



Business Case Study Virgin Media

Background:

Due to the closure of the Swansea site and relocation of its staff, Virgin Media needed to recruit for an additional 150 Customer Service Adviser positions which were to be based locally in Wythenshawe.

Working with the Wythenshawe Skills & Employment Group (WSEG), Virgin Media representatives met with the partners to discuss the organisation's recruitment objectives but also the challenges and barriers the residents may face as part of the usual recruitment process. The group agreed an approach designed to increase candidate/role compatibility with a view to maximising longer-term staff retention.

Process:

WSEG identified a lack of knowledge among local jobseekers about Virgin Media as a local employer. Informal research revealed good awareness of the brand, which came with certain assumptions about jobs and salary expectations. This led to a dissonance between expectations of the prospective employee and the employer caused by:

- A lack of awareness of corporate culture
- Misunderstanding of the integration of different roles in the day to day operations of the business leading to poor ambition for career progression.

The group also identified that the telephone interview stage, which takes place as part of the usual recruitment process, acts as a barrier for most residents. Certain skill sets such as communication and confidence are required for this and the group know from experience and general intervention that certain cohorts of local residents lack these skills.



Real business. Wythenshawe.

Method:

Virgin Media arranged several local open days to increase awareness, enable discussion in a less formal environment and to increase good quality applicants for those that were interested in applying to continue their recruitment journey. Those that were keen to continue were given the opportunity to register an interest during the open days.

Attendance at the open days was preceded by a foundation stage, whereby WSEG instigated targeted local outreach with pre-employment support, ensuring suitable candidates were put forward. In addition and as a follow on to the open days and lead up to the assessment centres, interview and role play workshops were offered as further wrap around support for the residents who had been invited to attend an assessment centre.

Outcomes:

Virgin Media received a higher uptake for its assessment days as more 'non-referred' individuals considered making applications due to the tailored targeted approach. Introducing this way of 'Our Manchester' working to an employer keen to try a new approach, saw 61 local residents of various ages and a mixture of both male and female attend the two open days. 67% registered an interest and 44% that attended an assessment centre secured employment with Virgin.

