

Case studies - Why customers can make a better case for what we do than we can

Christine Husbands

Jayne's Story

Jayne, married with a young daughter, worked full-time as an accounts clerk and was facing redundancy. She desperately needed to work, so she agreed to take a different role in a different team. Although nervous about the change, Jayne was hopeful that the new job would work out well.

After a few weeks, Jayne was still finding the new job very difficult and was beginning to feel very inadequate and out of her depth, she was also having trouble sleeping and felt irritable most of the time.

She spoke to her new manager but he was very unhelpful and Jayne felt worse than ever and decided to keep her feelings to herself and carry on as best she could.

Things went from bad to worse, Jayne felt on the verge of tears most of the time, she felt stuck between all her responsibilities. Juggling her career, being a good mum to her daughter and finding time for her husband meant she had no time for herself. She and her husband seemed to be constantly arguing.

Having experienced a number of anxiety attacks, she went to see her GP, who diagnosed her with anxiety and depression, prescribed medication and an initial month sick leave from work. He also recommended that Jayne have some counselling but the waiting list on the NHS was at least two months.

During her first few days at home, Jayne was feeling very isolated and alone and she remembered that she had access to RedArc. It took a lot of courage to make the call but was very pleased she did....

Gerry, her RedArc Mental Health Personal Nurse Adviser immediately put Jayne at her ease and over many phone calls gave Jayne much needed emotional support and a listening ear to give her the opportunity to talk everything over. Gerry was also able to arrange a course of counselling starting just a few days later.

After six weeks, Jayne felt well enough to be able to discuss returning to work with her employer and explain how things needed to change. Gradually Jayne settled back into her role and she was able to work together with her manager to sort out the areas which were causing her difficulty. After a couple of months she was enjoying the role, things were better at home and she was able to gradually come off her medication.

Even after returning to work she still received regular phone calls from Gerry and when her mother died suddenly, Gerry was a great support to her. Apart from a few days to sort things out Jayne was able to carry on at work.

“Not only did Gerry help me to get better the first time I was unwell, without his support when I lost my mum, I would have been back to square one. He was my rock!”

Jayne’s employer’s story

The company was going through a very difficult time, with significant financial pressures, and the directors had reluctantly had to make redundancies and reorganise the business significantly. Managers were under a lot of pressure and there was a very uncertain atmosphere in the office.

When Jayne raised her concerns about the suitability of her new role and her ability to do it, this was not what her manager wanted to hear; he had enough problems to deal with.

Then, to add to his problems, she went off sick with a sick note for a month. Great!

When Jayne got in touch to explain that she wanted to talk about how she could get back to work, her manager was delighted and much more open to listening to her...

Jayne explained how Gerry had helped her, and her manager was amazed at what was available from RedArc through the insurer. He had no idea at all...

“Without RedArc, I don’t know how long Jayne would have been off sick, she may never have had the confidence to return and sort out this new role. When she sadly lost her mum, it was great to know that she had someone she trusted to help her through that devastating time and knowing they’re always there for her in the future is fabulous!”

Customer outcomes and vulnerable people

Sadly, Jayne’s story happens to so many people in so many different circumstances. While some are fortunate to have income protection, so many are not. With the help of campaigns such as Seven Families, hopefully this will increase.

But is the need for good quality practical advice and emotional support really appreciated? Hopefully Jayne’s story demonstrates this and not only how employers or insurers can benefit but, most importantly, how the individual, the customer, can benefit.

When people are unwell, they are obviously very vulnerable. A recent FCA report aims to raise awareness of this: <http://www.fca.org.uk/news/occasional-paper-no-8>.

We need to recognise that customer outcomes for vulnerable people is about much more than money!

Some statistics

- Mind in 2013 reported:
 - While 22% of respondents have a diagnosed mental health problem, only 10% have told their boss about their diagnosis.
 - 56% of manager respondents said they would like to do more to improve the mental wellbeing of employees, but they needed more training and/or guidance.
- According to the GRiD 2014 claims survey; 23% of group IP claims are for mental health issues.
- Mental illness is the leading cause of sickness absence in the UK, accounting for 70 million sick days in 2013, up 24% since 2009. (Source: CMO, Professor Dame Sally Davies).

RedArc mental health results

RedArc has a team of highly experienced, qualified mental health personal nurse advisers and has developed a mental health programme addressing a wide range of mental health issues such as chronic depression, stress and anxiety. The programme is a unique combination of four elements which are tailored to meet the needs of each client and help them to manage and resolve the difficulties they are experiencing, which have resulted in mental ill health.

As part of the initial assessment and again at the end of the programme, clients complete psychological questionnaires validated by the NHS, to measure their levels of depression (PHQ9) and anxiety (GAD7). These scores provide an indication of client progress and outcomes.

Analysis of data for the last three years shows:

- 65% experienced reduced levels of depression and anxiety.
- Over 2/3rds recovered to normal mood levels and everyday coping capacity within a period of 3 – 4 months.

These changes are attributed to the unique support combination we provided and this support remains available for clients on an indefinite basis. This therefore helps to avoid the client becoming unwell again, avoiding time away from work, but most importantly a better result for the customer:

http://www.redarc.co.uk/pdfs/6323_RedArc_Services_Mental%20Health_web.pdf

97% of all customers rated the service Good/Excellent for three years running.

A good customer outcome for someone who could potentially be vulnerable!

Christine Husbands is CEO of RedArc