/I in Oxfordshire was relatively small, the diversity of organisations and the successful way in which they have implemented the Oxfordshire County Council VBR/I approach has provided a very useful indicator for how VBR/I could successfully be developed and implemented more widely in the adult social care sector."[vi]

The Values-based interviewing training was delivered by Kerry Cleary of VBA consulting over 2 days to 6 organisations of which 3 implemented value based recruitment.

Fit with Life Path

Life Path Trust is an organisation that is driven by its values. In the early 2000's Life Path Trust developed it mission statement and values which have been regularly reviewed but changed little.

The Vision of Life Path Trust is:
- To enable people with learning disabilities to live their lives to the full

Our Mission is:
- "To provide people with the best support and services to enable them to feel valued and achieve their dreams"

Our Key Values are:

- Choice
  - who you live with
  - where you live & work
  - where you go on holiday
- Opportunity & Inclusion
  - help to take part
  - own homes
  - study & achieve qualifications
- Rights
  - for an ordinary life
  - to get proper jobs with proper wages
- Independence
  - to do all you can
  - own homes

Selection methods

Following the training it was natural to use our four key values as the criteria to select staff. We have also always looked to involve the citizens (people with learning disabilities supported by Life Path) in the interview process, so that they can have a real choice about who works with them.

The course also gave some insights into other ways that the recruitment process could be changed. In assessing the different methods the predictive validity of each process was considered to ensure that it would improve our recruitment.

"Predictive validity centres on linkages between results or scores on a selection measure and subsequent outcome – most commonly, job performance at a future point. Here it is important to identify when the comparison will be made – ie immediately in the case of a simple job requiring little training, or more commonly, at an intermediate point, possibly after a suitable probationary period."[vii]

Research has shown that the validity of styles of selection to be:[viii]

```
1.0    Certain prediction
0.9
0.8
0.7    Assessment centres for development
0.6    Skilful and structured interviews
0.5    Work sampling
       Ability tests
0.4    Assessment centres for job performance
       Biodata
       Personality assessment
0.3    Unstructured interviews
0.2
0.1    References
0.0    Graphology
       Astrology
```

The key areas which Life Path Trust developed were, Profiling, Values-based Interviews and an Assessment Workshop.

Evaluation / Selection Criteria

It is important that throughout the process there is clear evaluation process of the candidates. Many recruitment processes especially for the interview evaluate candidates as to how well they answer the questions. This relies on asking questions that are relevant to the job performance required and reinforces the model of asking every candidate the same question in pursuit of fairness.

In Life Path Trust we decided that the 'Ideal One Page Profile' (person specification sets the evaluation standards and throughout the selection process we evaluate the candidates performance against these criteria.

The evaluation of all candidates is a cumulative process, scoring first from the application form and profile to reach a decision about inviting the candidate to the workshop. The workshop evaluation is then included to reach a decision about an invitation to interview. Finally, the interview scores are added to the mix to reach a decision about offering a job.

Profiling

The Oxfordshire value based recruitment training introduced People Clues as a profiling tool that has been widely used and assessed for its validity. There are other profiling tools available in the UK, but none made available their predictive validity score. People Clues is provided by Sticky People in the UK. The validity score for the assessment is .38[ix] and it has also been reviewed by the British Psychological Society[x]

Sticky People profiling is an online assessment tool based on psychological assessments of people for their attitudes and also provides a benchmarked job fit for each candidate. The assessments were conceived and developed by Dr. Leonard D. Goodstein, previously Chief Executive Officer of the American Psychological Association, and Dr. Richard I. Lanyon, previously of Harvard Medical School and Chief Psychologist at the Massachusetts General Hospital. The tool has been evaluated, adjusted for UK

employee cultural 'norms' and subjected to extensive testing and evaluation for predictability and reliability. The system is used widely to recruit frontline care and support roles, supervisory positions, care management. Job role benchmarks, such as 'Care Worker', have been measured on over half a million applicants.

We introduced profiling in March 2015. It has not only given an indication of the Job Fit and Attitude for candidates, but also provides useful questions that can be used in a values based interview.

Candidate complete the online assessments before being invited to the assessment workshop and interview.

Assessment workshop

In Life Path Trust we have introduced a workshop for candidates. The workshop is based on some of the ideas of an assessment centre and in our programme, they last for 3 hours.

The workshops have a facilitator and observer who are trained interviewers and there will also be some citizens (service users) and staff who support them involved. The citizens will usually be the people who the successful candidates will support.

All shortlisted candidates are invited to a workshop before being offered an interview. The workshop will have some different exercises depending on the requirements of the 'ideal one page profile' (person specification).

The table below describes some of the workshop activities and the issues that they assess.

Activity	Description of possible activity	Area assessed
Team activity	A group of 4 people – 2 or 3 Candidates, a citizen and if they require their support worker, will be asked to build a bridge or a tower given minimal materials.	Team Work Communication Interaction with a person with a learning disability
A story	The facilitator reads a short story and then asks the candidates to write down answers to questions about the story	Listening skills Written communication

There are also some activities which are not assessed but provided to give the candidates information about Life Path Trust, our values and work.

- A brief history of Life Path Trust and its values.
- What to expect in a 'Values based interview'
- A session with support workers and no managers/interviewers so candidates can have a frank discussion about what the job is really like and how Life Path Trust are as employers.

Values-based interviews

There is research from both NSPCC and Oxford University Hospital which demonstrate the validity of this style of interview.

Values, behaviours and attitude (VBA) interviews build on models of competency-based interviewing by taking examples from candidates' work experience and probing to understand what candidates did in the situation, but they also go further to explore how and why candidates did things.

The VBA interview technique works by asking candidates to give examples of things they have done at work or outside of work which demonstrate a particular value and followed by up to 10 minutes of probing questions to understand:

- What they did
- How they did it
- Why they did it
- What impact it had on them and others
- What they have learnt about themselves
- What they have subsequently done to implement the learning.

Key elements of the interview are:

- Carried out by 2 VBA-trained interviewers
- Use 3 questions in a 30 minute interview
- Based on situational and evidence-based questions, not hypothetical, scenario based questions
- Probing in nature and including follow up questions to further probe into the candidate's values, behaviours and attitude, not their technical skills
- Informal in style but structured
- Assessed using set criteria based on the organisational values and behavioural indicators
- Complementary to other selection tools which assess skills and abilities to do the job

Training

To implement Value-based interviews required all interviewers to be trained in the technique. Life Path Trust delivered training to staff internally using the same course materials that the Oxfordshire pilot had used that Kerry Cleary from VBA consulting had presented. The internal trainer was Gary Bye, CEO of Life Path Trust who had attended the course in Oxfordshire and was supported by Kerry Cleary to deliver the course.

In addition to the course all managers were mentored in the first two live interviews by the CEO. In the first interview the manager conducted the interview with the CEO and in the second the CEO observed two managers interviewing. The mentoring provided managers with feedback on the techniques they used and also ensured that the new interview technique was applied consistently.

Impact in Life Path

Life Path Trust has undertaken a review to see what if any evidence could be collated to demonstrate the impact of the changes to the way that we recruit staff. The new recruitment interviews were introduced in March 2015, so the group who had value based interviews started from April 2015 onwards. To be able to compare changes in behaviour, the same information was collated for people recruited immediately prior to March 2015.

The comparison groups are:

Group	Dates	No. in sample
Group 1	Employment start dates from Nov 13 to March 15	82
Group 2	Employment start dates from April 15 to Nov 16	85

A number of different criteria were reviewed:

- Staff retention
- Sickness
- Disciplinary
- Manager's assessment of performance
- Training attendance

Staff retention

The overall staff separation and fringe index (%age of staff leaving within 1 year) rates have shown a down turn as shown by the trend lines.
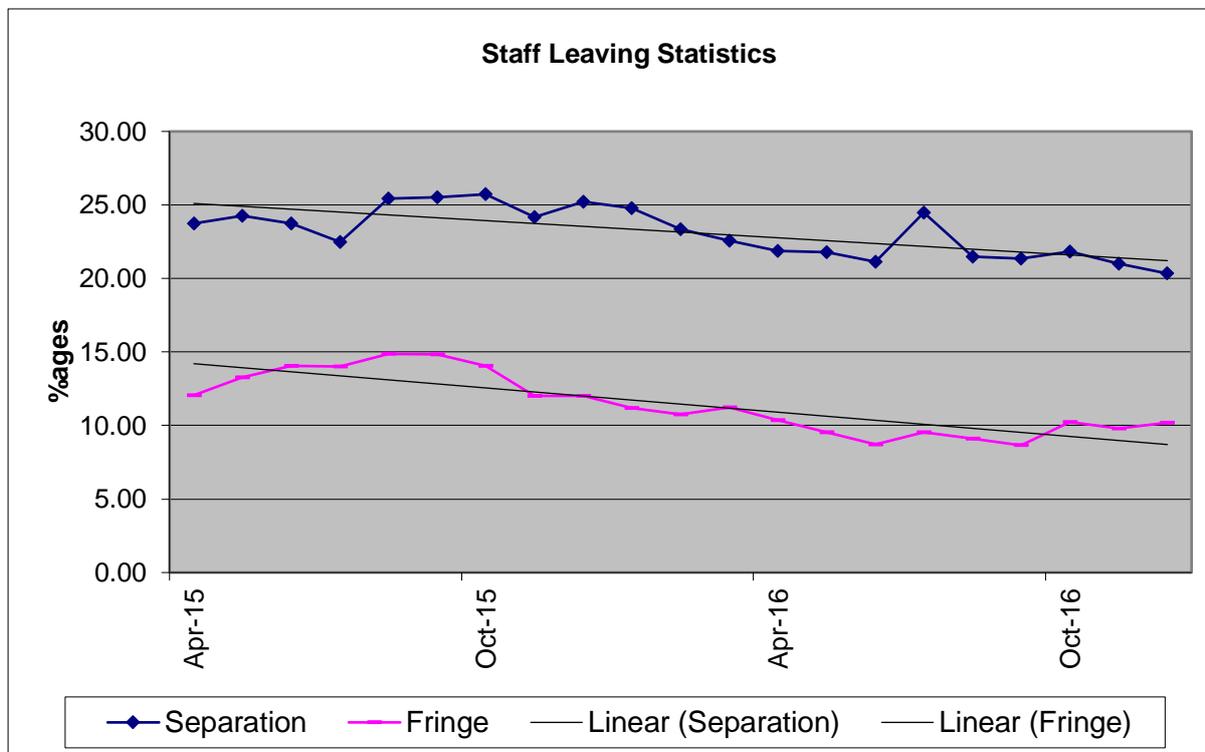
There is not any statistically significant difference between the two groups in the review with group 1 having 35 leavers and group 2 23 leavers to date. This could be explained as the first group have been employed longer there could reasonably be expect to have a higher number of leavers and their length of service could therefor also be longer.

Sickness

Sickness absence is a high cost for employers and a CIPD[xi] survey in November 2016 showed a wide variations from an average of 5.2 days a year in the private sector to 6.9 days in Not for Profit organisations to 8.5 days in the Public sector.

Figure 1: Average number of days lost per employee per year, by sector (5% trimmed mean)

When particular activities are analysed care and health services show a higher level of absence. In not for profit organisations working in the care sector the average is 11.3 days per year and in the public sector health service it is 10.9 days per year.

Looking at the detail for the two comparison groups there is a marked difference.

Group		Average no. days sickness per year.
Group 1	Employment start dates from Nov 13 to March 15	12.3
Group 2	Employment start dates from April 15 to Nov 16	2.4

Disciplinary

Having recruited people for their values and profiled people for their attitudes, a reasonable assumption was made that this would be reflect in a reduced level of disciplinary issue.

In the comparator groups there was not a significant number of disciplinary concerns for any reasonable conclusions to be drawn.

Group			Disciplinary	Outcome
Group 1	Employment start dates from Nov 13 to March 15		3	1 Written Warning 1 Dismissal on capacity issue 1 Dismissed
Group 2	Employment start dates from April 15 to Nov 16		4	2 Verbal Warnings 1 Dismissed 1 Dismissed – change in visa status

ACAS research[xii] indicates that the mean for disciplinary sanctions is 6.23 per 100 employees and 1.54 per 100 employees are dismissed each year.

In our sample for both groups of 82 and 85, this would lead us to expect just over 5 people with a disciplinary sanction and just over 1 person per year dismissed. The number of dismissals is compatible with this benchmark if the capacity and visa status are ignored. The disciplinary sanctions for both groups is considerably below the benchmark:

Group		No. in sample	Disciplinary sanction per 100 employees.
Group 1	Employment start dates from Nov 13 to March 15	82	1.2
Group 2	Employment start dates from April 15 to Nov 16	85	2.4

Manager's assessment of performance

Managers were asked to rate all staff performance in the study on the following scale:

1	2	3	4
Very Poor	Poor	Good	Very Good

The managers were not given any guidance on what makes poor or good, so it was a subjective assessment. The following are the results for both groups:

Group		Managers rating	
Group 1	Employment start dates from Nov 13 to March 15	1	15
		2	17
		3	43
		4	3
Group 2	Employment start dates from April 15 to Nov 16	1	13
		2	17
		3	43
		4	12

This shows that group 2 had a higher %age of staff rate by the managers as either good or very good.

	Group 1	Group 2
%age rated very poor or poor	41%	35%
%age rated good or very good	59%	65%

The recruitment and selection process has had an impact on how well managers perceive their staffs' performance.

Training attendance

Training staff is important for Life Path Trust as it ensures that they have been given the skills that they need to deliver a high quality service. Unfortunately the training provided has not always been well attended with 24% of places booked on courses not being filled on the day.

Group	No. Courses booked	No. Courses attended	%age attendance
Group 1	842	699	83.0%
Group 2	531	445	83.8%

The table above shows that there was not a significant difference between the 2 groups of staff.

To consider how many staff value their training the number of staff who attended 100% of the training that they are booked on was considered a reasonable measure.

Group	No. of people attending 100% of training	No. of people booked on training	%age staff with 100% attendance
Group 1	22	79	27.8%
Group 2	25	69	36.2%

This measure show that a considerably higher percentage of staff who have been recruited using a values based interview are committed to attending all the training that we make available for them.

Conclusion

The evaluation points to a value based approach having real benefits for social care providers. The key pointer in Life Path Trust are:

- Improvement in staff retention
- A significant decrease in the levels of sickness
- Managers assessing a higher percentage of their staff as good or very good
- Attendance at 100% of training has improved.

Overall the investment in redesigning recruitment systems and processes, training and mentoring managers and selecting new staff using a values based approach has made a positive contribution to Life Path Trust.

Next Steps

Having recruited staff for their values it is important that the teams they join also exhibit and uphold the same values.

Life Path Trust is now introducing value based conversations as an approach to staff supervision to ensure that the organisations values are shared by everyone and that they are seen in our everyday work by all staff.

The process has started with defining what we expect to see staff do to uphold the values and also what behaviour we do not expect to see from staff. Being clear and articulating how our values work in practice will help staff understand what is expected of them. This is a short leaflet that is being given to all staff (including administration support staff) to ensure that the values are clear to everyone.

The supervision system and processes have been redesigned and include a values based conversation. To ensure that this is consistent across the organisation managers are receiving training in conducting value based conversations.

Being a values based organisation is not a one off piece of work that comes to an end. It is an ongoing process to ensure that we have the right values for the time and that they are the foundation for all the work that we do.

[i] *Branham, L. (2005), The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave, New York: AMACOM*

[ii] Eastwood, N. (2015) Presentation slides, Sticky People Ltd.

[iii] Warner, N. (1992) *Choosing with care: the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Selection, Development and Management of Staff in Children's Homes.* London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

[iv] Francis, R. (2013) *Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry.* London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

[v] The Health Foundation & Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, (2015) *Valued Based Interviewing Project – Final Report.*

[vi] Oxfordshire County Council, (2015) *Values-based interviewing and recruitment in Adult Social Care in Oxford shire – Initial impact report.*

[vii] Rees, G. and French, R. (2010) *Leading, Managing and Developing People,* 3rd edition, CIPD.

[viii] Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006, p 173) *The Importance of Predictive and Face Validity, International Journal of Business and Management;* Canadian Center of Science and Education

[ix] Biddle Consulting Group, Inc (2010), *Test Development & Validation Study Results,* USA: Biddle Consulting Group, Inc

[x] British Psycholocial Society (2012), *Test Registration and Test Reviews,* Leicester: British Psychological Society
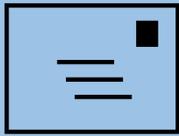
[xi] Sinclair, A. (2016), *Absence Management 2016,* London: CIPD & Simply Health

[xii] Wood, S. Saundry, R. & Latreille, P. (2014), *Analysis of the nature, extent and impact of grievance and disciplinary procedures and workplace mediation using WERS2011,* London: Acas
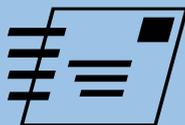
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