

Name: Achievement Training Ltd

Written By: Linda Friend-Early Years Care Co-ordinator
Danielle McCullough-Quality Co-ordinator

Date: 26 March 2008

1.0 Background to Linda Friend

This case study has been written around Linda Friend and her current position with regards to ITT. Linda has worked for Achievement Training (AT) for the past ten years and is one of the longest serving members of staff. Linda has been employed in the role as a tutor/assessor for this period.

In 2001 as a response to the requirements Linda completed her City and Guilds 7307 stages 1 and 2. This was the only teacher training qualification required at this time; this certificate was then superseded by the 7407.

Employees of AT were advised to complete the 7407 and arrangements were made for it to be taught in-house. During this period the company was experiencing a high volume of growth and staffing levels were increasing accordingly. AT gained centre approval, however, the course was never run due to funding issues.

Linda explained how she became despondent with the qualification framework as peers were going to Colleges/Universities to complete the 7404/Certificate in Education as evening classes. Unfortunately Linda was unable to attend sessions due to childcare issues. In the meantime Linda continued with her own CPD and has an extensive list of professional development activities.

In 2006 Linda was invited to join the Subject Learning Coach Professional Training Programme (PTP). Linda graduated from this programme at Level 7 last June. The PTP content was similar to that of the Certificate in Education programme in that some of the theories and models covered were comparable. The programme used peer coaching to demonstrate how teaching and learning standards could be raised in organisations. It covered different pedagogical approaches and used a variety of teaching and learning strategies.

Linda has been chosen for this study as her situation is unique within AT. The ITT needs of colleagues who do not hold formal teaching qualifications are being met by the introduction of the PTTLS and CTTLS, however, it is felt that due to her experience and qualifications Linda needs to complete the DTTLS.

2.0 Linda's ITT Experience

Linda completed the ITT award (7307) by attending evening courses run by the WEA along with several of her colleagues. These were held weekly. Linda funded this course herself as at the time no company funding were available.

3.0 Individual Issues

As mentioned Linda has recently completed the PTP at Level 7 so is reluctant to complete another such qualification under the funding conditions. Linda is prepared to complete the award but would like her extensive experience and previous learning to be taken into consideration i.e. an APL system applied.

3.1 Career Aspirations

Linda feels that her position within the company requires her to have QTLS due to the fact she is mentoring, coaching and training staff as well as learners. Linda has join the PTTLS and CTTLS team as a mentor and feels disadvantaged when having to discuss her own qualifications with colleagues as she feels her experience and knowledge may not be valued. Linda also holds the position of Early Years Care Co-ordinator which is considered to be at middle management level and feels that at some stage in the future the lack of QTLS will hold back her career advancement.

3.2 Organisational Support

AT is committed to improving and raising levels of teaching and learning for learners and staff. Linda has found that she has not been denied access to any training and is given appropriate opportunities to develop her skills. However, there are funding restrictions and the company is unlikely to be able to provide full funding for any future training and development needs unless further funding is secured.

3.3 Proposed ITT Route

Linda feels the best way for her to continue with her ITT and a way to overcome these issues would be for her to map her previous qualifications and experience to the DTTLS standards and present this for consideration. Linda feels a monthly session similar to the PTP would be more appropriate and has suggested that e-learning should be considered.

Although this case study is about Linda's own individual needs other ITT candidates may also experience similar problems once completing the CTTLS.

Linda has recently been disadvantaged; graduates of the PTP were offered to undertake an elective module which would allow them to offer 'in house' training for suitable candidates who wished to complete the PTP for themselves. Linda was not allowed to access this because she did not hold QTLS status. However, Linda was allowed to attend the e-learning elective and is now coaching colleagues to setup e-learning experiences within her department.

3.4 Other Responsibilities

Linda teaches three days a week and also trains Assessors and Verifiers internally and externally. Linda is the lead IV for CCLD Level 2 and TA Award. Linda represents AT at the CETT Forum and Tutor Development Group at City College Plymouth. Linda has also recently been involved with the consultation process for the new IQF.

Linda is responsible for mentoring new assessors within her department. Linda also belongs to the Child Protection, Teaching and Learning and IV Forum Working Parties to further improve quality and practices.

Linda is currently undertaking an Action Research Project (ARP) with the QIA. The project involves integrating KeySkills into the WBL area for CCLD. Linda and a colleague have been collaborating on the project which focuses on the subject expert coaching the non-subject teacher (Linda) to teach maths to this cohort of learners. New schemes of delivery and lesson plans using pedagogies are being developed.

The regional maths advisor from the QIA has been so impressed with the project that she has brought a crew to film a teaching session. This will be made into a DVD used for training. Linda and her colleague are expected to attend the roll out of the new resources that AT have been trialling in July 08.

Linda will also be involved with another ARP for the QIA with regards to the e-learning elective. Online assessment will be introduced and a review portal within the CCLD subject area.

3.5 Mentoring

At present Linda feels she does not have a mentor. Linda and her Manager complete CPD interviews and Appraisals annually, but these tend to be related to functional departmental issues rather than her long-term career prospects. Linda feels that

higher management have a lack of understanding and awareness of the role of a Subject Learning Coach and how to best use her skills within the organisation.

The topic of CPD has been presented to higher management and it is currently being reviewed to further support staff at all levels.

4.0 Organisational Issues

As mentioned Linda is not provided with a mentor. However, the organisation is in the position to be able to do so and recognises that this person should not be her Manager. AT is a small training provider so therefore does not have the same access to funding and specialist resources that other larger colleges enjoy. Within the company, like Linda, staff roles are stretched and areas cross over leading to possible conflicts of interest and the imposing of time constraints.

The culture of the organisation is changing and new ideas are being adopted to support staff members. AT recognise that staff have the same needs as learners and formal inductions to training programmes are being implemented.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

To conclude we feel that the needs of the more experienced staff within our organisation such as Linda, need to be identified and met. Additional funds and time will be needed in order to carry this through successfully ensuring that all trainee teachers have the same opportunities as those who are employed in larger organisations. At present Linda feels that no-one within the organisation is aware or interested in her plight.

Linda has recently registered with the IFL and has been awarded the status of an Affiliate member. Therefore she has no voting rights and feels that the IFL have not recognised her experience and feels undervalued.

Linda feels that raising senior management's awareness is important. A way of doing so would involve the Directors conducting CPD interviews themselves along with departmental Managers. The benefits would be evident as necessary decisions can be made promptly and experienced employees' self esteem and creditability would be raised within the company.

With regards to the IFL Linda feels that an interview process would be a more beneficial in cases such as hers as each individual can divulge information that does not fit into the standard form.

Note: The views in this case study are those of the author(s).