

Finland



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Place of action:

Factory producing furniture

Storyteller:

Mikko, manager of the company

Synopsis:

Pekka, an employee with a disability, works in the welding department, welding, and stamping products

Easing the busy work of the specialists

We had this need

"Before even thinking about recruiting, we had already noticed the multiple repetitive little tasks in the production line. These tasks took lots of time from our experts, who would rather do something more corresponding to their qualifications. There was a need for an employee who could take over these tasks, during some days of the week, and then 4 - 5 hours per day."

I saw the good example

"I have lived in other country and noticed people with disabilities working as cashiers in stores. I have never received such good and joyful services as I received from these cashiers. That's why I started to look for possibilities to do the same in our company, here in Finland. At the beginning I found it hard to find the right contacts. Once I found this service provider, everything went smoothly."

An opportunity for both

"It was the employment service of the city that I contacted. They supported me in finding the right person for the tasks to be carried out. For them, it was the first time they guided somebody to paid work. As I understand from the local job coach, they support people with disabilities, but they had never come this far, meaning really finding a paid job for their clients."

We choose Pekka

"One of their job coaches visited us and asked us all these questions about the tasks and about our culture in the company. She wanted to have a clear view of what was asked of the future employee. I had to rewrite the job description, too many unnecessary information in it and, on the other hand, not enough information about the specific tasks and the skills needed to carry out these tasks. A lesson for us. Then, two candidates were introduced to us. Both were guided by a job coach when interviewing them. We choose Pekka. He first started with an internship. For us, it was important to know whether it was safe to let him work independently. And that was fine, he could carry out his tasks independently. His job coach supported him in learning the job assignments, that worked well. It became clear he is suitable for the job. Pekka also found out he really likes the job. We then decided to hire him, for three days per week and six hours per day."

New possibilities

"We receive a wage subsidy for Pekka. We didn't know this was possible, the job coach advised us in this. She gave us the name of a contact person within employment services. She had already contacted them and had made sure the officials were up to date. The decision-making process of the wage subsidy decision went smoothly."

He likes it

"Pekka welds and stamps products. He does his work conscientiously and well. He does not need any adaptations. He has a colleague, who has the role of a mentor, with whom he can raise issues anytime during the working day. In the beginning, he needed some extra support, this need has diminished. Now it is 'the thought that there is someone available if needed'. Regularly, we ask him if he still likes the work, or if he wants some changes in tasks. It would be possible if he wants a change of duties. For now, there is no need to change anything."

The importance of an open mind

"Pekka has integrated very well into the work community. He felt welcome. As he mentioned it to me, he feels part of the work community. His colleagues consider him as a nice and appropriate guy. They are very pleased with him. And Pekka really loves to come to work. As I always say, 'everyone has something to give'. Important is an open mind. We have that open mind in our organisation and a commitment to make this a success. Without this commitment, we wouldn't have started. I have changed roles now, there is a new manager in my place, and he is also motivated and committed to taking the matter forward."

The support of the job coach

"We were quite happy with the support of the job coach. She supported in defining the job profile, searching candidates, and helping with the paperwork. She also supported Pekka to get into the rhythm and mentality of the workplace and working life in general. At the beginning, she was strongly involved and present. Once the tasks started to go smoothly and it was certain that Pekka coped well with his job duties, she moved more into the background. She is easily accessible when we need help. That does not happen often, she sometimes must remind us about her existence."

Being part of something is very important for all of us

"Pekka is carrying out assistive tasks for our highly educated professionals. They can now focus on their core tasks, which is quite cost-effective for us. And, as an internationally known brand, we wanted to show our social responsibility and helping the Finnish society by employing people for whom it is more difficult to find work. Work is a very big part of how we see ourselves as a person, and when it is taken away from anyone, it is a big deal. Being part of something is very important for all of us, even more with a person with a disability. We want to offer responsible work to everyone."

" As I always say, 'everyone has something to give'. Important is an open mind. "



Inclusion simply makes great enterprises



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