



Taken from article in Business Link internal magazine

It is very difficult to find training and development suited to the needs of an Enquiry/Gateway officer. It is such a demanding role whilst being the first point of customer contact but yet often undervalued. On top of all this it is difficult to release such key staff for team training. In the Eastern Region, we decided to group together to organise customised, regional training. , we selected Charlotte Mannion of Quick Learn Limited as she understands the new, brokerage environment, the needs of the Enquiry role and applies dynamic techniques to deliver relevant and interesting courses.

We split the course delivery into two days - one for new recruits and the second for existing staff majoring on customer relationship development and more in-depth relationship management.

The first day concentrated on delivering first class customer service. This was achieved by helping participants to understand the role and function of Business Link and their place in the organisation. It was practical, using real scenarios based on actual communications with Business Link clients, challenging preconceptions of customer demands and needs whilst introducing tried and tested problem solving techniques.

The second day for more experienced staff examined approaches to real 'hands-on' diagnostics. Using a real business on video the participants learned how to analyse the business issues and identify how best to communicate and build rapport with such entrepreneurs. To develop empathy the afternoon was spent finding out what it's really like to run a business using a fun but demanding business simulation game.

The feedback has been exceptional and ideas were put into place the very next day. The attendees all felt more confident in dealing with enquiries and felt they had learnt new diagnostic tips and tools which could be used immediately. It helped being on a course together so that they could share learning back at base and they appreciated the chance to network with Enquiry Officers from other counties. They are still swapping ideas.

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