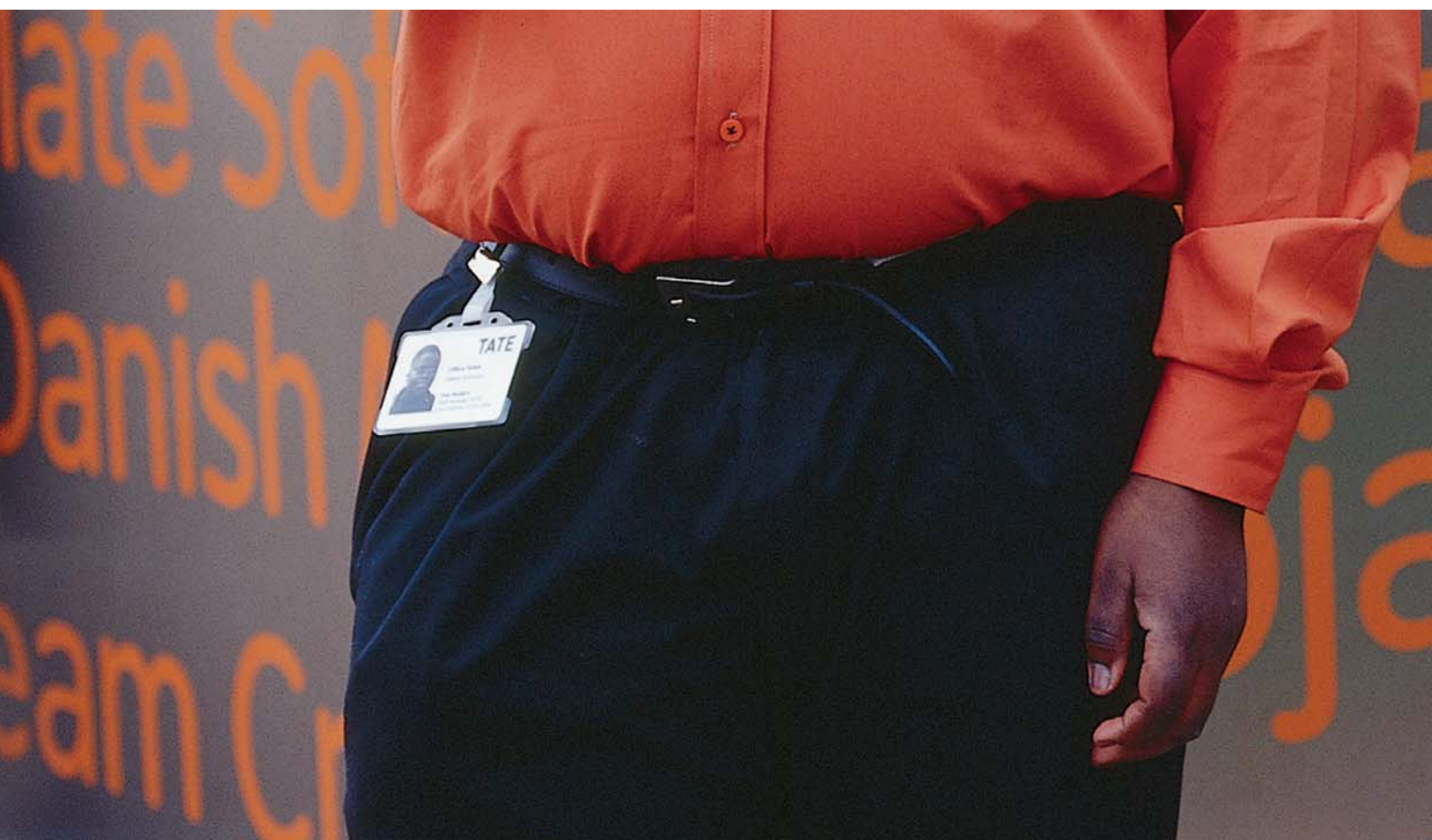




**You can work it out!**

**Supporting you into work**





# You can work it out!

## Supporting you better to find work

### Introduction

- Work is important to people - it's not just about earning money. Work helps you make new relationships and take part in your communities.
- Many people with a learning disability want to work, and can work in real jobs, with real pay. But not enough people get real jobs.

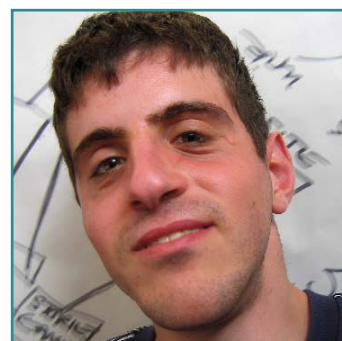


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- There are people who are **working** but who get very little or no money. **This is against the law.**
- There are people who go to **college** for many years but don't get jobs when it ends. This is a **waste of skills and money.**
- There are people who are **volunteers**, with no pay, but who want a paid job. **This is not fair.**
- There are people who do **work experience** for a long time and **never** get paid. This **not fair.**



The **Valuing People Support Team** wrote this guide to help you know more about what choices there are for work, training and volunteering. The guide will help you if you are interested in work. It will help you find out what choices you should expect from an employment service. It will tell you what you should expect from work and from the support you get.



## ■ The guide will help you if you need the chance to:

- do a job
- learn new skills
- do work experience as a step toward a job
- set up your own business
- volunteer if you do not want paid work.

## What's in this guide?

- 1 Supported Employment
- 2 Your own business
- 3 Social enterprises
- 4 Work experience, training & work trials
- 5 Volunteering
- 6 LETs and time banks

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# Supported Employment

- This is supporting you to **get a job** and **keep it**. You get a **real job**, with a **real employer**.
- It is **not** about day centre projects, sheltered workshops or training schemes. It is about moving you into a real job.

## Everyone should have a chance to work

- **Everyone** can work if they get the right support. Services should support **anyone** with a learning disability who **wants** to work. **Nobody** should be left out.
- You should get support **whatever** your disabilities, health care needs or behaviours that are called challenging.



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## Support for you

- The employment service should find out what **you** want to do and what you are good at. They should then support you to find a job that matches your choices.
- You should get the choice to work in **lots of different areas - in offices, shops and other places**.
- You should get **advice** so you can work the hours **you** want without worrying about your **benefits**.
- You should be able to work in the evening or at weekends.



# Your support

■ You should get support to help you **get** and **keep** a job so that your employer is happy with your work.

■ You can get support with other things like:

- **transport** - getting to and from work
- getting a **qualification** (this is a certificate you get from college)
- getting **promotion** or **changing jobs**



■ They can help you get support from other places like:

- your **self advocacy group**
- your **co-workers**
- your **manager** or **supervisor**
- **friends and family**



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# Being equal with your colleagues

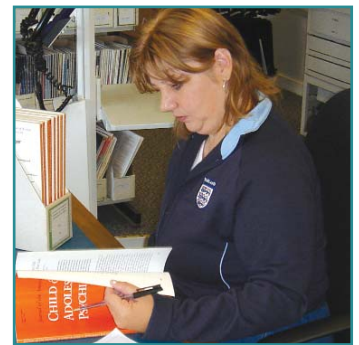
## You should get:

- the **same pay** as other people doing the same job
- the same **conditions** as other workers.
- training
- pension rights
- being able to join a **union**. A union is a group you can pay to join. A union can help you at work by making sure your rights are protected.
- a **healthy and safe workplace**



## A Real Job for you

- The employment service should support you to get a **real job** and keep it. It is **not** about getting you ready for a job in the future. The service should help you to work and train **on-the-job**.



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# Running your own business

## Micro enterprises:

- are **small businesses** which you run yourself.
- are open to **everyone** and are **flexible**.
- are about you **earning money**.
- offer people a product or service for which they'll be willing to pay.
- might mean you being **self-employed**.



## Your needs

- People with **very high support needs** can have micro-enterprises.
- You should get support to see **your** own skills and help with setting up a micro-enterprise.
- Micro-enterprises need thinking about **you**, with your interests, living in your community.
- Micro-enterprises are usually 'owned' by one person - **you**. This way you can keep control over it. If it's set up to match **your** needs, then it's probably only right for **you**.
- The best support comes from experienced voluntary, independent or business agencies. They should have links to local businesses and support agencies.
- Your employment service should offer you other choices too, like supported employment.



## You may need

- money for **personal assistants** or **staff** to support you in your enterprise.
- help to get money and benefits advice.
- help to write a business plan
- help to get business supports and money to start the enterprise
- support to develop long-term individual support



## Making the enterprise suit you

- Each micro-enterprise is different.
- Enterprises can take from a few days a year to full-time. They're set up to suit **your** needs.



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# Social Enterprises

These are businesses with **social goals** rather than just trying to make money. This means they are trying to do things like employ people with a disability or help people in other ways. There are lots of different kinds of social enterprises. **You** may have the chance of working in a social enterprise.



## Things to think about

- There should be a real demand for what you will be doing.
- You should still be offered support to work for employers if there are any jobs in the same sort of work. You should be supported to go into **mainstream work**.
- The people supporting you should have the right skills and a good plan to help your social enterprise **grow**.



## Meeting your needs

- A social enterprise should be set up around the work interests of **you** and the other people involved.
- You should have the chance to develop skills, interests and relationships with other people. There should be people with **and** without learning disabilities **working together**.
- You should get **wages**.
- You must also have **other work choices** like supported employment.
- You should ask if there are good plans to support you to learn skills and move into work as you develop.



# Work experience

- This is when you work but **don't get paid**.
- It gives you and an employer the chance to find out about each other. An employer can see **your skills**.
- It lets **you** try out a job and choose whether you like it.



## Be careful!

- It's **not** like real work unless you have wages and a contract!
- You are **not** protected by employment law. You may be treated badly!
- You should have your **costs** paid and be protected by **health and safety rules**.



## Planning for a real job

- Everyone should agree on how long your work experience lasts. There should be a **plan** to help you get a paid job.
- Don't stay in unpaid work experience for more than **16 days in 8 weeks**.
- **Don't** go from one work experience to another without a **plan** to get you into a paid job.

# Employment Training

- This is training to get you ready for a job.
- Employment training can help you be more **confident**.
- It can help you learn **new skills**.



## Your needs

- Training should help you reach **your** work goals.
- Training should make your chances of getting a **job** better.

## Be careful!

- Employment training should:
  - be part of **further education** and use proper trainers
  - assess you properly
- **Training on-the-job** works better than training in the classroom. You learn best in the same building, working with the same people, and using the same equipment as you will be when you are in the job.
- On their own, training courses often **don't** help to get you into paid work.



## Planning for a real job

- There should be links with employment services that can lead to work.
- The employment training should know about local jobs to help you move into a real job.

# Work Trials

- 'Employers can use work trials to give people with a learning disability a chance prove they can do a job.
- This lets them see your skills **on-the job**. You have a chance to try out the job.
- Employers can use work trials instead of formal interviews.



## Planning for work

- Your work trial should last for a time that suits you and the employer. It should not last more than **8 weeks**.
- You should **not** have to do one work trial after another.
- You need **support** so you can show your skills.



## Moving into real work

- 'There should always be a **real, paid job** at the end of your trial if you do well.

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# Being a volunteer

- This is when you spend time, doing something that helps you and the place where you are volunteering. **You do not get paid.**



## Volunteering can:

- give you new skills
- help you take part in your community
- help you make new relationships
- make you happier.

## Your needs

- Volunteering should be about **your** goals and wishes.

## Building relationships

- Volunteering helps you to take part in your community and get to know other volunteers.
- You should be able to volunteer in places like a charity shop or community centre.



## Be careful!

- **Don't** volunteer for firms that make money.
- Don't volunteer to do things that other people are **paid** for.
- Get advice to make sure that volunteering won't make your **benefits** go down!
- Working and volunteering for the same organisation is **never** a good idea.
- Make sure you get your **costs paid**, the right **clothing** and the **training** you need.



## Planning for a paid job

- If volunteering is a step to you getting a paid job, you need a **plan** to move into work.
- It should give you skills that will help you get a paid job. If you **are** volunteering as a way of getting a paid job, **don't volunteer for more than six months.**



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# LETS and Community Time Banks

- These are other ways you can get experience of work.
- People swap their **time** and **skills**.
- You do **not** get paid in these schemes. **No money changes hands**.
- By taking part, you can take part in your community and be valued.
- **LETS** operate with a **currency**: you may be given vouchers or tokens for any work you do, which you can use to get other people to do things for you.
- **Time Banks** work through people giving time to each other.



## Planning for a real job

- In LETS and Time Banks give you can **swap skills** and **make relationships**. They are **not** jobs.
- They are **not** as good as supported employment in helping you get a paid job.
- Everyone in the community should be involved - **not** just people with a learning disability.



# Finding out more

Ask your employment service for more information.

You can see some of the **Valuing People Support Team** guides at:

[www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/employment](http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/employment)

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## This guide

**The Valuing People Support Team** produced this guide to help people know more about support for them to find work. If you are interested in work, this guide will help you find out what your choices are.

The guide was written by **Bill Love** and **Peter Bates** at the **National Development Team** at [www.ndt.org.uk](http://www.ndt.org.uk).

**Simon Whitehead**, **Anne O'Bryan** and **Susan Boddy**, for the **Valuing People Support Team** helped.

The accessible text and design was by **Working with Words**. Find out more at [www.workingwithwords.org](http://www.workingwithwords.org).

