



Strengths-based practice

A strengths-based approach focuses on what a person can do, including their talents, skills, interests, values, networks and character strengths, rather than their limitations. Effective employment support helps them to identify their strengths, set personally meaningful goals and find solutions that fit their context.

Focusing on strengths actively builds self-determination, supporting people to act for themselves, pursue their goals, take risks and learn from their mistakes. This doesn't mean pretending that disability and the challenges that come with it don't exist but rather shifting the focus toward the person's capabilities.

A strengths-based approach will also help you advocate for jobseekers to employers in terms of what they bring rather than what they need, helping to build employer confidence and encourage meaningful job crafting and workplace adjustments.

Key strategies for success

Start with the person

The person with disability is the expert on their own life. Support them to reflect on and express their strengths. Look beyond work skills to include character traits, habits, values and relationships.

Develop personally meaningful goals

When goals belong to the person, they motivate. When they are imposed, they don't. Prioritise what the jobseeker actually values and wants from their working life.

Connect with role models and mentors

Connecting with role models and mentors who have navigated similar experiences can build confidence, expand what feels possible and provide practical guidance on the path to employment.

Support growth and development

Strengths-based approaches can create a virtuous circle, in which applying a strength builds confidence, which in turn supports further learning and development. This also supports resilience and learning from mistakes.

