

Case study 2: direct approaches

Older Workers Employment Network

Pete had been unemployed for two years before joining the Older Workers Employment Network (OWEN) project. He has worked as a mill manager in a textile business and had taken a few casual jobs but really wanted something more permanent. He particularly liked the sound of Portable Appliance Testing (PAT).

At his first one-to-one session with an adviser Pete seemed pretty confident about his CV, but wondered why it wasn't working for him as he simply wasn't getting interviews.

The important thing was to get Pete's CV sorted out so we invited him onto our in-house CV and interview technique workshop. This gave Pete the chance to focus on his CV and get some really good practical advice about how it could be improved on. It was still tailored to the textile industry, not surprising as he'd worked in that sector for such a long time, but it wasn't working for him as the jobs he was after had no obvious link to the job of a mill manager.

It's really common with more mature job seekers that they have lots of really good experience and skills, but just can't match them to the jobs they are applying for. For some this is about a lack of confidence....they just don't think they have many skills, for others it is just a lack of ability to do what we advisers do all the time: tease out transferable skills and match them to suitable jobs. So on taking the advice of his adviser, Pete:

- Changed his CV, adding in transferable skills that were relevant to the job he was applying for (and leaving out a lot of information from his original CV!)
- Reduced the amount of information sent to potential employers after we emphasised the importance of knowing when enough is enough and to not bombard an employer with too much information about yourself
- Sent his CV to companies speculatively, rather than waiting to see job opportunities advertised. Pete knew the kind of company he really wanted to work for, so sent his CV to these types of companies only. We often recommend to mature job seekers that they apply to smaller companies as it seems that there are often less barriers about their age, perhaps this is because some of the people doing the interviews are over 50 too.

We also funded Pete's PAT and Safety Passport course, as these were key qualifications he was going to have if he was going to stand a chance of getting a job as a PAT.

Success! Pete was recruited to a new job with local company CLM, who carry out PAT testing for organisations in East Yorkshire. On gaining employment, Pete said: "A big thank you to the team at OWEN, I don't think I would have got this job without your help and encouragement. You made my CV work for me and encouraged me to apply speculatively to companies who were recruiting - it was this tactic that finally paid off."

