

Austria



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# absolute enrichment for the production

Place of action:

**Fast food restaurant**

Storyteller:

**Loek Versluis owner of the restaurant**

Synopsis:

**Selina, an employee with a mental and intellectual disability, works in the drive-in, and Anton, an employee with MS, work as assistant, works as a janitor**

## As an introduction

"It is already a long time ago, almost twenty years, that I had a lack of employees. I heard during a business meeting about employees with a disability and I was open for applicants with disabilities. Ever since I successfully employ people with disabilities."

## My story

"I would like to share with you the story of Selina, and Anton who both now work for us. I was again looking for new personnel. I needed more staff because the number of customers was incredibly increasing ever since we could open again after Corona. We have different positions in our restaurant, and I could use more hands in any position. I send my applications to this service provider with whom I have already a long-term relationship. They came up with Selina and Anton. I both interviewed them and tried to figure out which department would be best according to their capacities and capabilities. For Selina it became the drive-in and for Anton, he suited best as a janitor. They both agreed with their new positions, and we started a training period, to find out whether we made the good decision. After a couple of days of training, we found out it was a good decision; both functioned well and I decided to hire Selina now for the drive-in and Anton for janitor, working in the surroundings of our restaurant."

## Two new colleagues and their tasks

"In the beginning, they both were supported by a job coach. Then very soon, they both did not need any assistance anymore. Selina now is working independently 30-35 hours per week. She is like any other regular employee, she does not stand out. She takes orders, cashes up, forwards complaints, and prepares balloons. From time to time she also works the cash register in front. Selina is completely independent, a very open and friendly person who fulfils her tasks 100%."

"Anton now is working full time as a janitor and also as a support in the kitchen. His tasks are to receive and check deliveries, keep the parking lot and outside area clean, mow the lawn, make sure that everything is always restocked in the kitchen. Sometimes he also supports in frying the chicken nuggets. He is very enthusiastic, sometimes a bit too much, he once accidentally mowed in his enthusiasm the freshly planted tulips!"

## How to make colleagues happy

"When Anton and Selina started, and also when other employees with a disability start, we prepare the team by explaining the team what tasks the new employee is allowed to do. I must say, everybody in the team was happy when Anton started as a janitor. For the team, it meant tasks like cleaning, and gardening were taken over by Anton."

### **My philosophy**

"I organise regularly to have breaks together and have a coffee together. Then people talk to me, I learn about their ideas, their concerns, etc. And they get to know each other better. This is my philosophy, to be together and share. We also work with a mentor; one person all employees trust. Here everybody can express their wishes, needs and problems, in case they want to do it in private."

### **Anton and Fatma**

"For Anton, we need to organise daily support. Anton has one contact person, Fatma, who is the restaurant manager. Anton talks with Fatma every day. He tells her what he has done well during the day, complains about employees when they do not keep the outside tidy by throwing away cigarettes stumps and pollute his workplace. He needs praise and recognition daily; it makes him feel secure. He often shares things from his private life, about his trips, about his parents and reports about everything that's going on in his life. He needs this daily support to function well, and we can give him this moment."

### **Anton and his colleagues**

"Then, also all other staff support him when needed, for instance when he is tired. His colleagues always joke with him, which he likes very much. He then really feels he is part of a team. Only, when some colleagues throw away their cigarettes outside, then they have a conflict with Anton, they should keep it clean, is his opinion."

### **We can always count on our service provider**

"In the very seldom moments we need support, we can always count on our service provider, the one that who was involved in the recruitment and selection of both Selina and Anton, and our other employees with a disability. From time to time, they are also present at meetings, and then we talk about if extra support is needed. Mostly everything runs smoothly, and no external support is needed."

### **Celebration time**

"Anton has just been honoured for five years working in my restaurant, Selina is almost there. I am happy they stay such long time with us, they function well, and I am happy with them being with us. Ever since we work with employees with a disability, the attitude of my employees is more cordial, the interaction with each other is more tolerant, everyone accepts everyone as they are. The company culture is lived by everyone, especially by the managers. Being in contact with all these different people, including persons with disabilities, creates that specific something with our guests, it creates a better atmosphere for everyone. Our employees with disabilities also get gifts from the guests from time to time, like small candles, stuffed animals, and chocolates."

### **It's all about giving motivated people a chance**

"I would certainly hire people with disabilities any time again. The working atmosphere improved, and it is always an added value to the team. I have the philosophy that every motivated person should be given the chance to work and grow, no matter school education, disabilities, as long as the person is willing to work, learn, is hygienic and polite. And, if one of my employees wants to develop, there's always the possibility for additional trainings and courses to move up in the hierarchy."



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