



## Section 1:



# Work skills



**Peer Support Group resources**  
for Disabled People's Organisations  
to use with Disabled job seekers



Making it Work



**Inclusion  
London**

Supporting London's Deaf and  
Disabled People's Organisations



**action on  
disability**



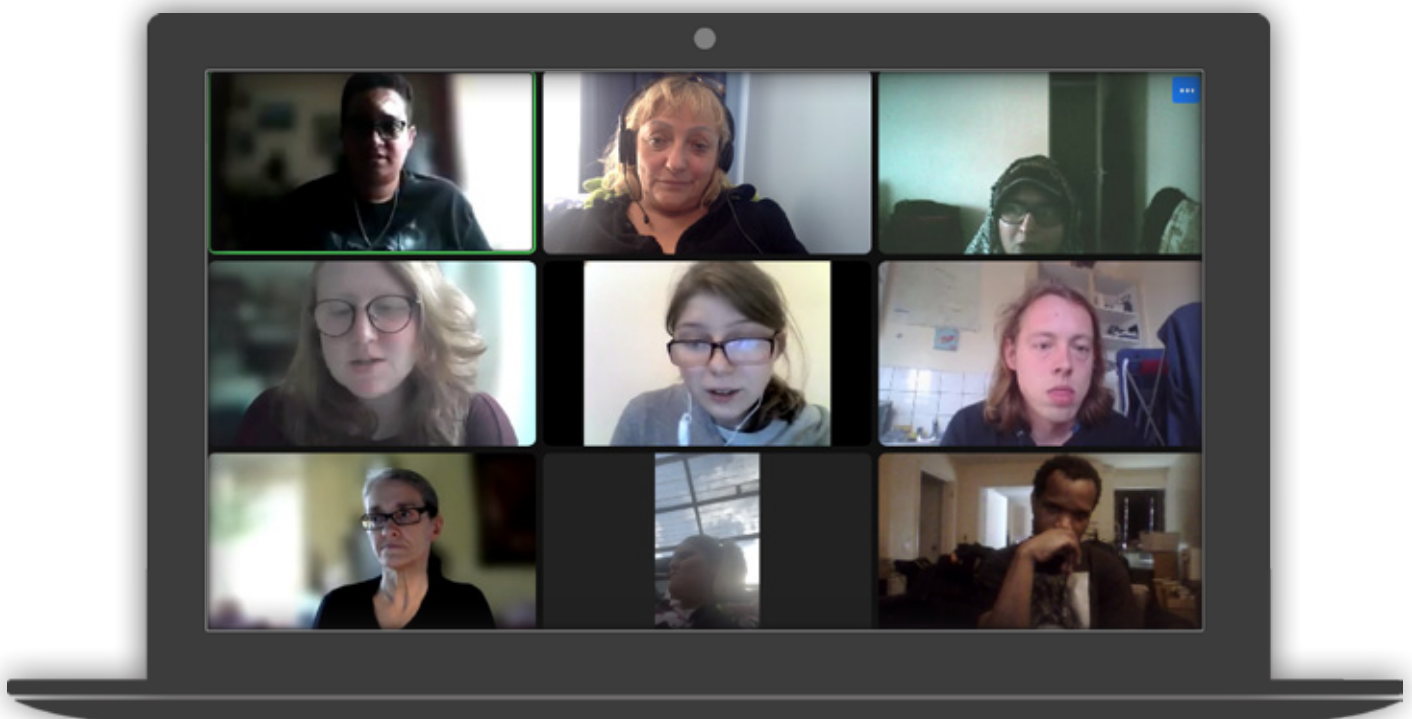
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## Thank you

Thanks to everyone involved in the Peer Support Group team for making this resource possible:

- All the Disabled people who attended our Peer Support Group (PSG) sessions
- Paige Tribe, Ella Steeper and Charlene Salter (the PSG co-facilitators)
- Catrin Digby (PSG coordination, outreach and tech support)
- Maria Armanda Goncalves, Clive Silverman and Gelila Tekle-Mariam (providers of tech support)
- Annalees Lim and Raphael Harfaux (designers)
- Sarah Pickthall (our PSG development consultant, trainer and coach)
- Sian Williams (Making it Work project manager)



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“

Mentoring, employment skills,  
support from others with a disability  
whom have gone on to get a job, all good.

”

Peer Support Group Participant

## Introduction



Making it Work was a five year programme which ran from 2017 to 2022. It aimed to:

- a) improve young Disabled people's chances of finding employment, and
- b) remove the barriers to getting into work

Inclusion London set up a Peer Support Group during Covid-19 to support young Disabled people seeking paid work. The aim was for the group to be run by its members for its members and help them to keep positive during lockdown. We also believed a Peer Support Group would help its members to continue to develop useful skills for the workplace, so they would be better prepared to apply for jobs in the future.

The Peer Support Group ran from November 2020 to June 2022. Every week an hour-long online session was co-facilitated by young Disabled people. The session focused on a different topic each week.

We created a factsheet for each session. The factsheet includes a video-link, things to learn, think about and discuss, suggestions of ways to develop new skills and next steps.

We hope that your Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) will use these factsheets to support young Disabled people to meet new people, increase their confidence and learn from each other. Most importantly we hope that this resource will also help them to develop useful skills for the workplace and provide a good start on their journey to find paid work.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who attended our Peer Support Group sessions. Their thoughts and ideas have been included in these factsheets and will help many other young Disabled people seeking paid work.

Sian Williams, on behalf of  
the Making it Work Peer Support Group team

“

Sharing informally happens all the time -  
it's good to have gaps between  
formal sharing opportunities and  
less formal ones with peers...  
a mountain of new experiences and skills to share.

”

Guest speaker



# FACT SHEET 1

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

### How to show up for work

Video:

“How to dress for success”



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/taDdxF0T5B8>



### Getting started:

Important things to think about when dressing for work:

- Follow work dress code
- Freshen up regularly
- Brush your teeth before you set out
- Clean and ironed clothes every day
- Check your clothes for stains



## Resources:

### How to show up for work



### Tips for 'Dress Success'



- ✓ Know what clothes are expected for the job
- ✓ Is there a dress code? What is suitable?
- ✓ Check what staff wear on employer's website
- ✓ Find out about business v casual dress
- ✓ Bring an alternative pair of shoes, etc.

Other ideas?

### How to keep fresh for the day ahead:



- Pack your bag the night before and get your clean clothes ready
- Choose clothes to fit the work
- Have a healthy breakfast
- Have a shower / bath – scrub up!
- Drink lots of water
- Pack deodorant, hand sanitiser, energy bar and healthy smoothie



### Help with what to wear?



- Ask your mates
- Ask your manager what the right thing to wear is
- Go to the work website to see what people wear
- Scour charity shops for good bargains
- Ask the shop assistants what they think are good work outfits



### Key points:

- Be prepared and plan ahead
- Clean up!
- Wake up well
- Have a healthy approach to eating and general wellbeing
- Keep hydrated



### Session quote:

“ Never give up, no matter how you feel. ”



# FACT SHEET 2

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

### Body language

Video:

“Body language”



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/1sfM-xx7tHI>



Getting started:

How can we improve our body language?

- Take deep breaths
- Use hand gestures
- Relax but don't slouch
- Keep your chin up
- Make eye contact
- Smile!





## Resources:

### How can you improve your body language?



- Smile and say hello
- Stand up straight, don't slouch
- Show interest through your body, such as nodding your head
- Make gestures with your hands

### More tips and techniques to improve your body language

- Join a drama group to improve body language
- Practise different faces and positions in the mirror
- Ask friends / family for their honest opinion
- Join a choir to help with breathing
- Take a dance class to build body confidence

What else?

Where can you go for help?

### Idea for next steps...



1. Theatre companies, such as Tramshed in Woolwich
2. Dance companies, like Corali and Magpie Dance
3. Look on the internet for a class of your choice

What else?



## Key points:

Ways to help develop positive body language:

- Stretch to relax
- Do a creative and relaxing hobby
- Meditate
- Smile
- Listen actively



Session quote:

“ Try 5-minute breathing techniques. ”



# FACT SHEET

3a

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

### Communication skills for life

Video:

“How to communicate effectively”



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/ed9MMH2T-u4>



Getting started:

Reasons to improve our communication skills:

- So that people understand you clearly
- To help you feel less isolated
- To build up your confidence
- To get your opinions across
- To find new opportunities
- To socialise and build a network with new people



## Resources:



### 5 tips for communicating:



1. Listen attentively
2. Listen to hear, not just to have your say
3. Be clear and not 'wishy washy'
4. Think about the different ways you can say things by using your voice differently
5. Use your best body language when communicating with someone to help you make your point

### Miscommunication



### What more can you do?

- Practise with friends
- Try things in front of the mirror
- Watch videos on Youtube to help you
- Join a drama club to build confidence
- Plan how you will communicate (and use post-it notes to help remind you)

### Key points:

- Speak clearly
- Make sure you listen to others
- Use gestures to help you communicate
- Be inspired by others
- Practise with your friends



### Session quote:

“ Be approachable and try to make eye contact with everyone. ”



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# FACT SHEET

3b

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

### Communication in the workplace

Video:

“Communication skills at work”



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/CIHkuLgeBcA>



### Getting started:

Why is it important to develop your communication skills?

- To share your personality
- To show you are motivated
- To sell yourself
- To work together more effectively
- To improve relationships at work



## Resources:

### Things to avoid when communicating



- not listening
- saying words like 'er' or 'like' (mumbling)
- not taking turns to speak
- no eye contact
- lazy body language, fidgeting
- talking too quickly



### Body language

#### Do:

- Sit up straight
- Maintain eye contact
- Smile and be enthusiastic
- Use hand gestures



#### Don't:

- Slouch
- Stare
- Frown
- Fidget

### Top tips for good body language and communication

- Sit straight in your chair
- Maintain good eye contact
- Use hand gestures to express yourself
- Be aware of your posture – no slouching!
- Nod your head to show you're listening

### What will you do now to improve your communication?



- Role play with a friend or family member?
- Practice your communication when shopping / eating out?
- Use a mirror to reflect your body language?

### Key points:

- Practise positive body language on family, friends or in front of the mirror
- Listen attentively
- Be interested
- Make eye contact
- Smile



### Session quote:

“ Practice makes perfect. ”



# FACT SHEET 4

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

### Dealing with change in life and work

Video:

“Why we are all afraid of change”



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/267cB6tNeUc>



Getting started:

What kind of changes do we face in work and life?

- Moving home
- Friends and family changing
- Leaving college
- Setting new goals
- Moving up a level
- Losing a job



## Resources:

### Dealing with change

in work and life...



### Why change is a good thing?



- new adventures
- it's part of life to move on
- growing/growing up
- to see new horizons
- to inspire young people

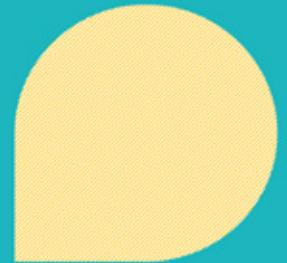
### Why change is a challenge?



- It is tiring to change
- It affects other people's feelings
- It is scary
- It can be risky and a bumpy ride
- It can cause anxiety

### Things to think about when you are going through change:

- Keep an open mind
- Be gentle on yourself, you can make mistakes!
- Make time to reflect
- Keep things simple
- Create some comfort
- Count your blessings – think of the good things



### Key points:

- Change is positive
- Change is part of our growth
- Change can be exciting and challenging
- Be kind to yourself and be grateful when going through change



### Session quote:

“ Stay in the moment. Seek that horizon, that change. ”



# FACT SHEET 5

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

### Overcoming disappointment

Video:

“How to handle disappointment”



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/LKdva3PCCSE>



Getting started:

What can we do when facing setbacks in life?

- Find out why we didn't succeed
- Get feedback from family or friends
- Meet a job coach and talk it through
- Reflect on what we could have done differently
- Feel determined to keep trying





## Resources:

### When you are disappointed, do you:



- over-indulge (tv, food)?
- stay in your room?
- get angry?
- compare yourself to others?
- wallow in self pity?
- bottle it in?

What do you do?



### What can you do differently?



- Be disappointed for a while, then move on
- Go for a walk outside
- Talk to friends / family
- Talk to your job coach
- Have a healthy treat
- Ask for feedback...

What else?



### Ask yourself these questions:

- Did you ask enough questions?
- Did you research the position or company?
- Did you show enough motivation / interest?
- Did you have positive body language?
- Did you dress the right way for the job?
- Did I speak to the right person?

### Ideas for next steps



Contact your local Disabled People's Organisation

Inclusion London has a list:

<https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/directory/listing/>

Or speak to your job coach

If you're really sad, call:

The Samaritans or Mind



What else?

## Key points:

When faced with disappointment:

- Reach out to friends and family
- Contact organisations you know well and ask for support
- Keep busy
- Be creative
- Ask for feedback



### Session quote:

“ Do art,  
be out and about  
and keep happy. ”



# FACT SHEET 6

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

**Being unstoppable and building confidence**

Video:

“3 tips to boost your confidence“



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

[https://youtu.be/I\\_NYrWqUR40](https://youtu.be/I_NYrWqUR40)



Getting started:

What does this video teach us?

- If you fail, keep on trying
- Failure is sometimes a good thing
- Strike confident poses to feel positive
- Play music to boost your confidence
- Surround yourself with people who boost your confidence
- Don't stress, be more relaxed
- Join a new group



## Resources:

### Things to try to build your confidence

- ☑ Talk to friends and family
- ☑ Join a therapy / counselling group
- ☑ Join a drama / art group or 'speak up' group
- ☑ Talk to your job coach or teacher
- ☑ Express how you feel to people you know

What else?

Where can you go for help?

BE BRAVE



### Idea for next steps



- Try a new activity, such as art, dance, yoga, computers, etc.
- Join a gym or an exercise class
- Sign up for a new course
- Make new friends
- Listen to podcasts or motivational songs

## Key points:

When you need a confidence boost:

- Reach out to friends and family
- Do some exercise
- Practise self-love
- Do what you need to feel stronger



Session quote:

“ Relax through the difficult times. ”



# FACT SHEET 7

## Section: Work skills

Topic:

### New opportunities and change

Video:

“How to start over in life“



Link to watch the video on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/efFitX1VoWc>



### Getting started:

How can we find new opportunities when things change?

- Find a new course to do
- Look for new activities
- Challenge ourselves with new tasks
- Seek advice from others
- Start looking for a new job
- Do some research online

## Resources:



How can we react better when things change?

- Remember things don't stay the same
- Take some rest and reflect
- Fill the spaces with things that give you energy
- Give back to get back
- Challenge yourself
- Do things that give you joy
- Mix up solo things with group activities
- Find new opportunities



Finding your next steps...



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**Bromley Experts by Experience**  
(<https://www.xbyxbromley.com>)

Bromley Experts by Experience (X by X) is a user-led charity for Deaf and Disabled People and carers in Bromley.

We run a Peer Information Network.



### Where to go for more help with change

- DASL (Disability Advice Service Lambeth)**
- AoD (Action on Disability)**
- Heart n Soul**
- Inclusion London has a list of Disabled People's Organisations in London**  
(<https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/directory/listing/>)

## Key points:

- Change is positive
- Do things that make you happy
- Take time for yourself
- Try new things
- Spend time with others
- Research new opportunities



Session quote:

“ It's important to get fresh air. Walk around outside for mental health. ”



Making it Work

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Inclusion London promotes equality and inclusion for Deaf and Disabled people by supporting the development of Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) across London. Our 'Making it Work' programme aimed to improve young Disabled people's chances of finding employment and remove the barriers to getting into work.

[www.inclusionlondon.org.uk](http://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk)

“

I went away feeling like what  
Inclusion London had already set up  
was incredibly useful  
for young people and building on skills.

”

Guest speaker

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