

JOB REDESIGN GUIDE FOR INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS

Developed by:

SG ENABLE
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01

WHAT IS JOB REDESIGN?



INTRODUCTION

Implementing job redesign can lead to greater clarity in the job responsibilities, better allocation of tasks or specialisation of job roles, which would lead to increased productivity.

With job tasks allocated to employees based on their competencies and strengths, this can lead to talent optimisation for the organisation and greater job satisfaction for employees. While job redesign helps address the needs of employees with disabilities, it signals to other employees that the organisation understands and is willing to address their needs too.

This guide shares how job redesign can help support and integrate employees with disabilities in the workplace. The following sections cover what job redesign is, how to implement it, and case studies of organisations with best practices in job redesign.

1. WHAT IS JOB REDESIGN?

Job redesign is an effort to review job responsibilities and work environments, simplify processes and develop solutions that improve an employee's performance and safety. Redesigning jobs can lead to improvements in productivity and job satisfaction¹.

Job redesign can be addressed in the following areas:



Types of Job Redesign

Reassignment of Roles and Responsibilities

Existing job roles and responsibilities can be reviewed to determine whether the job scope should be more specialised or expanded, and if the job tasks should remain, be removed or modified. It would also be useful to evaluate whether other roles will be affected by any changes that occur due to the reassignment of tasks for a specific role. Some ways to reassign roles and responsibilities include:

- ✓ **job carving** - where specific tasks are carved out for the individual or removed due to obsolescence
- ✓ **job sharing** - where two or more people share the responsibility of a full-time position, typically with each person working part-time²
- ✓ **job enlargement** - where employees with disabilities are gradually exposed to more tasks as an expansion of work scope³
- ✓ **job enhancement** - where the individual is assigned to do more value-added work⁴

This reassignment should take into account the needs of the employees with disabilities so as to enable them to perform their roles optimally.

Changes to Work Processes

Besides changing the job tasks, there may be a need to change work processes to effectively redesign the job. Process redesign is the approach to ensure that a particular set of interconnected activities are **performed correctly**, and in the **most efficient and effective manner possible**⁵.

The following are some common approaches of process redesign⁶:

- ✓ **streamline** - cut down the number of steps required to complete a task
- ✓ **re-sequence** - re-arrange the tasks to improve flow and/or reduce wastage
- ✓ **centralise** - gather common activities together to achieve economies of scale
- ✓ **de-centralise** - disseminate activities to improve responsiveness and flexibility
- ✓ **balance** - fine-tune the throughput and the capacity

Process redesign may be in the form of



Introducing new technological systems



Reallocation of resources



Challenging existing norms in the company to identify areas of improvement

When making these changes, it is important to obtain buy-in and involve the relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process. For example, when a restaurant introduces electronic menus, this could free up waiters who could be deployed to work in other aspects of the business. An effective approach would be to consider the entire process of a customer's experience – from the time that he is shown to his seat, orders food and gets served, to the time he pays – and see how the process can be redesigned to improve the experience or increase the throughput of the restaurant.

Changes in Work Arrangements

Some employees with disabilities need to gradually build up work stamina as they make the transition to work from Special Education schools, or after acquiring a disability. They may also have commitments like medical appointments on weekdays.

To better support them, employers can consider implementing flexible work arrangements, such as staggered hours or telecommuting.

Changes to Physical Workspace and Environment

Changes can be made to the physical workspace to better meet the needs of employees with disabilities and help them perform optimally. Some of these changes may involve the setup of a workstation, such as:



Displaying a flowchart of the tasks to be completed



Labelling the work desk and colour coding the different processes for ease of identification and recall



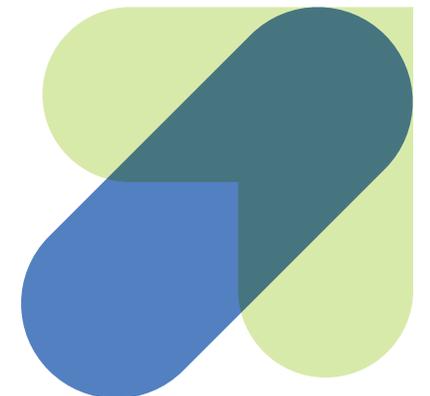
Adjusting the workstation to ensure better ergonomics

Other changes to the physical environment may include improving the accessibility within the compound, such as installing ramps or adjusting the height of card access points to allow better access for employees on wheelchairs. Similarly, the installation of sliding doors could be useful, not just for wheelchair users and persons using mobility aids, but for other employees as well.

Procurement of Assistive Technology Devices and Software

Some employees with disabilities may need assistive technology devices or software to perform the job tasks efficiently, such as the use of a handheld magnifier to see text better, or the use of a Roger Pen to hear better.

To find out more about assistive technology, you may download the online resource guide titled "Assistive Technology and e-Accessibility" [here](#).



02

THE JOB REDESIGN PROCESS

2. THE JOB REDESIGN PROCESS

Job redesign involves a process that will guide employers to systematically analyse, review and document their experience. This can be applied at the stage when employers are exploring to perform the different types of job redesign as discussed in chapter 1.

The job redesign process can be broken down into the following steps:



I. Examining and Defining Outcomes

Before conducting job redesign, it is important to study the existing job role to determine whether redesign is necessary. Some possible reasons include:

- Inability by employees with disabilities to perform certain job tasks
- Poor job fit between employees with disabilities and the job role
- Rotation of employees with disabilities across different job roles
- Inefficiencies in existing processes

It is essential to look at the outcome that the redesign should achieve and ensure that the said outcome is quantifiable and measurable.

II. Identifying Areas for Redesign

Employees with disabilities that require job redesign may experience difficulties in the form of:



Physical abilities

Employees have difficulties in terms of their fine motor skills, reach and getting around the workplace



Sensory abilities

Employees have limited vision or hearing abilities



Cognitive abilities

Employees with intellectual disabilities have difficulty in understanding and processing complex instructions



Adaptation abilities

Employees with autism may require a routine schedule as they have some difficulty adapting to changes.

As such, organisations should work with employees to identify their needs.

For a more in-depth understanding of the different types of disabilities, please refer to the guide titled "Recruitment and Hiring" [here](#).

III. Examining Redesign Solutions

After the desired outcome and needs have been identified, organisations can look into the types of job redesign. As mentioned in chapter 1, these types include:

- Reassignment of roles and responsibilities
- Changes to work processes
- Changes in work arrangements
- Changes to physical workspace and environment
- Procurement of assistive technology devices and software

It is important to note that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to job redesign. A combination of multiple solutions may be required to ensure the effectiveness of the redesign.

IV. Planning for Redesign

When planning for redesign, it is important to consider how the redesign would impact the employees with disabilities and others in the organisation. Organisations may wish to assess the scale of the redesign, determine whether the change takes place gradually or radically, observe whether there are possible forms of resistance and how the redesign efforts would be reviewed and assessed subsequently. Some considerations include:



How will other jobs be impacted by changes in this job role?



What is the time period for the redesign to take place?



How will the effectiveness of the redesign be measured?



Which relevant stakeholder will be impacted by the redesign?



How will they respond to the redesign efforts?



How should the job remuneration be calibrated along with the redesign?



Are there other changes that are taking place concurrently which may impact the redesign efforts?

V. Implementation and Change Management

When implementing the redesign for employees with disabilities, it is important to ensure that the changes are communicated effectively to the parties involved and affected. This ensures clarity of the outcomes to be achieved and the expectations of the role/task. Expectations should be clearly stated between both the supervisors and the employees, and they should be aligned with the measurement indicators applicable for the specific role/task.

Depending on the duration for which the change takes place, it may also be advisable to monitor whether there are other changes/variables which may impact the redesign efforts, and which of these variables should be accounted for and reported during the review.

VI. Review and Measurement

In this phase of the job redesign process, organisations should look into collecting and analysing feedback from the relevant parties, e.g. supervisors and employees with disabilities. Organisations should encourage the feedback to be given as objectively as possible to facilitate the analysis on whether the original intended outcomes were met.

After collating the feedback, organisations can look into diagnosing whether there are any gaps so that corrective actions could be taken, where necessary. This review should also take place periodically to ensure sustainability and effectiveness of the redesign, as well as circumvent situations in which the needs of employees with disabilities change over time.

Organisations can look into how they would like to replicate the success of the redesign for other subsequent redesign efforts, as it is ultimately a cyclical process, as illustrated in the diagram on Page 6.

Successful job redesign can be implemented in organisations of various sizes and industries, with employees of different types of disabilities, as shown in the following case studies.

03

CASE STUDIES OF ORGANISATIONS THAT IMPLEMENTED JOB REDESIGN

Disclaimer: Information in the case studies is accurate as of April 2019.

3. CASE STUDIES OF ORGANISATIONS THAT IMPLEMENTED JOB REDESIGN



FOREWORD COFFEE

Number of employees with disabilities: 11

Disability type: Autism, Hearing impairment, Physical disability

Job tasks: Coffee making (barista), Cashiering duties, Cleaning, Serving

Type of job redesign: Reassignment of roles and responsibilities, Changes to work processes, Changes in work arrangements, Procurement of assistive equipment

Foreword Coffee is a speciality coffee company and a social enterprise member of raISE (Singapore Centre for Social Enterprises). Established in 2017, its mission is to empower persons with disabilities by providing employment and skills training in the F&B industry.

CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF JOB TASKS REQUIRED

Foreword Coffee started off with building a robust understanding of the workflow needed to create a cup of coffee: there would need to be an espresso station and a milk station. It also set up a third station for premix drinks, known as the side bar station, as it saw that there was a market for non-coffee drinks too. Finally, a basic cashiering system had to be put in place for transaction purposes and to attend to customers directly. It then looked at the potential job roles and tasks involved at each station and asked a vital question “What are the skills needed for an employee to be effective?”

It came up with a list of skillsets needed and the responsibilities of each role before selecting suitable candidates for the role. In the hiring process, the café not only assessed each candidate’s abilities, but also sought to understand his aspirations and needs to determine if the job was a good fit.

EXAMINING AND DEFINING OUTCOMES

Its key outcome of job redesign was for the company to be efficient in its daily operations. It thought through how it could assess an employee’s efficiency and decided against using time trials, which may be too stressful for employees with disabilities. Instead, it considered the employee’s consistency in performing a particular job task, his ability to multi-task and whether he was self-directed in coming up with ways to improve his productivity.

IDENTIFYING AREAS FOR REDESIGN

Foreword Coffee noted that different employees with disabilities had challenges associated with their particular disability.

Those with cerebral palsy had challenges standing up for extended periods of time. Some employees with autism had difficulties in social interaction and speaking to customers. Others were unable to remember the different recipes of the drinks and needed a step-by-step guide on the process of making different drinks. Employees who were deaf had challenges of communicating effectively with their co-workers and customers.

Foreword Coffee started to look at how their jobs can be redesigned to meet the goal.

EXAMINING REDESIGN SOLUTIONS

Reassignment of Roles and Responsibilities

- **Job carving:** Foreword Coffee organised the café operations into four stations: the cashier, the side bar station, the espresso station and the milk station. Specific job tasks at each station were carved out for the employees with disabilities, according to the difficulty level.

New employees with disabilities were assigned to one station at any one time, so that they learnt part of the process of coffee-making, and not the whole process at a go. As a result, the employees could better digest what was learnt.

- **Job enlargement:** Foreword Coffee’s goal for the employees with disabilities was that they would grow to be competent in at least two stations. With training done progressively, this became a form of skills upgrading where the employee would master another area of work after proving to be competent in the first.

- **Job enhancement:** Employees with disabilities were given opportunities to take on more value-added work if they were consistent in producing quality work. If they attained proficiency in the first two stations, they would be assigned to the rest of the stations.

Besides coffee making skills, there were opportunities to problem-solve and devise solutions (e.g. when the machine broke down), manage team dynamics and help out with the inventory if they attained senior job positions. There were also opportunities for training and obtaining certification for related courses.

Changes to Work Processes

The café directors observed that some employees would get confused when using the weighing scale because of the decimal point. As the difference was negligible, the directors decided to cover the part of the weighing scale showing the decimal point, to reduce confusion.

Foreword Coffee also experimented using a cup holder with a suction at the bottom so that an employee with a weak hand could still have a steady grip of the cup while stirring the drink with the other hand.

The paper menu contains a disclaimer that some employees are deaf and customers could point at their item of choice when giving their orders. Coffee terms in the menu were simplified, so employees with disabilities could understand and process orders more easily. For instance, “black” is used instead of “Americano”.



Photo courtesy of Foreword Coffee

Changes in Work Arrangements

Foreword Coffee took into account the individual employee’s preferences and schedules when arranging the duty roster.

For fresh graduates from Special Education schools without prior work experience, Foreword Coffee gave them the option to work on three days of the week or do part-time shifts. This flexibility of work schedules allowed the employees with disabilities to acclimatise to the culture, pace of work and the work environment. Once they were comfortable with the arrangement and able to take on more tasks, Foreword Coffee eased them into working longer hours.

Procurement of Assistive Equipment

Devices such as “puq press” and auto milk frother helped employees with disabilities, especially those with weak muscle strength, so that they could work more safely and efficiently. These also helped simplify the work processes.

REVIEW AND MEASUREMENT

Foreword Coffee conducts regular face-to-face reviews with its staff. It also holds monthly meetings with all staff. At these sessions, Foreword Coffee provides updates that include a review of the job redesign solutions that were implemented that month and whether the solutions were useful. The sessions also identified new challenges, discussed possible adaptive solutions and modification or purchase of equipment. Feedback on work performance was also discussed with employees in a non-critical manner.

Foreword Coffee strongly believes that employees with disabilities are a loyal pool of untapped potential. Where one does a task consistently, his accuracy and efficiency will improve.

“ It goes beyond a job. We are also improving and enriching their lives beyond the workplace, like their social skills, motor skills etc. I think that’s a very nice thing – impact beyond the workplace. ”

Mr Nadi Chan, Director, Foreword Coffee

SYARIAH COURT MINISTRY OF CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH (MCCY)

Number of employees with disabilities: 3

Disability type: Physical and Visual impairment

Job tasks: Administrative, Clerical, Customer service with additional projects

Type of job redesign: Reassignment of roles and responsibilities, Procurement of assistive technology devices and software

Established in 1958, the Syariah Court (SYC) is a key institution of the Muslim community in Singapore and has developed into an institution with a strong legal tradition. SYC strives for justice, and to administer fairly and effectively the cases brought before it.

IDENTIFYING AREAS FOR REDESIGN

In redesigning jobs for employees with disabilities, SYC considers employees' strengths, interests and limitations for a better job fit and career satisfaction. For example, an employee who has a physical disability would not be assigned court duties as it involves transferring physical casefiles from the filing room to the court room (and vice-versa) on a daily basis. Employees who have visual impairment will not be tasked to perform duties that strain their eyes or require them to perform their duties at different locations within the Court due to their need to use assistive equipment to aid them in reading documents. It will not be productive for them to dismantle their assistive equipment and re-install the system whenever their work location within the Court changes.

EXAMINING REDESIGN SOLUTIONS

Reassignment of Roles and Responsibilities

Job Carving: SYC introduced the 50-50 job redesign model for employees with disabilities: 50% of their job responsibilities consist of frontline duties and the other 50% is made up of work projects that differ for each employee, depending on their skills and abilities as well as the skillsets that SYC wants the employees to develop. Injecting variety into the employees' work also helps to enhance their learning opportunities.

For Firdaus, an executive at SYC, who has visual impairment, SYC redesigned a role that matches his ability and interest. As a frontline officer, he attends to SYC's clients when they submit court documents or attend hearings and serves summons to clients' homes and Prisons. For the serving of summons, Firdaus prepares the necessary documents in office through the usage of assistive equipment and prints the addresses in large fonts prior to the visits. Firdaus is also tasked to plan and organise events/activities for staff bonding, which he enjoys and has the temperament for. These have given him greater exposure to learn and work independently.

Job Enlargement: Khairul, an executive at SYC, has cerebral palsy and was initially assigned only frontline duties. After assessing his strengths and abilities and recognising his positive attitude, SYC has since enlarged Khairul's work to involve him in managing SYC's public queries and website. Khairul responds to calls escalated from the call centre, tracks all public queries from the different channels and updates SYC's website. SYC has created opportunities for employees like Khairul to develop his expertise which he finds "challenging and exciting!"

Job Enhancement: SYC ensures that there are opportunities for career growth and that the employee's portfolio is meaningful and engaging. Habibah, a senior executive at SYC, who has visual impairment, has been working with SYC since 1993. Over the years, Habibah has developed from handling clerical duties to taking on frontline duties. She also manages SYC's finance and procurement functions and business continuity management. SYC recognises that an individual should be given the opportunity to take on more responsibilities if they have demonstrated their capabilities in a certain area.

Employees with disabilities are given the same opportunity to excel in areas that they are strong in and be developed in new areas. For example, Khairul was an emcee at one of SYC's public seminars and a member of the Ministry's staff welfare committee. Firdaus is a member of an inter-agency committee to organise Minister's Hari Raya celebration, as well as the division's work plan organising committee. Habibah has received National Day Awards for efficiency and long service, as well as the PS21 Star Award. She has also upgraded herself and completed two diplomas through the support of the Ministry.

Procurement of Assistive Technology Devices and Software

Staff from the human resource and IT departments work closely with the job coaches of the employees with disabilities to understand the assistive technology required by the employees to perform their work. Screen magnifiers and software like Zoom Text, which are tailored for low vision users, were procured by SYC to help them work productively and efficiently.

There was a period where Firdaus' screen magnifier malfunctioned and it had to be sent overseas for repair. This affected his productivity despite him trying out alternative equipment. As a result, SYC redeployed Firdaus to perform work where very good eyesight is not a requirement, allowing Firdaus to continue to contribute in other ways.

Mentoring Employees with Disabilities to Use Assistive Technology

SYC has also gone one step further in providing senior employees like Habibah opportunities to mentor new colleagues, some of whom have visual impairment like herself. For instance, she showed Firdaus how to increase productivity with the aid of a handheld magnifier while executing counter duties. Adjustments such as replacing a keyboard with one that has enlarged fonts, using pens with darker ink, and writing with larger handwriting on certain documents are small yet material changes in ensuring an employee with visual disabilities performs his tasks with greater ease and precision.

Habibah said: "I also told Khairul, I was like him when I first joined. So if I can, so can you! But you must persevere and stay strong! Then, I share my experiences with them."



Photo courtesy of Syariah Court
Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY)

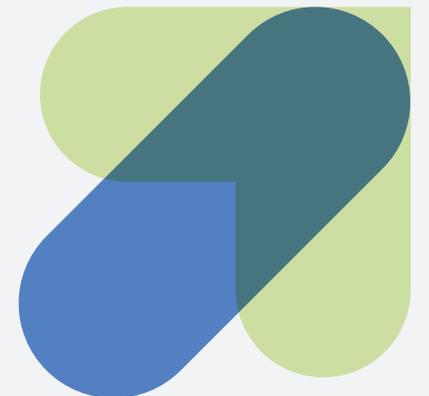
IMPLEMENTATION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

While SYC has redesigned jobs to suit those with physical disabilities, SYC has not lowered its expectations of these employees in terms of their work performance. SYC believes that these employees can still contribute significantly and deliver excellent services to citizens. The employees with disabilities have to undergo the standard training required for all frontline officers. Experienced officers were assigned to them as buddies, who coached them during the initial phases of work. Employees with disabilities were also appraised in the same way as their other colleagues. Habibah, Firdaus and Khairul have also been actively involved in SYC's business process re-engineering journey.

SYC has also partnered SG Enable to conduct talks for staff to promote better empathy and understanding when working with their colleagues who have disabilities.

“ You need to prepare the staff. Give them clear expectations of what an employee with disability can or cannot do. ”

Ms Siti Aishah Hashim, Assistant Director, SYC



UNITED OVERSEAS BANK (UOB)

Number of employees with disabilities: 26

Disability type: Autism, Deafness

Job tasks: Administrative work

Type of job redesign: Reassignment of roles and responsibilities,
Changes to work processes and physical workspace

United Overseas Bank's (UOB) hiring of persons with disabilities in UOB Scan Hub has garnered multiple accolades, including the apex Leader Award at the 4th Enabling Employers Awards in 2017. With 30% of the Scan Hub team comprising employees with disabilities, UOB has demonstrated that successful job redesign can lead to innovative solutions and increased productivity.

EXAMINING THE BUSINESS CASE AND DEFINING OUTCOMES

UOB Scan Hub was set up in 2012 for digitising and archiving customer documents. However, it faced a high annual staff turnover of 50%. The management decided to look beyond the traditional employment model to find the right people the Bank needed. UOB was looking for candidates with strong attention to detail, high levels of accuracy in their work, and high levels of concentration – qualities that they realised could be fulfilled by persons with autism who possess the right work capabilities.



Photo courtesy of United Overseas Bank

EXAMINING REDESIGN SOLUTIONS

Reassignment of Roles and Responsibilities

UOB Scan Hub applied design principles of breaking down existing tasks and grouping together of tasks that require similar skillsets. This process helped streamline and categorise smaller and similar tasks into six main processes to allow focused training and ease of managing resources.

As a result, managers are able to accurately match employees with suitable abilities to tasks. This in turn helps employees achieve their performance objectives. Employees can also be placed on task rotation schedules that encourage the development of cross-functional skillsets over time.

Changes to Work Processes and Physical Workspace

The UOB Scan Hub team continuously reviews processes to implement simple yet effective modifications that enhance employees' productivity levels. These include:

- A duty roster that indicates the primary and secondary tasks of each employee (this also ensures rotation of tasks for employees);
- Clear job instructions, sample documents and pictorial diagrams or flowcharts that employees can refer to, when in doubt;
- Clear labels on two-way cabinets for easy transfer of documents across the operational floor and between stations. These help define actionable tasks clearly and enable employees to work independently;
- A "rest and relax" room that offers respite from busy work schedules;
- Television screens that are placed in common areas to provide timely divisional updates and dissemination of other important information;
- Provide bespoke and reasonable accommodations such as clear demarcation on desks to help organise work, when necessary;
- Making adjustments to work schedules and start and finish work times;
- Increase frequency of one-on-one meetings with supervisor.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Tripartite Collaboration to Ensure Sustainability

UOB collaborates with SG Enable's Job Placement and Job Support (JPJS) partners, Autism Resource Centre (ARC) and SPD, in establishing an end-to-end employment framework – talent selection, on-boarding, training processes and counselling services – that helps new employees with disabilities succeed in their new roles.

Pre-onboarding Preparation

ARC and SPD place selected candidates through a series of training modules in a simulated environment, which equips them with essential job competencies (e.g. sorting and scanning of documents) and soft skills (e.g. business dress code and professional etiquette). This helps candidates prepare for employment integration into the larger team when training concludes.

Once employees are on-boarded, work buddies are assigned to each employee to help them assimilate into the work environment. They are also placed on On-the-Job Training (OJT) modules to reinforce what they've learnt. Job Coaches from ARC and SPD are on-site to guide new employees, and support supervisors on how best to work with and develop their new employees.

Performance Measurement and Career Progression

A set of quantitative Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that applies to all members of staff in Scan Hub allows department managers to evaluate and ensure that their teams and individual employees are performing effectively. Employees respond well to these KPIs because they can push themselves towards daily and monthly targets that are clearly defined. Employees with disabilities consistently showed that they could be more productive than the other staff.

Supervisors also look out for untapped talents that can be further developed. An employee was assigned to maintain a divisional programme using Microsoft Excel after he expressed interest in using Information Technology (IT). Another was roped in to design event materials because of her experience in digital graphics.

To date, more than 90% of the existing cohort of employees with disabilities have been promoted; one has been promoted twice in recognition of his capability.

OUTCOMES

Agnes Tay (First Vice President, UOB Group Technology and Operations) who spearheaded the establishment of Scan Hub and has been overseeing its day-to-day operations, observed that one of the key success factors is the right job fit based on abilities and to focus on the abilities of every individual, as this allows for good work culture and productivity.

Co-workers and managers appreciate the benefits of this innovative employment model. "When employees with disabilities were first on-boarded at Scan Hub, I was a bit anxious and worried as I thought that they might not be able to keep up with the pace of work. But after spending some time with them on the job, I have noticed that they actually work with tremendous speed," said Shirley Tan, a people manager at UOB Scan Hub.

With the new employment model and job redesign process in place, the turnover rate was reduced from 50% to 5% between 2015 and 2018. Employees' average productivity also rose from 76.1% in 2015 to over 100% in 2018.



YISHUN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Number of employees with disabilities: 12

Disability type: Autism, Intellectual disability

Job tasks: Cleaning, Packing, Food preparation

Type of job redesign: Reassignment of roles and responsibilities

Opened in late 2015, the 428-bed Yishun Community Hospital (YCH) is one of the largest community hospitals in Singapore, providing rehabilitation services and intermediate care for recuperating patients. Its inclusive hiring journey began in 2016 with two employees with intellectual disabilities joining the Environment Services department. Following the success of this trial, the hospital has continued hiring persons with disabilities. To date, they have hired 12 employees with disabilities across various divisions. In recognition of its inclusive hiring practices, the hospital won the 'Best Newcomer' award at the 4th Enabling Employer Awards in 2017.

IDENTIFYING AREAS FOR REDESIGN

Before embarking on recruitment and hiring, YCH first sought to understand and explore feasible employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This was done through:

- On-site learning journeys for SG Enable and its partners, allowing them to understand the existing work environment and explore possible internships for their clients
- Brainstorming discussions with job coaches from Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS)
- Conducting on-site interviews and job assessments with potential candidates

Through this process, the team learnt that persons with intellectual disabilities may be better suited to hands-on work, repetitive tasks and roles that do not require them to have too much interaction with members of the public. The supervisory team, after realising that most of its current workflows and processes do not meet these criteria, decided to design a suitable programme and workflow for this group of staff.

EXAMINING REDESIGN SOLUTIONS

Reassignment of Roles and Responsibilities

YCH's first employment experience for the redesigned roles started with a six-month job trial for two persons with intellectual disabilities, Asraf and Jack. The team made sure to first assign straightforward tasks to the pair in order to ease them into the role. Asraf and Jack started out with cleaning tables and chairs in the dining area after patients finished their meals. These areas also had low human traffic and this allowed the job coaches and supervisor to focus on training the pair.

YCH worked closely with MINDS' job coaches and occupational therapists to pitch the training programme at an appropriate level for the trainees. At the initial stage, Asraf and Jack learnt through observation and return demonstration. Training activities were then progressively added to allow them sufficient time to learn and adapt to new tasks and roles. Following their mastery of simpler tasks, they went on to train in more advanced jobs such as driving the ride-on scrubber.

After the successful onboarding of the initial cohort of employees with disabilities, the organisation decided to extend this practice to other departments. "We started with housekeeping. This worked out and we realised that we could manage hiring them in the kitchen too," shared Celyn Khor, Manager, Environmental Services Division.



CALIBRATING WORK LOAD IN AN EQUITABLE WAY

When asked if there were reactions from able-bodied staff about the job carving, Low Teck Yee, HR Manager, shared that in redesigning jobs for persons with disabilities, it was important to ensure job value and equitable work distribution.

He said, "The department ensures that the new staff can demonstrate the value they bring to the department. We also guide our existing staff on suitable approaches to interact with persons with disabilities to ensure work integration."

This was the principle that the hiring managers kept in mind when planning the job carving and sharing. When a vacancy freed up, the hiring managers decided to break an eight-hour job into two four-hour jobs for Sheila and Jane, who have intellectual disabilities, with each of them on different shifts. The supervisors also trained them to gradually take on a load equivalent to that of an able-bodied employee.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The job redesign process was not always smooth sailing for YCH. Due to the unique requirements of some job functions, as well as the nature of each employees' condition, adaptations had to be made along the way. For example, one employee could not handle a food packing job as he was unable to adhere to the hygiene standards that were crucial for the role. In this case, the employee was re-deployed to handle cleaning tasks.

Also, conditions such as autism may lead to situations where staff can feel uneasy or overwhelmed in noisy spaces, or when a routine is changed. As handling change can be quite stressful for persons with autism, one employee got agitated when a cleaning task entailed multiple changes in venue. This employee's job coach and occupational therapist were brought in to determine how to adapt the role to fit his needs. The occupational therapist found that he was best able to handle up to three instructions at a time. The team then modified the employee's job of washing and arranging flasks in order to meet this requirement. He also would get confused when he could see multiple clocks showing different times. The team performed the simple task of synchronising these clocks and was able to create a much more pleasant working environment for him.

YCH's inclusive hiring efforts would not have been successful without its senior management's support. Dr Pauline Tan, CEO, Yishun Community Hospital (Jan 2015 - Oct 2018), personally conducted townhall sessions and discussed inclusive hiring at Head of Department meetings to galvanise the hearts and minds of staff in embracing the long term societal benefit of the initiative.

“ Senior management needs to go down to the ground to speak to and encourage staff. This will motivate them and help them feel supported. ”

Celyn Khor, Manager, Environmental Services Division, YCH

REVIEW AND MEASUREMENT

Although the initial job redesign process was challenging, once the employees were settled into their jobs, the rest of the staff in YCH saw the value of inclusive hiring.

"She (the nurse manager) always gives us feedback that your staff is very good, everything is so clean," said Celyn. She also shared that her colleagues from the kitchen department appreciated the support they received from Tim, who has an intellectual disability and initially had adjustment issues. "When we have Tim, the chef doesn't have to come in so early. He can rely on Tim."

Celyn felt that employees with disabilities also showed strong commitment to their work. "Once they are used to the job, they will not take MCs (medical certificates). They are very stable," she said.

The contributions and diligence of employees with disabilities have motivated the organisation to continue investing in inclusive hiring efforts.

04



GRANTS AND SUPPORT
FOR EMPLOYERS

4. GRANTS AND SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS



Employers can also benefit from advisory and grants to hire and support persons with disabilities.

1. Advisory and Consultancy

Enhance your readiness for hiring

- Disability awareness training
- Workplace accessibility assessments

5. Special Employment Credit

16%
of an employee's salary capped at
\$240/mth

4. Subsidised Training for Employees

Up to **90%** funding for

- Training for employees with disabilities
- Training for co-workers to build their confidence in working with colleagues with disabilities

2. Job Placement and Job Support Services

up to
1 year
of job support will be provided

3. Job Redesign

Defray costs for

- Purchase of equipment
- Workplace modification
- Support at workplace

Up to **90%** funding capped at
\$20,000

(per employee with disability)

The Open Door Programme (ODP) is a government-funded initiative by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and Workforce Singapore (WSG). It is supported as part of WSG's Adapt and Grow initiative and administered by SG Enable.

For more information on the grants and support available, click [here](#). For further enquiries, please email opendoor@sgenable.sg.

Employers can also approach WSG to tap on the following programmes when hiring persons with disabilities:

Salary Support to Hire Unemployed PMETs

- Employers can receive salary support of up to \$42,000 under the **Career Support Programme**, capped at 18 months when they hire eligible unemployed Singapore Citizen Professionals, Managers, Executives and Technicians (PMETs).

Career Trial to Assess Individuals

- The **Career Trial** allows employers to assess a jobseeker's job fit through a short-term trial of up to 3 months, before offering employment for jobs paying \$1,500 or more, to suitable Singapore Citizens. For employers who hire unemployed Singapore Citizens who have been actively looking for jobs for 6 months or more, companies can receive 30% of monthly salary support for up to 6 months, capped at \$5,400 per hire.

To find out more information about the Career Support Programme and Career Trial Programme, employers can visit www.wsg.gov.sg or contact WSG or NTUC's e2i at:

WSG : 6883 5885, <https://portal.ssg-wsg.gov.sg>

NTUC's e2i : 6474 0606, followup@e2i.com.sg

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Closed on Weekends and Public Holidays)**

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