

# Train to gain

**Robert Johnson, Training & Delivery Consultant, Tunstall Healthcare**

*Tunstall's training team is dedicated to enabling its customers get the most out of its products, helping them to deliver services more effectively and offer the best possible care to service users. Robert Johnson, Training and Delivery Consultant, tells us more about how they work.*

My days can be pretty varied. Although our time as a training team is largely scheduled around three months in advance, things can change, and as we don't have regions I could be anywhere in the UK, or delivering training online. This could be to people who have never used our software before, to teams who have been using it for years but are upgrading to a newer version, or managers wanting to become more knowledgeable about the capabilities of the system and how they can make it work best for them.

Until the end of 2021 I worked as Assistive Technology Office Manager at South Tyneside Council. This has been useful in terms of understanding how Tunstall customers use our software, but it's actually been a huge leap from using the system to planning, delivering and training on it! I liken it to going from knowing how to drive a car to being able to replace the engine!

My main reason for moving from being a Tunstall customer to a Tunstall trainer was my absolute belief that the TSP/PNC software is by far the best system out there. I wanted to show other centres how to derive full advantage from it, not only to help them, but also to make sure they're delivering maximum benefits to the people they support.

No two training sessions are ever the same; you're dealing with different people with different personalities and who want different things from the system. And each organisation has different procedures and requirements. Whilst all centres strive to meet the TEC Services Association's (TSA) Code of Practice, they all have their own procedures to follow, KPIs to meet and reporting requirements. This means they all work slightly differently, and so our training is also bespoke to each customer to a large degree.

As a general rule, we tend to deliver training sessions to no more than six people as we find that this is the optimum amount for people to be able to fully engage and take on board the information. Having said that, we do make exceptions where it makes sense to do so. We also try to put attendees together in groups in terms of their job role and what they want out of the training.

Although my role is focused on software training, there's a reason we have Consultancy in our title, and it's because a huge amount of what we do is in the planning. We work on moving from an 'As is' position to a 'To be' situation. So, my first step when working with a customer is to observe what they do and how they do it, right from referral to installation. We then work together in a workshop setting to map this out. That's the 'As is'. I then work through the 'To be', working out how we can streamline services by getting rid of duplication and inefficiencies, for example using the Service Manager module can often replace several paper forms with a single input, and automate reporting. Freeing up this administration time is critical, not just because the service runs so much more efficiently, but because it increases capacity and choice in the way services are delivered.

The best feeling for me is when I drive away from a customer who's just gone live with a new system or upgrade from us. Because we've done the work together, I know the operators will feel more confident and will have more time to spend on calls and less on administration. And that means they can spend more time developing services which make such a difference to the people they support, such as proactive calling or being able to spend a bit longer on a call to someone who is lonely or afraid. In our industry we place a great emphasis on helping people to remain independent for longer, but for me it's just as much about delivering peace of mind. Knowing there are so many people out there that feel reassured they can get help when they really need it is what gets me out of bed in the morning.