



Supporting Meat Retailing
apprentices who have a
specific disability

Scenario: Apprentice with a disability

Introduction

- In this session, I will be discussing the difficulties and challenges that confronted an apprentice retail butcher who was diagnosed with Asperger syndrome as a child.
- This particular syndrome is a developmental disorder that affects how the brain processes information.
- People with Asperger syndrome may be helped with support, regular routine and training
- Upon reflection, as his assessor in the workplace, I had to not only acknowledge his learning difficulties, but also consider his own individual learning styles so he could complete his TAFE studies.

Scenario: Apprentice with a disability

Training providers perspective:

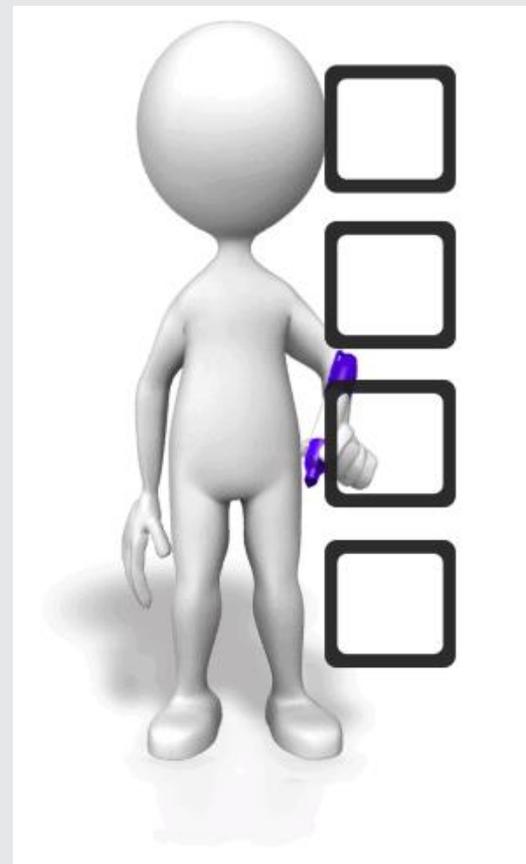
- ✓ Apprentice enrolled in flexible delivery mode (workplace)
- ✓ The apprentice is only assessed in the workplace, not trained by the RTO
- ✓ Apprentice did not declare his disability at the time of enrolment (funding issues)



Scenario: Apprentice with a disability (cont'd)

Apprentices family perspective:

- ✓ Parents are anxious,
- ✓ Mother assisting with theory work,
- ✓ Parents worried how he was coping,
- ✓ Father a High School teacher and had higher expectations for his son, (why become a butcher in the first place)



Scenario: Apprentice with a disability (cont'd)

Employers perspective:

- ✓ Apprentice is the son of a friend,
- ✓ Very frustrated by apprentices inability to follow, the daily routine and running of the shop,
- ✓ Employer had no disability awareness,
- ✓ Apprentice was not developing time management skills,
- ✓ Apprentice inability to prioritise tasks,
- ✓ Apprentice had no sense of urgency in work related tasks (too slow)
- ✓ ***Employer pulling his hair out and wants to sack the apprentice!***



What did the I do from an RTO's point of view?

- I assured the employer I would contact the teacher consultant (TC) for students with a disability at Granville TAFE College ASAP,
- I contacted the TC the same day,
- I contacted the employer a few days later to inform him that the TC would contact him ASAP regarding assistance for his apprentice.



How did the RTO assist the apprentice to keep his job?

Information gathered by teacher consultant (TC) for students with a disability

- TC met with all parties (on site) to determine the issues,
- TC conducted psychometric assessment on apprentice,
- TC identified apprentices disability,
- TC identified prior educational history,
- TC established the employers goals,
- What did the employer want?
- What would be a reasonable outcome ?



How did the RTO assist the apprentice to keep his job?

What could the assessor provide?

- Provide greater flexibility in the assessment process
- Research availability of federal government funding for one to one training
- Change from workplace delivery to College based



How did the RTO assist the apprentice to keep his job? (cont'd)

Barriers:

- ✓ availability of funding
- ✓ time restraints applied by employer
- ✓ lack of workplace mentors education
- ✓ apprentice only recently passed drivers licence
- ✓ apprentice was not a confident driver and could only cope driving to and from work
- ✓ parents worried about apprentice catching a train to TAFE college
- ✓ teaching section was relocating for 12 months due to major renovations to another TAFE college further away

Outcome:

- ✓ workplace training/assessment was successful because funding was made available to mentor, train and assess apprentice by the RTO

How to support an apprentice with a disability in the workplace

Apprentice's issues

- Diagnosed with a learning disability and auditory disorder at school,
- Below average in reading, spelling, mathematical skills and cannot be addressed by remediation,
- Very slow at all work tasks,
- Could not remember what tasks to do next,
- Distracted by background noise and bright lighting,
- Took long extended bathroom breaks



How to support an apprentice with a disability in the workplace (cont'd)

On the other hand, apprentice's attributes:

- ✓ Very keen and eager to learn,
- ✓ Punctual,
- ✓ Clean and neat appearance,
- ✓ Customers liked him,
- ✓ Had a good sense of humour,
- ✓ Good rapport with other employees.



What support did the apprentice require in the workplace ?

- ✓ Practice with technical skills,
- ✓ Assistance with time management,
- ✓ Assistance with work and shop routine,
- ✓ Assistance with theory work.



What was needed to be able to provide tailored assistance in the work place?

Funding:

- ✓ Application was made to the federal government for employing an apprentice with a disability,
- ✓ Successful in application, \$5000 was made available to enable support to be delivered,
- ✓ Wage subsidised by the federal government so the employer could offset reduction in productivity.



What was needed to be able to provide tailored assistance in the workplace?

VET teacher: What was on my radar:

- ✓ I had the desire to assist the apprentice, however, I had to demonstrate that the apprentice could be supported and trained on the job,
- ✓ I needed an agreeable employer,
- ✓ I required employer to continue to employ apprentice,
- ✓ I required the apprentice to adapt to a new situation



What did the support sessions in the workplace look like?

What did I do

- I negotiated with the employer a suitable time of the week,
- I negotiated 8 x 4 hour one on one training and support sessions,
- I provided intensive learner support, addressing all of the employers and apprentices concerns,
- I provided detailed procedures for apprentice to establish a structured and well timed daily routine,
- I identified his learning styles. (how he learnt)



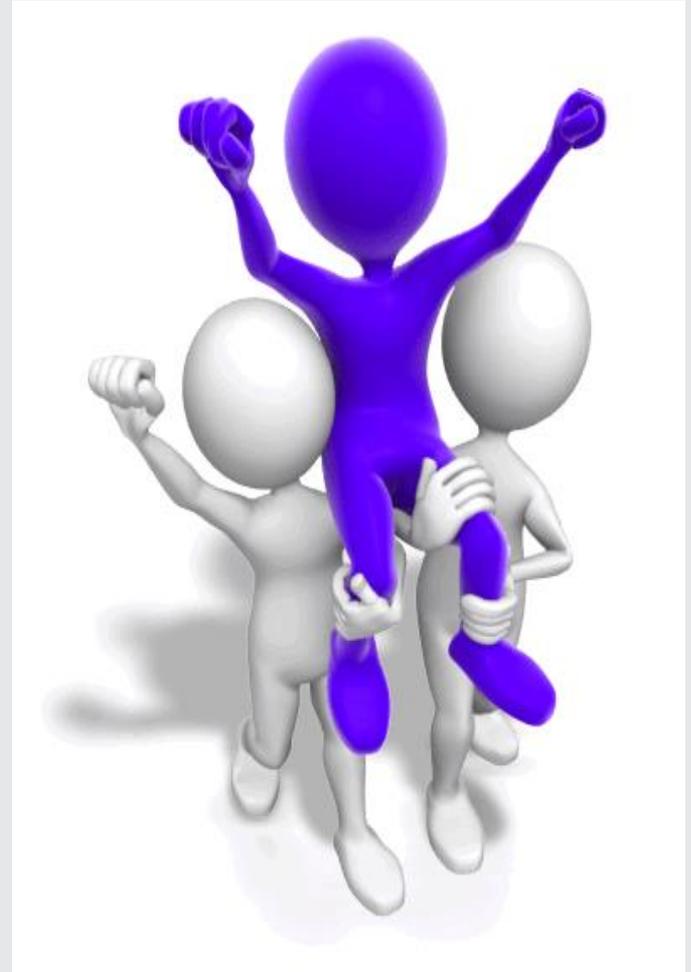
What did the support sessions in the workplace look like? (cont'd)

- Demonstration and corrective feedback to the apprentice,
- Practice sessions in basic butchery skills: knife sharpening, breaking (including bandsaw), boning, slicing, rolling and tray packing,
- Videoed practical sessions to provide feedback on technique,
- Verbal questioning throughout practical sessions to determine skills and knowledge.
- Apprentice practised practical skills throughout the week.



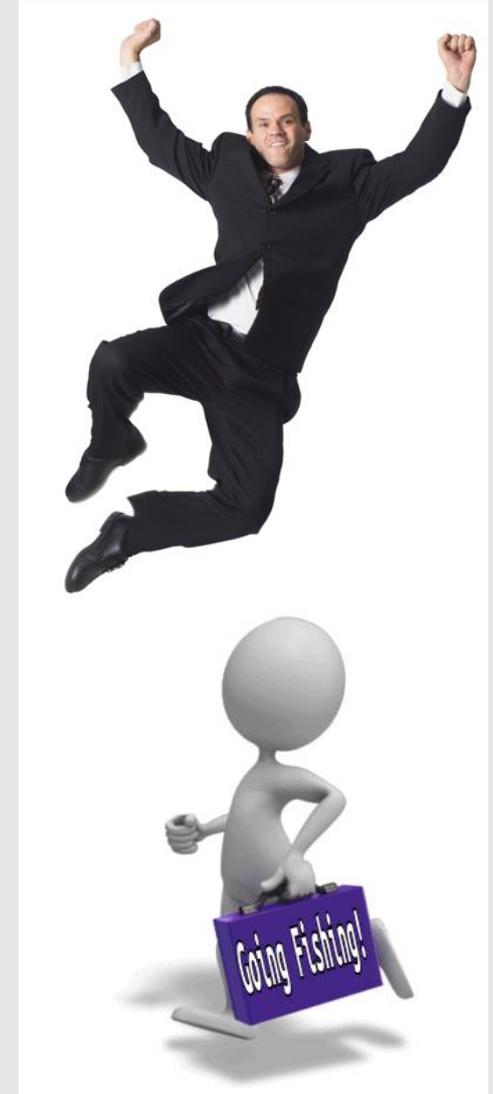
Outcomes

- ✓ Last two training sessions apprentice was able to perform all specified tasks without coaching,
- ✓ Time management was vastly improved due to structured daily routine, including ***only 2 minute bathroom breaks!!!***
- ✓ Apprentice is now ***very competent, confident and quick*** in all general butchery skills, including breaking carcass meat,



Outcomes (cont'd)

- ✓ Apprentice completed Cert. III in Meat Processing (Retail Butcher),
- ✓ Employer very happy,
- ✓ Parents happy,
- ✓ Apprentice happy and is now employed as a FT butcher at the same shop,
- ✓ Everyone involved in the programme including, employer, apprentice, parents, TAFE disabilities coordinator and assessor are now aware what can be achieved through collaboration and '***focusing on the student, not the disability***'.



Group activity:

What are the issues in the workplace?

- Who takes responsibility for training apprentices who have a disability in the workplace?
- What is the role of the RTO in the workplace if an apprentice has a disability?
- How does the RTO identify apprentices who have a learning disability?
- How would a workplace trainer understand the requirements of an apprentice who has a disability?
- What is the role of the assessor if an apprentice has a disability?
- Who will be the apprentices mentor?
e.g. workplace trainer, RTO, fellow worker, counsellor?
- How could this process impact on the employer, apprentice and the RTO?
- What were the students learning styles?



Any questions



