

John aims, and hits the target!



Redundancy hit John hard after 10 years with NZ Post. He then started the long, soul destroying rollercoaster ride of job hunting, a journey that was to last 12 years.

“I had patches of work but pretty much just lived off the benefit,” explained John. His hopes were often raised and then dashed.

“I had one placement when I was there for 4 weeks and it turned to 3 months. I thought they were going to employ me but they didn’t,” explained John.

With self confidence at an all time low, pessimism at an all time high and no support network he said, “I pretty much gave up after that ... what’s the point?”. He believed that any temporary work he did get would be just a “flash in the pan” and not lead to anything permanent. He explained that it was very hard to get motivated to do anything and he started not to care. “Each day was very much like the next,” he said. Most of his time was spent just watching TV, avoiding people he might know.

Directed to attend weekly employment seminars at Work and Income last year proved to be the turning point for John. Kingdom Resources’ employment coach, Tony, was a guest speaker and John found himself interested in what Tony had to say. “I felt I really needed this [employment coaching]. It was time to talk to someone,” John said.

Not long after his first meeting with Tony, John attended Kingdom Resources’ employment training course for men, *Men @ Work*. He found it reassuring to know that he wasn’t the only one who was having difficulty finding work; there were many others on the course in the same boat.

“The course really opened my eyes. I learned a lot of things about myself,” said John. The most valuable things he learned were how to conduct himself in interviews and the realisation that there was much more to getting a job than just filling in the application form. “Research, dropping in CVs in person, knowing what things to ask just to get that foot in the door and be one step ahead,” he explained was really helpful advice.

After identifying that he would like to work in a call centre, John was soon enrolled in a Call Centre course.

“I came out of the course, ready to take on the world,” explained John. “I made a promise to myself that I was going to get off the benefit by the end of the year.”

However, getting a job was still far from easy. He describes his Work and Income Case Manager, Pip, as being “excellent” and very supportive. She directed him to Kingdom Resources’ employment coach, Sue, and together they redid his CV and started applying for jobs. “But when I put in every application I still then waited for a rejection letter,” he said.

“My biggest problem was no experience,” John explained. To get around that issue, Sue recommended that he try for work placement training through Lee at Christchurch Academy. Soon after that, he started work placement at Gold Band Taxis in their Call Centre where he now works permanently.

“Sue, Pip and Lee are the three people I have most to thank,” said John. “They did more for me in less than a year than most case managers had done in the last 10. I also kept my promise and drop kicked the benefit. I never want to be on that again.”