



a beacon of light

Place of action:

lunch restaurant and café

Storyteller:

Kimmo, owner of the restaurant

Synopsis:

Tomi, an employee with a disability, works as a helper during busy lunch time

Take my share of social responsibility

"A friend of mine used to work for an organisation for people with intellectual disabilities. Through him I heard about this opportunity. For me, it only felt right to bear one's share of social responsibility, it only felt right to employ people with partial work ability. For twenty years now, we have been employing people with a partial workability. We had one long-term employee that is already retired, another has been working for us for over ten years, and we have one younger employee, Tomi who started two years ago. He is now on sick leave. Tomi will come back as soon as his situation improves."

We pay from the start

"When I started, I contacted the local employment agency, and they connected me to a job coach. She explained 'how it worked'. It is up to us to mention what we need, and they select candidates and prepare them for interviews with us. Then we choose our new employee. And, in our case if we hire them, we pay them from the beginning. This was according to our collective agreement."

A little bit of everything

"The restaurant has different workstations, kitchen, pastry shop and café. The aim is to have one trainee per workstation in the future. When we started, we bundled out tasks that wouldn't fit, like for instance hot places in the bakery. All other tasks were divided among all employees with or without partial workability, so everyone has a little bit of everything. Of course, each employee only has to do the tasks that match their capacities. And, fortunately, most tasks in the kitchen, pastry shop, bakery and hall fit."

A beacon of light

"My employees with a disability are a natural part of the work community and accepted by customers. Up until now, after all these years, customer reactions have only been positive. And that's great, our employees have gained self-esteem and feel part of the community. They are diligent in taking care of their own responsibilities. Everyone comes to work in a good mood. My employees with a partial workability are a beacon of light for the work community. And, I now also have a reputation as a responsible employer. I have done it, and I will continue where possible, hiring persons with a partial workability"