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PSR DEIB Training

Barriers to Employment & Reasonable Adjustments

Summary and Key Takeaways
Session 2 - January 2025

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Summary

On the 29th January, Adam Hyland Chief of Inclusion at Evenbreak, one of AMS' Alliance Partners delivered an insightful training session to the PSR team on Barriers to Employment and Reasonable Adjustments.

140 PSR colleagues attended the live training session



The session was hugely impactful, equipping PSR candidate facing colleagues with the knowledge and confidence to have meaningful conversations around Disability and Inclusion.

Adam shared a powerful reminder:

"It's more important to have conversations about Disability than to worry about getting the language wrong."

About the trainer Adam Hyland



Adam Hyland (He/Him) is a trailblazing leader in disability inclusion and the Chief Inclusion Officer at Evenbreak. With extensive experience in consultancy and training, he is widely respected both nationally and internationally.

In recognition of his impact, Adam was named on The Shaw Trust's Disability Power 100 list in 2023.

At Evenbreak, Adam focuses on building strategic partnerships and advancing disability inclusion across industries, ensuring disabled talent connects with inclusive employers.

Click on the icons to visit Adam's LinkedIn and Evenbreak's website.



Key Takeaways

Understanding Disability and The Social Model

The session emphasised shifting from the **medical model** (which sees disability as an individual's issue) to the **social model**, which identifies barriers in society as the main issue.

Society needs to be adapted to enable disabled people to participate fully, rather than expecting individuals to "overcome" challenges.

Barriers to Employment & Inclusion

Barriers can be **physical, attitudinal, communicational, policy-related, or environmental**.

CV gaps and non-traditional career paths should not be seen as negatives, as they often reflect systemic challenges rather than a lack of ability.

The **biggest barriers** for disabled job seekers include:

- › Lack of inclusive job advertisements and recruitment processes.
- › Negative employer perceptions and biases.
- › Inaccessible work environments.

24%

24% of the UK working-age population is disabled.

8%

Only 8% of disabled people use wheelchairs, challenging the common stereotype of disability.

90%

Up to 90% of disabilities are hidden or invisible.

Making Recruitment More Inclusive

Organisations should focus on **culture add** rather than **culture fit** to bring in diverse perspectives.

Practical steps for inclusive recruitment:

- › Avoid unnecessary job requirements (e.g., "must have a driving license" when it isn't essential).
- › Offer **multiple application formats** (written, video, audio).
- › Provide **interview questions in advance** to allow candidates time to prepare.
- › Ensure **digital and physical accessibility** in assessments and interviews.
- › Consider **skills-based hiring** over traditional CV-based assessments.

The Business Case for Inclusion

Hiring disabled candidates brings **business benefits**:

- › Increased productivity and problem-solving capabilities.
- › Better representation of diverse customer bases.
- › Higher retention rates as many disabled employees are accustomed to managing challenges.

The cost of a reasonable adjustment is, on average, £75—far lower than the cost of employee turnover.

Creating an Inclusive Onboarding Experience

Recruitment is only the first step—**retention is equally critical**.

Effective onboarding includes:

- › Clear information about **workplace adjustments and support**.
- › Assigning a **buddy or mentor** to assist in the transition.
- › Ensuring accessibility of **all office facilities and digital tools**.

Building Confidence in Disability Conversations

Language matters, but intent is more important than perfection.

Employers and recruiters should **ask, not assume**—e.g., “What can we do to support you?” instead of assuming needs.

Normalising discussions around disability reduces stigma and **makes inclusion part of company culture**.

The session was described as insightful, impactful, and educational.

A key word highlighted by participants was “seen”, reflecting the importance of visibility and recognition for disabled individuals.

