

A shortcut to the open labour market

**Pro ACT Suport Association
Romania**

The issues that Pro ACT Support`s project refers to

- It is acknowledged that employers do not tend to hire people with disabilities mainly because of lack of interaction with them and because of the *medicalized* view of disability.
- Employers think that persons with disabilities especially those who are multiple discriminated, need support and accommodations that they cannot or don't want to provide.

The essence of the project

- Pro ACT`S clients are supported in a person centered manner to identify their skills, talent and desired field of work.
- Dedicated staff engages with employers in the community to find suitable jobs.
- Employers are educated about making reasonable accommodations at the workplace.
- Pro ACT staff remains engaged to help resolve challenges that may arise on both sides.

The innovative aspects

- Starting from the idea that a person with disability must be treated as *normal* as possible-thus, the *holistic approach* of each client (needs, abilities, talent, limitations, etc.) like anybody else.
- Applying Person Centered Planning (PCP) based on true and open *dialog* and *collaboration* between Pro ACT and the client.
- Active *involvement* of the person throughout the whole process of employment – what comes to reality is the *client`s decision*, no matter what are the circumstances. In the end he/she is the one that will work there or do that job/activity.
- *Working with employers to understand* that engaging with people with disabilities does not require any specialized skills, only openness and flexibility.

The innovative process

- Pro ACT runs a deep evaluation of the person;
- Pro ACT discovers and takes in account the abilities and capacities of that person;
- Pro ACT goes directly for employment in three directions:
 1. On the open labor market.
 2. Social enterprises/protected units.
 3. Pro ACT`s own small enterprises - a farm, 2 greenhouses and a workshop.

A few typical steps are being eliminated as training, sheltered employment or employment with a job coach.

Impact

All Pro ACT Suport`s clients are now deinstitutionalized, meaning they live a normal life in the community and most important, all 40 of them have part time or full time jobs or are involved in different regular activities according to each one`s abilities.

Anyone has its share of contribution to the society, regardless the conditions!

Insights from Gina`s process of employment



2015

She came in Pro ACT`s services.

She described herself as: female, abandoned at birth, hemi paresis, intellectual disability, insecure.

Not in the mood for anything and no plans for her future.

2016

She talks about being a married woman, a religious person, very practical and mindful about details.

Declares she wants to work, so she gets a two hours/day, 2 times a week job at a cleaning firm from Bucharest.

She gets lost in the city very easy, that is why she is accompanied on her way to work.

She starts to make plans for a future holiday.

2017

She gets from two hours job to four hours job at the same employer in Bucharest.

Goes by herself at the job, using 3 types of public transport.

She lives almost independently with her husband in an rented apartment.

She dreams to have her own place and live there without any support.

Insights from Tudor`s process of employment



2012

He comes in Pro ACT`s services.

He describes himself as:

having no family, orphan, but willing to earn money (lot of...).

2013

He is getting confident.

He gets his first job at a local entrepreneur.

He abandons because he doesn`t like the loneliness there.

2014

Gets the second job in a bakery. He complains that he has too many chores to do. (He was supposed to take the dough from the mixer and put it on a conveyer belt). He quits after three months..

2015

Gets a job in a small furniture factory. He is not content with his co-workers and how they treat him, and leaves the job after 3 months.

2016 -present

He gets a 5th job at a construction materials warehouse.

We can say, it`s the first job that Tudor has been holding to, since almost 12 months.

He is thinking about quitting.

The project in the future

- Increase number of clients who have jobs on the open labor market.
- Counseling the employers to make the involvement more reliable on activities for clients with severe disabilities.
- Developing entrepreneurship frameworks for clients to develop potential businesses.



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