

fact sheet p4.8f

GROUP TASK: COUNSELLING LOW-SKILL WORKERS

This is a group task for a team of three to six participants.

You have 30 minutes

Consider the following situation:

Monica is working as personnel-development and careers advisor for a regional chamber of commerce. The catering company BizCanteen has approached her for advice. BizCanteen employ seven people in their kitchen and a further five service staff. Just two of her kitchen staff have relevant entry qualification certificates, and only the owner-manager, Sally, is a fully qualified chef. The employees are on minimum-wage contracts. Sally says that the company “is doing okay”, but feels she is missing some business, because she cannot offer a broad enough menu that also would include some more sophisticated options. Sally has approached Monica to enquire after availability and costs for further training for her staff. She was able to point out some attractive opportunities, both for kitchen and service staff. The chamber can even co-fund training, but Sally will still have to chip in forty per cent of the cost. She is unsure about the investment.

Take five minutes to draw up a list of possible concerns that Sally may have, which may deter her from enlisting members of her team on the courses offered. Think about how Monica could respond to those concerns. The aim should not be to “sell” the courses, but to dispel blanket concerns and convince Sally to invite Monica to talk directly to Sally’s staff. You also should think about what form the interaction between Monica and Sally’s employees should take and what the goals will be, as Monica will need to explain these aspects to Sally.

Chose two members of your group to enact a five-minutes conversation between Sally and Monica. The others are to take notes. Take another ten minutes to reflect on, if Monica is successful, to what extent her activity will constitute independent career counselling and to what extent she will be limited by external interests (those of *BizCanteen*, those of the chamber of commerce). On the basis of your notes, summarise the role play and the discussion for a five-minutes oral presentation to the rest of the class. (Take 15 minutes for this last step).