



## Barclays Corporate Banking – Case Study

We were exhibiting in High Chelmer shopping centre when we received a call from Barclays' Corporate Banking team. They were keen to meet and immediately sent a staff member to the shopping centre to glean information about how we might be able to work together as they were keen to support the local community.

A few days later, our Volunteer Centre Co-ordinator and Charity Engagement Manager were invited to Barclays' Chelmsford branch where they made a formal presentation to Barclays' Corporate Management Team explaining the work we do across the city, its villages and South Woodham Ferrers. At the meeting, Barclays explained about their LifeSkills programme that aims to support young people aged 11-19 to improve their employability skills supported by better access to work experience opportunities, traineeships and apprenticeships. The programme also provides free resources in schools and online that are designed to develop skills that employers most seek. Teachers are then able to access work experience opportunities for students at Barclays and partner businesses across the UK. The Barclays staff in Chelmsford wanted to do something creative that would link into their LifeSkills programme.

Their idea was to deliver a bespoke mentoring scheme aimed at children with additional support needs and outside a school setting. Two meetings later, the support scheme was finally created and we were also given the wonderful news that Chelmsford CSVA had been chosen to be their Charity of the Year and would be the guests of honour at their quiz evenings during 2015.

Employee volunteering opportunities were discussed back at our office and a week later a team of four Barclays' staff joined in with the Time-to-Time team helping to stuff envelopes for one of our member groups. After this, a team helped to collect money for Chelmsford 4 Good at a Marks and Spencer's bag packing event.

Chelmsford CSVA identified two local organisations that were supporting young children and young adults with learning difficulties that could benefit from Barclays skill set. Two of Barclays' senior management team met with the CEOs of both local organisations. After careful consideration, InterAct was chosen as a charity that Barclays could best support in the community. The process of building a bridge between a local charity and Barclays had begun.

During the selection process, a 'pilot' for LifeSkills was initiated by inviting four unemployed young people registered with Chelmsford Volunteering Centre to attend a session. The 'pre' pilots (spanning four sessions) were held at Barclays' Corporate Banking offices in Chelmsford

over four and a half hour, one to one sessions in which the mentors were able to get to know their candidates and find out what level of life skills support they required. The feedback was extremely positive.

“I really found the course very helpful, it gave me much more confidence”

Barclays' Corporate Banking team delivered a pilot on LifeSkills with support training consisting of five sessions for 11 young people with learning difficulties aged 16 to 25 years. LifeSkills is designed to give young people access to the advice, support and opportunities they need to get ready for the world of work. The delivery lasted for two hours per session for five weeks. The delivery was led by Barclays' volunteers (2 DBS checked volunteers per session) with an InterAct facilitator present each week to support them.

The original session consisted of two modules:

- People Skills and
- Work skills over 5 sessions, with the fifth session being the presentation of certificates.

During the first two weeks it was clear that elements within the modules were taking longer to explore and understand, therefore it was decided to use all five sessions for learning. The focus of each session emphasised all forms of communication when applying for a job.

Feedback from the young people:

- Brilliant course learnt things not to do
- Not to get over excited
- Preparing for an interview
- To believe in yourself and be more confident
- Good eye contact, listening and talking loud and clear, distracting to others
- Communication and how to prepare

At the end of the course all participants, including their families, attended an awards evening at Barclays' Corporate Banking offices in Chelmsford where each young person received a LifeSkills Certificate.

## **In summary**

Chelmsford 4 Good's business brokerage brought the organisations together and helped the young people to develop their personal skills.

InterAct's facilitator attended each session and supported Barclays' volunteers by working in partnership showing them first-hand how to deliver the LifeSkills course to people with extra support needs. Since the session, InterAct has now become a registered LifeSkills centre and it is hoped that a LifeSkills course aimed at individuals with learning difficulties and additional needs will be rolled out across the UK.

**Commenting on InterAct's involvement, Co-Chief Executive [add name in here], said:**

“Many thanks for thinking of InterAct as a suitable match. It is your local knowledge of the sector and listening/matching of the business ‘volunteer’ offer that is key. Acting as the broker we have benefited from the opportunity of your investment in the pre work/engagement with the business sector of promoting the benefits of cross sector partnerships and matching needs with the skills/talents offered, in this case by Barclays.”