

LAB

PROJECT

PROPER JOB CASE STUDY OF THE LAB PROJECT



Early this year I was able to spend some time observing and taking part in the LAB Project. As a trustee of Proper Job, we often discussed the LAB Project at board meetings but I really wanted to see what happened for myself over the two weeks.

To say I was impressed is an understatement. My initial thoughts on the first day were how are the facilitators and volunteers going to work with such a diverse group of people? The participants were from very different backgrounds, they had a range of work and non-work experiences, there was a mix of learning styles, age ranges and disabilities.

The participants looked apprehensive - this was a new and slightly daunting experience for them and for me. Any fears or nervousness were soon dispelled by a series of warm-up exercises and 'getting to know one another' exercises. By the end of the day, the participants were working together on group activities. I went back mid-week to see friendships groups had been formed and there was a positive, upbeat and friendly atmosphere within the room. I was very impressed with how cohesive the group had become in such a short time.

I attended the last day of the LAB and there were significant changes in the participants - their increase in confidence was measurable. The group worked as a team on all the activities and they were very supportive and encouraging of each other. Chatting with some of the participants they felt they now had the confidence to progress into work and had acquired some valuable life-long skills.

I felt very privileged to have observed the LAB Project and on a personal level, I learnt so much. I observed how an individual's confidence and resilience can be developed and improved in very short space of time. The facilitators, volunteers and participants worked together to enable progression for everyone involved.