

Case Studies from LSIS Pilot

Case Study 1 – Luke M from Portland College at The Nottingham Belfry – Room Assistant

Luke M had a very positive work experience as a Room Assistant at The Nottingham Belfry

Luke really enjoyed cleaning the en suite bathrooms as rooms become unoccupied in the mornings and was particularly pleased when he was able to see the result of his hard work; clean floors, polished mirrors and leaving neatly folded towels ready for the next hotel guest. He moved on to making the large comfortable beds in some of the 120 rooms which will give him new skills in his role

Part of the bathroom cleaning was causing a small problem because of Luke's mobility, specifically; in small confined spaces when he was cleaning the shower tray which demanded time and consideration and there was some discomfort for him whilst kneeling. Luke was able to think through this issue and eventually solved the problem by using folded dirty towels to ensure his knees were more comfortable - this really worked well and there were no other issues

His co-workers found him particularly useful as Luke is almost six foot tall; and his colleagues are not! The highest part of the bathroom that needs cleaning regularly is the extractor fan - Luke was good at this and understood the importance of keeping it in good order to maintain the air quality in the room

He got on very well with the other Room Assistants, particularly Donna and Alana, from Latvia. In discussion with Luke, he was able to describe how the hotel worked and what some of the priorities were in running a successful luxury hotel

One of the most successful elements of the work experience was being fed by the hotel; the staff food was excellent and had made a big impression on Luke

Asked what he was most surprised by at The Nottingham Belfry; after some thought Luke commented that he wasn't used to such a luxurious environment - he had expected it to be posh but this was really posh and had a swimming pool, sauna and treatment room

Luke told me that following his period of work experience at the hotel he too would be going on holiday - unlike The Nottingham Belfry he would be spending a week in a static caravan with his mother in Blackpool and he was really looking forward to this.....

Case Study 2 – Luke C from Vision West Nottinghamshire College at The Nottingham Belfry - Food and Beverage Assistant (Breakfast)

Luke settled very quickly into working at The Nottingham Belfry and by the third day was carrying out complex tasks around the laying of tables and presenting food, working with others as part of an effective team in a busy conference venue setting

The most challenging aspects of his role are to replicate identical place settings on the larger tables for 10 diners. Luke mastered this and took great pleasure in seeing how smart and correct the tables looked in readiness for the lunchtime rush of almost eighty diners who would all need feeding and made to feel valued

A major factor which made Luke settle in so well were his team of colleagues who were all supportive and keen for him to be full member of staff. Initially there was a small amount of anxiety of getting to know new names and remembering faces - this soon disappeared and he soon felt part of the crew

The dining room can take two sittings of 78 people at a time which really means that Luke had to be on the ball in a very intense environment. At Vision West Nottinghamshire College he had completed various qualifications successfully including Practical Work Skills Entry Level 3 as well as participating in a Pre Work Experience programme plus regularly taking part in 'practical days' at the college as well as working in the coffee shop. This was all excellent preparation for his role at The Nottingham Belfry

Already Luke has felt an increase in his confidence and feels able to succeed in a busy and active workplace - family and friends are very proud of what he has achieved in the hotel

Luke, a massive Nottingham Forest fan, was hoping his placement coincided with a visit from the football team who are frequent visitors to The Nottingham Belfry -

Case Study 3 – Sarah R from Bracken Hill School at The Nottingham Belfry - Food and Beverage Assistant (Breakfast)

Sarah very quickly exceeded the expectations of the employer, Job Coach and school- initially quiet she soon felt at home with her natural trainer and the new working environment.

In preparation for working at The Nottingham Belfry, Sarah had attended 'work related learning days' at school as well as having work experience at Rumbles Café (a local Community caterer) and has committed to regular voluntary work at a

Cattery near to home. Initial career choices may be around the hospitality and catering sector on a full or part time basis

Despite initial shyness Sarah thought the best part of the whole experience so far was to be helping other members of staff and being part of a team. Within a few days she had found her way around the large and busy premises and interacted well with people from other teams, unknown to her

Originally on 'Housekeeping' duties, Sarah was able to perfect the cleaning, tidying and preparing of bedrooms and bathrooms, working as part of a team and against the clock

Real challenges were few and far between; getting to grips with working alongside new people because of shift patterns and rotas were soon managed. On a practical front changing the pillow case covers took some early extra effort to ensure the corners were in the right place

Even towards the end of the placement she was full of enthusiasm and genuinely enjoyed every aspect of the work, the people and the premises. Her family had also noticed a massive change in Sarah's confidence, ability and desire to try new things

Whatever work Sarah wants to try in the future, taking part in this LSIS funded project has made a fantastic difference to her ability to seek and secure paid employment in the future

Case Study 4 – Ian T from Skills for Employment (Nottinghamshire County Council) at The Nottingham Belfry -

A very self aware individual with a background in studying catering and hospitality, Ian adapted extremely quickly to being front of house and 'waiting on' in a very busy dining area situation, coping really well. Duties included; waiting on tables in the dining room, to clearing the tables when finished and relaying for new customers. As one of his skills is being at ease with people, Ian was responsible for showing guests to their tables which included verbal interaction asking how their days had gone, was there anything they needed to make their visit/stay more comfortable etc

Very quickly he had an understanding of how the hotel functioned and was able to give advice to guests and visitors about using the Leisure Club and who to ask about specific needs. Some of his work between peak meal times involved 'floor walking' – scouring the three floors of the hotel and collecting any used glasses, crockery and cutlery; returning these to the kitchen area for washing

Ian felt he was comfortable in working in this environment, he enjoyed being alongside his co workers who were slightly older than him and some for whom English was not their first language – he felt very much an integral part of the team and not an 'add on'. The 11 hour long days were not a problem, starting at 0630hrs and he had a very good relationship with his Job Coach. One of the best parts of his

three week placement was meeting new people, whoever they were. He soon understood the hotel's philosophy of work known in Q Hotels as FISH which conveyed that people who enjoyed their work and were able to display their enjoyment were more likely to be better workers and pass on an air of confidence to the guests and visitors

He is clear about the future; in September 2013 Ian will study at North Nottinghamshire College towards a recognised Level 2 catering and hospitality qualification and he will use this experience to secure paid employment in that sector

Case Study 5 – Liam A at The Linney Group

Liam felt at home even before the induction period had started, he thought the people and premises at The Linney Group were fantastic and was able to get to work using his own transport

First duties were in Linney Direct where boxes are constructed out of sheet cardboard; cut to shape and scored along folds they are then constructed and fixed using a glue gun ready to be packed with printed goods and sent off

His work was challenging and his duties were on a rota to give variety; Liam's next task was to be responsible for cleaning the main floor area of one of the large print rooms, more like a large factory. The entire floor has to be cleaned continually as this area is operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and any dirt will put the whole printing process at risk

He easily mastered the use of the Wetrock pressure cleaner for floors and is pleased to see the difference between before and after it has been used on an area of flooring

He found all the other workers very supportive and interested in what he was getting up to and felt a valued member of the team, he was able to describe in detailed other parts of the process he was involved with

Any difficulties experienced were when he had just started learning a new task – Liam was a quick learner and once something was explained by a colleague it was no longer an issue

Previously Liam had attended the local college of Further Education having studied an employability course and was still working on a voluntary basis in a retail setting at weekends

For the future he would like to secure well paid employment and hopes that this opportunity works out as he feels so much at home and is performing well. He does have a back up plan in case this doesn't work out and is confident he will be able to find other similar work

Case Study 6 – Stef E at The Linney Group

Unlike most of the other candidates, Stefan is a qualified welder and has had previous paid jobs which unfortunately have evaporated and he found himself at myplace (Skills for Employment) in Mansfield where he worked hard at improving his employability skills to enable himself to get back into work

Stef coped well with the induction which was comprehensive and thorough and feels he has done all of the tasks to the best of his ability and this has been of a high standard. The tasks have ranged from operating machinery in a cleaning role to keeping large areas across the site tidy, clean and free from debris

He was very quickly trained in moving pallets around the factories to provide a supply of new materials to the sides of the machines and he has really enjoyed everything he has had a go at. His co workers are from across the age range and he has felt part of the team, gaining very positive feedback from his Steve, his supervisor in the box making department – stating that he was a 'breath of fresh air' in the place and is never afraid to get stuck into a new task

Other duties include 'hand finishing' which is the finishing off by hand anything that leaves the production line that is not quite 100%. He understands the company well as is proud to be associated with Linneys who produce printed materials for some of the biggest names in the work

Stef displays a genuine willingness to work and is a quick learner, showing a strong work ethos and wants to get on in life to become independent living. Job Coach, David, is especially pleased that on no occasion has he had to step in and use TSI (part of training that deals with correcting workers when they are making mistakes) with either Stef or Liam

Learner Feedback

All learners kept a daily diary on their placements and these excerpts have been lifted from those diaries to give true reflections on their experiences. Also used was any verbal feedback gleaned from those learners expressed during those placements;

“I really enjoyed working at the Belfry but found it hard work”

More than one “struggled working the five days a week and also the length of the working day”

“really enjoyed working with the other staff and I found them all friendly but missed my friends and I also missed working with people my own age”

“sometimes I struggled with talking to the customers and also prioritising tasks but this disappeared as I grew in confidence and I managed to overcome these problems”

“It was a brilliant experience, it was different to what I had expected but everything I did made Mum and Dad were very proud of me”

“Using the various machines is best as they take a lot of concentration to get them working properly”

“Today was my last day at The Belfry, I have really enjoyed working here. It has been hard work but everyone has been really helpful and friendly to me”

“Today has been really hard work, I hope to have a full time job one day”

“I have enjoyed working hard today as I became faster at doing my jobs”

“It was special this morning as I thoroughly cleaned the VIP rooms”

“Today I have cleaned 7 bedrooms and have folded hundreds of towels which was hard”

“Jo has been very pleased with me today”

“I don’t miss my mates as I am doing something much more important; I am getting a career”

“The blokes in the factory treat you like an equal and value what you are doing, as I am new they have been so helpful”

“I can’t wait until Trevor goes on holiday in August as I will be taking his job over so I am the boss”

“There’s no way I would want to be doing nothing, the best bit is to see what I have made during the day”

“My family reckon this is the best thing that has ever happened to me....and I agree”

“I get to work on my moped, not relying on buses meaning I can start work earlier than I should”

“Doing real work is much better than being at college doing the learning part of the job”

“This means I will not be like my Dad who has never had a job in his life”

Employer, family and school/college Feedback

Parent - “what have you done to my child? they are a different person at home, happy and confident”

Teacher – “the first week back at school was a residential and from this shy person with language and speech difficulties they actually volunteered to lead a problem solving activity of Day One and succeeded organising the team to achieve an outcome – a Massive Achievement”

Co Worker – “we have cleaned 18 rooms today; the learner is quick, capable and efficient and performed stock rotation between rooms – they are a star”

Head of HR- “They have come on leaps and bounds since starting with us. Confidence, communication skills and using their initiative have all improved; they have improved massively since we first met”

Family – “we are really pleased that our son has been busy and stretched, he now wants to get out of bed and go to work”

Manager – “no absences, always on time, no problems, fitted in really well and worked to a high standard completing tasks using equipment appropriately”

Natural Trainer – “we have done 16 rooms today, that is good team work – thank you”

Co Worker – “They have done extremely well today, working without my help they were fast and produced quality work, its been a very busy day”

Natural Trainer – “They did a perfect job and they have had a really good week”

Family – “even in the final week they still couldn’t wait to get into the car and go to work”

Job Coach – “It has amazed me how quickly they grasped the job to be done and just knuckled down and did it!”

Hotel Management – “I was really amazed how well they came back to work after a Bank Holiday off; they were enthusiastic, had not forgotten skills already learned and just got on with it”

Co Worker – “they had a brilliant day today, we had 12 rooms, lots of corridors and cupboards to do – I have really enjoyed working with them”

Natural Trainer – “This week they have worked with me for three long days – they have been lovely and helpful and they were always willing to work whatever the task was”

Manager – “Their self confidence had grown beyond belief from the day they started with us – they have been brilliant”

Supervisor – “I never have to tell them much as they are working it out on their own, I would have them working with me every day of the week”

Job Coach – “Its really difficult to pin point the big moments of this project, there have been so many and all the learners have enjoyed their own positive moments”