

Place of action:

**Company in food supplements  
made from cannabis: CBD oil**

Storyteller:

**Vladas, owner of the company**

Synopsis:

**Ugnė, an employee with autism  
spectrum disorder, is a packer  
expert**

# The joy of a motivated workforce

## The impact of the television

"It was during the Christmas period and the number of orders increased. We were no longer able to pack the products ourselves, so we started looking for a packer. Then I saw on television a good example of employment, where a company has hired a person with a disability doing relatively simple work and is happy about it. May be that would be something for my company? Why not give it a try! It took some time to find out where to go to, then my colleague found this organisation specialised in helping people with disabilities to find a job. They quickly contacted us, found out what kind of employee we were looking for and sent us two candidates. The first candidate did not like the location of the work, the second one really liked the specifics of the job and had a similar job experience before. We decided to go for the second candidate, which was Ugnė."

## It takes a little longer

"Fortunately, a job coach from this organisation came along in the first week of work. He was of great support. He explained to us whom to contact, to arrange all the administrative details that come along when you hire a person with a disability. The job coach explained to us we would be eligible to receive a financial support, and we contacted the employment service for this financial support. A short-term 3-month subsidy of 50 per cent of the salary was granted. I must admit, the process of hiring a person with a disability takes a little longer because more paperwork is needed. Then at the same time it is the way to receive the financial support that we could use in the beginning, for her guidance process."

## The eye-opener in communication

"The first working week started with the job coach who helped us to communicate with Ugnė. This was an eye-opener for us. For instance, if you tell her that you will be in the office at 10 o'clock, she will be waiting for you exactly at 10, but if you come earlier or unannounced, she will get irritated. Once you know it, you understand why she reacts irritated when you do something different than mentioned."

## Simple but essential adaptations

"The job coach also supported us to understand what needs to be adapted for her to feel comfortable and able to produce the packer job. It was interesting to see what needed to be adapted. It was in fact only details that needed to be adapted. It was the workroom that had to be arranged in such a way that there would be only essential and necessary information. And it should take only a bit of reading for Ugnė to find out quickly what products are placed where and what packaging would need to be used accordingly. The solution for this was quite simple, we marked the different products in separate colours. On the bottles, we have icons of water drops to show the how many drops need to be in the bottles."

### Our package expert

"At the beginning the job coach looked after Ugnė's work, to make sure she understood the requirements and procedures to produce. She was very motivated to learn the job. After half a year, the job coach was able to come only once or two times per week, just to check if everything was okay. Now, Ugnė is able to work on her own. Also., in the beginning Ugnė was working slowly. It took time for her to learn how to fold the boxes and realising the importance of every detail in the package. For example, the sticker must be put in a certain place so that the package looks more beautiful. Now Ugnė is our packer expert and is very deep on details, loves concreteness and stability. First, we wanted her to pay a salary related to her production. After a while it became clear her productivity was not developing, and then we decided to pay her a fixed salary."

### It's all about communication

"Having a colleague with a disability had impact, though just a bit. It is all about small things and once you know them, it is easy to think of and do. For instance, if we want to change anything in the working environment and want to avoid rising irritation, we need first to think how to announce it to her. We once changed the place of the microwave in the kitchen. For us it was no big deal, but for Ugnė it was a real-life change, she wasn't happy with that change and was complaining about it for some time. Now we carefully announce that some changes will be made in the future, then we give her some time to warm up with the idea and then again inform her right before doing the actual changes."

### The joy of a motivated workforce

"I am satisfied with my choice to offer a job to Ugnė. It feels good, it is the emotional satisfaction of doing good to society. And, I have a lot of free advertising ever since I hired her. This was completely unexpected. For me, the strongest added value of employing Ugnė has to do with her, being a motivated worker that you know won't run away in a couple of months and will value the job. For me, my first impulsive reaction has been transferred into well considered actions leading to having now already three people with disabilities in my team as packers. People with disabilities started directly contacting us and proposing themselves. In the future we might think about an accountant job role and already have one person with a disability who has contacted us, saying that he would love to join our team and would like to be an accountant. I would say, let's go for it!"

" Now Ugnė is our packer expert and is very deep on details, loves concreteness and stability."



Inclusion simply makes great enterprises



Co-funded by  
the European Union