

Intelife Supported Employment Discussion Paper Easy Read Responses

Introduction

Intelife is a social enterprise based in Western Australia, dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities and enabling them to lead fulfilling lives. Our mission is to provide people with disabilities access to purpose-driven work, social connections, and independence. We are committed to offering innovative solutions for job opportunities and supporting pathways to open employment, fostering a sense of belonging and enabling independence.

Types of Work We Do

At Intelife, we offer a wide range of services designed to support individuals with disabilities in various aspects of their lives. Our services include:

- Supported Employment
- Customised Employment (including school leaver employment support)
- Community Access & Engagement
- Lifeskills
- Support Coordination

Contribution to This Document

Intelife employs 138 supported employees, and they were all given the opportunity to contribute to this document in a variety of ways: including small group discussions, one-on-one sessions with staff, and taking the document home to complete with family.

Summary of Responses

Ideal Workplaces: Participants expressed a preference for working in supportive environments such as Intelife, op shops, and various other roles including gaming, outdoor tasks, and cinema jobs. They emphasised the importance of working alongside friends and supportive staff.

Necessary Support: Respondents highlighted the need for daily support, training, and assistance with job applications and interviews. They also mentioned the importance of reducing competition and stress in open employment settings.

Improving Employment Plans: Suggestions for enhancing supported employment included offering a variety of job options, better pay, more breaks, and increased support staff. Participants desired more control over their work schedules and the types of jobs they could pursue.

Value of Supported Employment: Individuals appreciated the friendships formed, the support received, and the sense of safety in their work environments. They valued being treated with respect and the opportunity to engage in meaningful work while enjoying social interactions.

Additional Feedback from Focus Groups

Intelife recently held focus groups with supported employees, facilitated by an external facilitator. The feedback from these sessions included:

Positive Experiences: Participants enjoyed their work, the people, and the support they receive at Intelife. They highlighted the independence, teamwork, and respect they experience in their roles.

Concerns: Participants expressed concerns about moving to open employment, including fear of failure, pressure, less support, and losing benefits.

Suggestions for Improvement: Recommendations included upgrading tools and machinery, providing more responsibility and freedom, and addressing issues such as early work hours and poor communication.

A summary of the responses to the Easy Read version of the Supported Employment discussion paper are summarised as follows (answers as provided to us are included as Attachment 1):

What would Supported Employment look like if it was perfect?

- Participants expressed a desire to work at Intelife, on shops, gaming, outdoor tasks, and cinema jobs. They emphasized working alongside friends and supportive staff.

We want more people with high support needs to be working in open employment. How can we make this happen?

- Suggestions included providing more training and support, reducing competition and stress, and ensuring job security.

The DRC thought we should make a plan to help us make supported employment better. What ideas would you put in the plan?

- Ideas included offering a variety of job options, better pay, more breaks, and increased support staff.

How can employers keep all jobs and pay people with a disability more money?

- Participants suggested finding more work, producing more, and upskilling employees.

What do you like most about Supported Employment?

- Participants appreciated the support, friendships, and sense of safety in their work environments.

Conclusion

Intelife is dedicated to providing high-quality supported employment services that empower individuals with disabilities. We continuously seek feedback from our supported employees to improve our services and ensure that their voices are heard.

Attachment 1:

Next Steps in Supported Employment Easy Read Responses.

1. Do you think we have forgotten some work that is happening?

No responses provided and we were unsure as to the intent of this question.

2. What would Supported Employment look like if it was perfect?

a. Where would you work?

- Intelife
- I would work at Intelife
- In an Op Shop
- Intelife
- Op Shop
- A job in gaming
- Doing the rubbish/outdoors/roadside
- Working at a cinema
- Happy at Intelife
- I would work with my friends at Intelife and sort papers together
- Intelife
- Intelife

b. What would you be doing?

- Tags
- I would be doing something that I really liked
- Work the counter, manage the money
- Towing cars
- Paper/Tags
- Cleaning
- BBQ Cleaning
- Admin/Clerical work
- Something outside
- Working at checkout
- Litter Collection
- Sorting
- Giving people a service
- Mechanic
- Working 3 days/week
- Firefighter
- Working with dogs
- I like doing tags
- Beekeeper
- I like working on all the jobs at Intelife
- BBQ Cleaning
- Fire fighter
- Folding bags
- Different things

c. *Who would you be working with?*

- Staff member name (Skills Trainer)
- people who are kind and support me at work
- I want to work with my friends
- Staff member name (Skills Trainer)
- Staff member name (Skills Trainer)
- More helpers
- Intelife
- My friends
- All the Skills Trainers in Mandurah
- Staff member name (Skills Trainer)
- Skills Trainers
- Staff at Intelife
- Staff member name (Skills Trainer)

3. *We want more people with high support needs to be working in open employment. Open employment means anyone can get a job in that workplace. How can we make this happen?*

- Make it good
- I would need lots of support in doing something that I liked
- I need more training and more supports
- Support every day
- I don't want to work in open employment
- Not getting the sack if you make a mistake.
- It is too competitive
- We would lose job security
- Help us to apply online
- I'm scared of being rejected
- Having to figure out problems on your own.
- Help with interviews
- Give us support until we feel confident.
- People need to be nice
- Less pressure and stress
- People treat us like a burden
- More support staff
- Let people see the workplace on television and in pictures
- Having jobs suited for people with disabilities
- Supported employment in mainstream workforce
- More jobs
- Make it equal and fair
- Have more places that accommodate people with special needs
- Allowing more supported employees to work in different workplaces

4. *The DRC thought we should make a plan to help us make supported employment better. What ideas would you put in the plan?*

- Help me do jobs
- Different jobs, variety is good

- More employees
- More money
- Need more breaks to do some fun in between hard work
- Help others out as a team
- Get paid more
- More jobs to try
- More goals
- Support us until we feel confident
- I want to learn new skills
- Change work hours (too early)
- Get different contracts
- Different PPE that is more comfortable.
- Let us work the days and hours that we want
- No late roster changes
- Choose our work more
- More support staff
- More choice in the activities/jobs at work
- Longer working days
- Learn new things
- Not cutting funding
- Better litter pickers
- More BBQs
- More of a range of things we can do

5. How can employers keep all jobs and pay people with a disability more money?

- Pay people more money from more jobs I think.
- Get more work and produce more
- Work harder to keep work
- By finding jobs or small tasks of a whole job others don't want to do that people with disability can do to help them get more tasks done.
- Bring back the Tea boy or girl
- Assist others photocopying
- Give them more help
- Don't understand
- Question is not clear
- Longer working days
- Up our pay rate
- Upskilling
- Pay people with a disability more money
- Raise Supported Employment wages

6. What do you like most about Supported Employment?

- They help me with things
- I like friends
- I feel safe and supported
- Working with my friends

- Helping others
- Social time at lunch
- Make cups of tea, coffee and milo
- Getting paid to do things I like to do and go on holidays
- The contracts
- The mowing/lawn care
- Tags
- The people
- Making friends/getting to know people
- Knowing we're needed
- Being kind to each other
- The support we get, we know people are there for us
- We get breaks
- They are careful about our safety
- It's easier with support
- Sorting papers and helping people
- I like my boss, she is nice to me
- How my coworkers treat me
- I am respected
- That I have a job
- I get to see people that I like
- I get to do the job that I like doing
- Working with likeminded people
- How I am treated
- I get out of the house
- I'm making friends with people that are the same as me
- There is no pressure on how fast I'm learning the job
- I am treated like an equal
- Having people supervise and assist me
- I get to see and talk to people
- Having fun
- Being able to get out of the house

End of Submission

