



MENTORING LEWISHAM SPEAKING UP



Lewisham Speaking Up is an advocacy organisation based in the London Borough of Lewisham that provides support to people with learning disabilities to ensure they can speak up, be heard, and have a stronger voice. Started in 2005 for and by self-advocates who have learning disabilities in Lewisham, the charity has three main service areas; self-advocacy, 1-1 advocacy, and training.

The Issue

The charity was referred to Cranfield Trust through our STRIVE programme with City Bridge Trust for some mentoring support. At the time, their CEO, who had been within the organisation for a few years prior in different roles, was looking to enhance and improve upon their existing skills to gain support on areas they were less familiar or confident within, to allow them to continue moving the organisation forward successfully and build their leadership capabilities.

Solution

The charity CEO was matched with longstanding Cranfield Trust volunteer Christopher Smith, who has many years of experience within business including mentoring, executive coaching, leadership, and strategic business management.

Over the course of 15 mentoring sessions, Christopher and the CEO covered many different areas and topics. During these sessions, Christopher provided mentoring support bespoke to the CEO and their skills, experience, and Lewisham Speaking Up as an organisation.

This includes advice and coaching in several areas including leadership, staff management, board management, fundraising, and sustaining ideas.



Impact

The mentoring has given me greater knowledge and confidence, which has benefited the organisation as a whole. The mentoring came at a very challenging time: post-Covid followed by a cost of living crisis and funding difficulties. The Mentor was very effective in supporting me through these challenges, which has given greater resilience to the organisation overall. It has emphasised the importance of our Beneficiaries. The sessions have indirectly contributed to the CEO re-drafting the strategy, which will hopefully have a positive effect on the services we offer

CEO - Lewisham Speaking Up

It has been enjoyable and rewarding to work alongside the CEO of a small charity that makes a substantive difference to some of the most marginalised people in our society. By using my skills to support him as he addresses his challenges, I feel I have helped to make a difference for the people his charity supports

Christopher Smith - Cranfield Trust Volunteer



Being a CEO of a small charity can be lonely, demanding, and often daunting. Having a Mentor through Cranfield Trust has provided me with somebody reliable, knowledgeable, supportive, and experienced to help me problem solve, tackle complexities, and overcome barriers more effectively. A Mentor means you are not alone: I would recommend this service to new Directors/CEOs in particular

CEO - Lewisham Speaking Up



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