**Best guidance practice to employing a Deaf person**

Written by a Deaf, British Sign Language User

It is important that you make it known that your workplace is accessible and inclusive for any Deaf people. This will mean that Deaf people will have the confidence to apply for work where their needs can be met.

What do we mean by accessible and inclusive for Deaf people? We would like to believe that all workplaces are Deaf Aware and have full training to understand how you can work with and support your Deaf employees.

Communication between yourself and the Deaf employee is imperative to enable the Deaf employee to learn/train well and progress to various levels of skills. It is common to hear that Deaf people will be loyal people and yet they are still in the same job role from when they first commenced employment. This means they have not been given equal workplace opportunities and are excluded when talking and sharing internal information.

Conversation within the workplace is a barrier for Deaf people which can make them feel lonely at work and left out of social events.

Do you know if any of your work employees have BSL (British Sign Language)? Knowing this can be useful to get an idea of how the Deaf employee can fit in with the team.

Access to work is available for all employers to apply for funding to pay toward, job interviews, full employment training, Deaf Awareness Training, equipment, note taker and BSL interpreters. This can ensure that the Deaf employee can fulfil the role they are employed to do without barriers.

It is also commonly known that employers will say, Deaf people cannot work in their workplaces due to health and safety concerns. This is not true; there is an Equality Act 2010 requiring employers to make reasonable adjustments to allow Deaf people to work in the workplace.

On a personal note, I have worked for Living Options Devon since 2006 and started as a Project Assistant. Since then, I have worked my way up to managing numbers of Project work and the opportunity to train as a fully qualified Counsellor and Psychotherapist. This would not have been possible without the company's full understanding and support, in which I was able to partake in various training provided and access to work to help make this possible.