



Career Connect deploys blended learning to train over 380 staff in under two months



Client: Career Connect

Activities: Independent careers advice and management charity

Location: Across the North West

Courses: Safeguarding; Data Protection
Equality & Diversity

About Career Connect

Career Connect is a charity which provides high quality, independent careers advice, bridging the gap between learning and employment and generating better life chances for young people and adults alike. It provides a wide range of career management services around the UK, often in partnership with Local Authorities, schools and colleges. The charity is also a key provider of the National Careers Service for adults.

Blended learning to save time and get best results

In today's diversified world where the third and private sectors both compete for contracts, Career Connect has a number of engagements, primarily

across the North West of England, working with everyone from young people in schools and colleges to the unemployed and even in prisons. Workforce Development Manager, Stewart Nicolson says that what unites these contracts is the passion of true experts providing high-quality, independent careers management services.

Whilst the team is expert in careers guidance; in these often complex environments, further training is essential in aspects of Safeguarding, Data protection and Equality & Diversity. Nicolson realised that there is value in face-to-face training sessions; for example, in a classroom, a group of learners will ask questions which benefit the whole room. On the other hand, it is often uneconomical and inconvenient to pull staff out of their work contexts at least once every 12 months.

"To get the best of both worlds, we were very keen to have a blended approach", he says. "So we've built Me Learning into our induction and probation process. We give new starters e-learning and some practical exercises to do, so that when they come to our induction day, they're not coming in cold – they already have the background knowledge and can get straight down to the specifics of how safeguarding and diversity work in our own context. It saves us a lot of time, and means we can be much more focused and solve real-world problems in the face-to-face sessions."

Quality first

Nicolson knew what courses the organisation needed, and conducted a trial with half a dozen providers, based on the key modules required. However, he says, “They are not all the same. Some are incredibly dull and unengaging. We’ve got a great deal with Me Learning, but if you approach procurement on price alone, you’ll end up with something very unappealing.

“We checked out the market on a quality basis and came back to Me Learning because the courses are friendly and really nicely broken down into easy-to-chew modules. We’re a training organisation ourselves, so we know the value of getting training right.”

386 trained in under two months

Thanks to Me Learning’s easy administration console – including the ability to upload employee lists to create multiple learning accounts at once – Career Connect has achieved a remarkable throughput of 386 employees onboarded and trained in under two months.

Says Nicolson, “The groundswell issue for us was equality & diversity. We had an immediate need for that, and 85% of our staff have now taken that course. And the target is a full 100%. As an administrator, I can achieve that throughput because we’ve got instant, real-time tools. Not only can I see the pie chart of who has completed the course and who has not; because the system allows me to connect individuals with their supervisors, I can automatically nudge managers – wherever they are in the country – to get their people to participate”.

Indeed, for the first four weeks, Nicolson used Me Learning’s highly configurable report functionality to download reports for each local team leader to identify learners who had not yet taken their course – it’s proven to be a simple way to reach 85% coverage.

Training the trainers

Despite originally requiring only a handful of core courses; today, Career Connect’s expert advisers and coaches have cost-effective access to 25 courses, all validated towards CPD learning hours and comfortably managed by Nicolson single-handedly. “The system allows us to make courses available in different ways”, he says. “So we have the core set which is mandatory, and we monitor our employees’ progress through that.

“But then there are other courses which are relevant to some trainers and not others; like **teenage pregnancy** or **domestic abuse**. We’ve put those in a broader ‘library’, and we can either mandate them to individual learners, or they can request them through their managers”. It means that Career Connect’s team can stay current and fully skilled, no matter how the market changes. It also demonstrates that the business can react fast to up-staff when it wins new contracts – and that’s a clear competitive differentiator.

Why Me Learning?

For Career Connect, Me Learning was the right choice for:

- User engagement
- Blended learning
- Flexible licensing

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For over 10 years, Me Learning has provided engaging learning experiences for complex and challenging professional environments. Our first class approach has seen us awarded ISO9001 status for quality management, and our commitment to customer service is second-to-none. We were recognised in 2015-16 and 2016-17 as top performers in the Deloitte Technology Fast 500 EMEA, along with receiving many other awards.

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