



ROLLS ON WHEELS

OUTSIDE CATERING AND ROLL DELIVERY



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Issues addressed:

- A Bit About Rolls On Wheels
- Number Of Employees
- Managing Stress
- Training People
- An Early Start
- Benefits Of Working At Rolls On Wheels
- Supporting People At Work
- Starting The Journey To Work

A bit about Rolls on Wheels

Rolls on Wheels are a long established Social Firm. Can you tell us a bit about it please?

Forth Sector bought Rolls on Wheels as a going concern in 1990 but I have only just joined as manager in the past few months. Rolls on Wheels have red liveried, refrigerated vans which can be seen daily around Edinburgh delivering freshly filled rolls, hot food and snacks, packed lunches and business buffets. We have a great team who prepare the food with great attention and can offer choices for vegetarians and those with other dietary needs. We can advise customers on what would suit their requirements and give a range of options on variety and price.

Number Of employees

How many people work at Rolls on Wheels?

There is myself as manager, then an assistant manager and we also have 2 supervisors and 3 catering assistants / drivers. We couldn't do it all without our trainees. Rolls on Wheels are one of the bigger Forth Sector Social Firms and has about 28 trainees over the course of a year. Some people have been with us for a while and others move on fairly quickly so the number is always changing.

Social Firms seek to create good quality jobs for severely disadvantaged people within supportive and successful enterprises

For more information on Social Firms and how to join us please go to our website or get in touch by email sfs@socialfirms.org.uk or call us on 0131 225 4178.

www.socialfirms.org.uk

Evidence of success:

- Rolls on Wheels has built a strong customer base since 1990
- Rolls on Wheels is successful financially
- Rolls on Wheels is successful in terms of supporting people with mental health problems
- Many clients use their time with Rolls on Wheels to gain experience, increase their confidence, and reduce their anxiety.... And then move into full or part time employment or go into further education
- Some trainees have moved into supported and unsupported employment within Forth Sector

Managing Stress

Catering can be a fast paced stressful environment. What does Rolls on Wheels do to alleviate this?

Rolls on Wheels is a Social Firm and it should be recognised that if it were a private enterprise we would not have a such a large staff team. Producing food to a high quality and to deadlines would be much more stressful if it weren't for the team. It is definitely about team work and having enough people each day to share the load. We also try to manage the pace and workload by utilising people's natural strengths and abilities.

What do you mean by that?

Well, some trainees and staff prefer being in a customer facing role (roll! Ha ha, excuse the pun!). They will staff the vans, selling the produce at the various offices we visit each day. Other people really enjoy doing the preparation work in the kitchen and so, everyone is vital to keep the whole business running. If people get to do work that they enjoy and take pride in, it makes for a much happier environment.

Training

How are the trainees trained?

From day one the staff are very strict on teaching the trainees our health and hygiene systems, how to store different types of food, labeling, packaging, etc. Although this always happened we are developing a system where trainees will get a certificate after each stage of the training. This can be taken to future employers to show the achievements made in a real working business. We also offer REHIS training which is recognised throughout the catering industry. REHIS stands for Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland.

An Early Start

What time of day does Rolls on Wheels start working?

The staff are in about 6.00am so it is an early start. Trainees join us from 8am onwards.

Do trainees struggle with the early start time?

We tell people what we expect from them when they first make contact but also, what they have to gain. It doesn't suit everyone but normally if a person isn't up for the early start they will self select a different opportunity in another Social Firm. Sometimes medication makes it hard for people to get up and out early in the day. Others set themselves the goal of getting to Rolls on Wheels on time and really go for it. It can be a big achievement.

Benefits of Working

How will people benefit from working at Rolls on wheels?

New friends, new skills, the opportunity to attend social events, a sense of achievement and soon, certificates to prove the skills to others. This will include skills like time keeping and customer care as well as food hygiene and kitchen knife skills etc.

Key Learning Points

- You may see that clients could benefit from participating in a particular activity and decide that this activity could be turned into a business or part of the business but...
- It is essential to research and know that enough customers will pay money for the products/service
- A client customer may gain great satisfaction from baking and decorating a cake and then sharing it with others – you need to know:
 - Can you get enough customers and/or funding to grow and sustain a business in this market place?
 - How do customers know you are there?
 - Do your premises meet health regulations?
 - Can you produce the product to a high quality EVERY time?
 - Can you do this to a fast deadline?
 - Can you cover all the costs and still charge a price similar to your competitors?
- Don't get fixated on a particular activity because the client enjoys it make sure the business is one that people will pay for AND that it provides a realistic, quality training and employment experience



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Top Tips

- ❖ Employ the most qualified, experienced person from the relevant business sector – they will already have the business knowledge and experience, as well as the customer and supplier contacts
- ❖ If a Social Firm is fully staffed with support staff a huge proportion of their time and energy will go into learning and doing the business side – neither the business function nor the support function will be fully effective

Supporting People at Work

As Rolls on Wheels has been going so long I guess the staff have experienced some difficult situations?

Yes, as there is such a wide range of trainees and staff, there is a wide range of issues and problems that pop up from time to time.

How is this managed?

Each situation is looked at individually and we see what support can be put in place for the person concerned. Sometimes this means time off or reduced hours. At other times it means involving other support workers or advisors. The Forth Sector Training & Support Team coordinates all this and keeps everyone informed. We also have to satisfy the business customers though so we try to ensure the environment is as stress free as possible to avoid people being off sick in the first place.

If issues do occur we also try and reflect back afterwards to see if there was anything we could do better in the future. This might help prevent a problem arising in the first place or help you react even better the next time.

Next Steps:

- ❖ In any business you cannot stay the same. We regularly review our business plan and research new opportunities. For a business to sustain itself long term it is essential to invest in research and training. Right now customers want more exotic foods than ever before (sushi anyone?) and almost 50% of food consumption is now outside the home.

Caterers need to evolve and change to not only “food fashions” but also to the seasons and to demand for local produce and organically produced food. Businesses need to react to the market place to survive long term.

Do you get involved in non work related issues?

We definitely try to have the right environment to start with and I do what I can but I also need to keep the business running so that everyone else can get the support and the development opportunities they need. However, sometimes people have issues in their lives outside of Rolls on Wheels. The Training & Support team handles most issues and often utilise the expert skills of other agencies to ensure that trainees get the support and advice they need. This could be debt management, benefits, housing, addictions, anxiety, confidence building etc.

Do you think this would be possible in a small Social Firm?

As Forth Sector has several Social Firms we are lucky enough to afford the T&S team but they do have almost 100 trainees to work with. In a small Social Firm there may only be a few staff members but it would be key for relationships to be built up with other organisations. That way people would know where to contact for the best advice.

Starting the Journey to Work

What advice would you give to someone thinking about starting their journey to work?

I would advise them to try all the new opportunities they get offered so that they can discover what they enjoy doing. They should aim to build up friendships so that they have as much support as possible. They should set themselves (or with a support worker) realistic achievable goals and review them regularly. They should eat well, sleep well and get a bit of exercise. This can really help maintain good mental health.



Forth Sector is a social enterprise. It operates small, commercial, supportive businesses (Social Firms) which provide employment opportunities for people with mental health problems.

People whose mental health is a barrier to them gaining open employment can attend as a trainee, benefiting from practical experience in a supportive realistic working environment.

Forth Sector are also piloting a project called Workspace. Workspace trainees are moving towards work within 9 months. They get a placement within the Forth Sector office or in one of the Social Firms which provides real working experience. The group also comes together once a week for training in areas such as IT skills, customer service, team working, assertiveness, confidence, interview skills, CV building etc.