

Return to Work Interviews

Date:

April 2008

Client:

University of Sheffield, Accommodation and Cleaning Services (ACS)

Objective:

To reduce absenteeism in the department by training cleaning supervisors in how to conduct a return to work interview

Approach:

We were commissioned to deliver an interactive training package based on a performed scenario, the client having previously commissioned a forum theatre piece. After initial consultation it was decided that we should take a slightly different approach than we when using a standard forum theatre approach. Rather than a single performance that is replayed and unpicked, we created two scenes which showed different approaches (one too formal and another too informal) and also made space for a third scenario to be directed by the participants. The session was designed to allow the audience to use the empathy and care of the first scene with a sense of the seriousness of the second scenario.

Facilitation:

The change in approach also led to a change in facilitation. After the first scene (it was conducted in a corridor and the supervisor made it clear that she didn't want to do it. For much of the scene the two women discussed their caravans in Skegness) the facilitator collected feedback and recorded the weaknesses and strengths of the approach. The second more formal approach was then performed and then replayed in short chunks. After each section the audience was able to dissect what they had just seen but also to interrogate the characters. The lessons learnt in both of these scenarios then allowed the audience and actors to work together to construct a third 'in-between' version.

Outcomes:

The training was received extremely well with excellent evaluation statistics and quotations. At this stage it is too early to say whether there has been a reduction in absenteeism, as this won't be known for another year.

This training has been submitted for the National Training Awards

Dead Earnest Media Player:

You can listen to the second (formal) scene on the media player, recorded in rehearsals.