

# Improving Workforce Development and Organisation Performance

*Benefits gained by embedding workplace based training in the New Zealand health and disability sector*

## The Research

**What:** Independent qualitative research on health and disability workplaces that have embedded workplace training.

**Who:** Conducted by Dr Rose Ryan, Heathrose Research Ltd. Commissioned by Careerforce.

**Objectives:**

- describe the embedded workplace based training model
- assess the impact of the model on organisational performance

**Methodology:** Detailed case studies of 5 health and disability workplaces.

**Finding:** Embedded training delivers personal development and organisational development.

## The Major Benefits of Embedding Identified in the Research

### 1. Service delivery and client benefits

- improvements in client outcomes
- improvements in quality of care
- greater sense of professionalism
- greater awareness of client needs and what care and support workers should or should not do in relation to these
- increased incident reporting
- adoption of a more holistic approach due to better understanding of 'why' care and support is delivered the way it is

### 2. Organisational benefits

- reduced employee turnover and improved retention
- higher level of quality assurance
- attracting higher quality, and younger, applicants
- improved planning and work processes
- improved workplace culture and teamwork
- efficiency gains, including better matching of workers against client need

### 3. Employee benefits

- clarification of care and support worker role and its value to the workplace
- a career pathway and greater likelihood of career progression
- recognition of existing skills
- better wages, job security and working conditions
- improved self-esteem, confidence and job satisfaction
- feeling safer due to better understanding of responsibilities and risks
- national qualification achievements

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## What is Embedding?

The embedded workplace training model treats the workplace as the centre of learning and assessment. It was developed by Careerforce in conjunction with the sector.

### What does embedded training look like?

Careerforce's embedded workplace based training model makes learning and assessment a part of everyday workplace practice. Common elements include:

- training resources are created to fit with the organisational infrastructure, policies and procedures so that training is directly relevant to the employer and employee
- training and assessment becomes part of everyday practice
- the creation of a culture of learning within organisations by making learning central to everyday practice
- Careerforce works with employers to support implementation of documentation, training supports and workplace assessment

### How does embedding happen?

Across all five workplaces the process of embedding training had been an evolutionary one. It tended to start with thinking about ensuring staff knew how to perform tasks in line with contractual obligations, but quickly moved into identifying how work processes can be improved to deliver better services. In all cases the embedding process was supported by Careerforce Workplace Advisors.

### Workplace actions identified which supported the embedding process

- a key person leading the development of a plan for the delivery of training, assessment and verification
- ensuring workplace policy and procedures are available and accessible
- assisting people to become re-acquainted with study skills, such as reading comprehension and recording their answers in clear language
- time management support
- open access to supervisors, service co-ordinators and training staff
- facilitation of study groups and the provision of mentoring
- the opportunity to correct and re-submit assessments (helping address trainee fears)

## Quotes from the Research

*"I've become very passionate about training... because I can see that when staff are well trained and well supported the package of care will work better... If the training isn't there it all breaks down – it doesn't work for the client, but it isn't a good thing for the worker either. Training is the key to the success of the care."* **Manager**

*"It is the on-job stuff that is what embedding is about. It's not just doing the workbooks and ticking the boxes...you can't tell how capable they are just from that. It's about how they do things and the way we transmit our organisational culture."* **Manager**

*"It's very different from sitting in a class room. And by the end of that training they are so knowledgeable about how we do things here... So we can say to them "okay, show me where our health and safety policy is and what it says" and it makes them think about its your organisation, your policy – and suddenly they all know the things they need."* **Manager**

*"I'm just heaps more confident. Knowing that you actually know what you are doing, and that they (employers and clients) have the confidence in you as well... how it was before was that we didn't know if there was a better way to do something."* **Trainee**

*"What they said about training at the interview definitely made me want the job more. Because it sounded really good, it sounded really professional."* **Trainee**

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