



The Provision of Intensive Transition Services to Youth

At this time of employment pessimism it is an excellent opportunity to expound on Catapults' Intensive Transition Supported Employment Services provided to youth.

The rise in the number of youth clients that have entered our service over the last two years seeking transition from School to Employment, further training, further education and work based experience has enabled us to build on our experience and commitment to provide successful employment outcomes for those most disadvantaged members of society.



Catapult has, during this period, laid the foundation for this further development in respect to youth. Catapult's increased work in the area of transition from school to work and employment support for our youth clients, coupled with increased youth referrals from family, doctors, Work and Income and supported living organisations has reaffirmed our commitment to our youth specific Transition Supported Employment Service.

Solving the employment issue solves so many other problems. It not only provides income and opportunities, it also supports the personal development of the individual with regards to confidence, self esteem, mobility, and community awareness. This, in turn can assist the individual to go on independently to problem solve for themselves. Furthermore, getting a job is the perennial issue for families.

Our experience has also shown us that mentors within the workplace are numerous, and that workplace based education and goal setting, if chosen by the client and then supported by Catapult in a way that celebrates progress, achievement and focuses on the client's dreams, aspirations and goals, is as vital and long lasting as external support structures that focus on the negative aspect of the client.

Successful employment placement and the provision of ongoing post placement support, to both the employer and the employee, ensures long term success for youth clients and long term employer commitment to the work of Catapult.

As is the nature of the work, it is important to include as a vital factor in our clients success - the productive relationships with clients, parents, caregivers, whanau, the Ministry of Social Development, Work and Income, schools, employers, doctors and health professionals, community organisations and all parties that work with the client. These relationships are essential and have ensured ongoing consistent success for clients.

It is pleasing to report that as at 31 January 2009, Catapult has a total of 217 active clients who are currently working or job seeking, of which 77 are youth clients.

Of these 77 youth, 41 are currently employed and have maintained employment for over six months. Concurrent to this, Catapult has and continues to provide job training, work experience and further education opportunities for the remaining clients who continue on their own pathways towards their desired goals.

Catapult's strength and success is based on attention to detail in respect of the need to provide the best support for our young people, and to have a streamlined, flexible, no hassle service that is attractive to youth, non judgemental, and small enough not to be overpowering and institutionalised.

Location is also important and being centrally located near the bus exchange provides easy access to our offices from any part of the city.

In conclusion, Catapult's success has been based on the key relationships highlighted above while providing a flexible service that supports school leavers and all young people to actively engage in community participation in employment, further education, career training or other activities that contribute to their long-term societal, economic independence and well-being.

This success of Catapult's effective service has been underpinned by the well developed and historical links with youth mentoring groups, tertiary providers, employer groups, community organisations, central and local government advisors and individual employers themselves.

Catapult continues its ongoing commitment to develop and enhance its open and rewarding relationship between government departments both central and local, to provide the impetus to increase the quality and suitability of the opportunities and services available for young people. Our commitment to the sector is ongoing and our success is a reflection of the strong connections initiated, sustained and developed throughout Christchurch/Otautahi.

Value Cars' Value Employee

Typically our newsletters feature an article recognizing the fantastic support an employer has given to our clients. Recently we decided that acknowledgement of our clients and the great work they do in maintaining employment is long overdue and also deserves mention.

Murray Wilson, car groomer at Value Cars, deserves acknowledgement for the great work he has done both in maintaining employment and for the standard of work produced.

Murray started work at Value Cars in February 2006. It would be true to say he got off to a shaky start. According to Murray, it was the excellent support from the staff at Value Cars and Catapult staff that he still works there today.

Murray is now a highly valued employee, for both the standard and amount of work produced.

I asked Murray why he has stayed at Value Cars. He replied without hesitation, 'It is the staff'. They have been there for me through the tough times and also the good times. They are like a family to me.'



Murray Wilson, Car Groomer for Value Cars.

What motivates Murray and gives him job satisfaction is seeing the cars he has cleaned to perfection leave the yard. "When a car is sold it means the customer is impressed enough to want to buy the car and that's when I know I have done a good job" he said.

Murray is an excellent role model. He stands as a shining example of achievement and workplace success.

We at Catapult congratulate Murray for his work at Value Cars and wish him every success for the future.

Employer of the Month



JATRA CORPORATION LTD

Hi Tech Foods Ltd

Every now and then we work with an employer who is willing to go the extra mile to ensure that an employee gets the right training and support for the job.

One such employer is Mike and his staff members at Hi Tech Foods, who have employed several of our clients over the years and at present Hi Tech, employ three full time staff members who have come via Catapult.

We began working with Hi Tech Foods three years ago when we approached Mike regarding a young client who was keen to work but had no experience in the job market. The client was also disadvantaged due to health issues as a result of his disability.

To ensure a stable employment outcome for our client required a great deal of support and understanding from the employer. Jenny, who is the Factory Manager at Hi Tech, was given the role of helping our client integrate into the factory environment and learn the tasks required for his position.

Jenny has been committed to making the placement work and has supported our client to help him develop the necessary skills for the job.

Jenny also helped him to become integrated into the workplace culture. Initially this proved difficult as the nature of our client's disability meant that he had problems connecting with other people on a social level. By meeting with staff members and explaining the issues that the client faced in relation to his disability enabled Jenny to develop a support network within the workplace and a greater understanding of the client's disability by his co-workers. Jenny says that he is treated the same as all the other Hi Tech workers and that no special treatment is given to him that differentiates him from other staff members.

On one support visit to Hi Tech I was told by our client that Jenny was like a mother hen, who would pull him back into line if he made any mistakes, but who also fussed over him to make sure he was happy in his job.

The success of this now, long term sustained and supported employment outcome has had a marked effect on our clients' life. From initially working part time, our client is now a full time permanent employee who is also now living independently and utilising his own resources to access the social opportunities that are available to him.

We at Catapult would like to thank Mike, Jacqui and Jenny for all their support over the last few years, and our hope is that this great relationship will continue for many years to come.

For further information about Catapult and the services we provide visit our website

www.catapult.org.nz