

PurpleSpace

Out of Office

CASE STUDY FOUR:
TESCO



POSITIVELY
PURPLE

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Motability
Operations

CASE STUDY FOUR: TESCO

PurpleSpace

Context

Tesco employs 300,000 colleagues in the UK, many of whom are part-time, with 90% of business through retail shops and around 10% through online shopping. Tesco's work environments include retail shops (3,000 across the UK), fulfilment centres, and distribution centres.

This content has been created with Tesco Disability Network Chair, Russell Price.

Tesco's Disability Network has experienced challenges when trying to communicate and engage with employees, including:

- **The pace and logistics** of the business, on the shop floor and the distribution centres, makes it difficult or impossible for colleagues to 'step away' to engage with network activities.
- **Access to tech:** electronic communications will not reach all colleagues, the majority of whom do not have work emails or devices.
- **Shop floor employees** are not able to access communications when they are on shift and may not wish to engage with workplace communications outside working hours.
- **Lack of confidence:** managers are the first point of contact for most colleagues, and they may not feel confident talking about disability or the network.

The focus of the network's communication approach is on making information available and easy to find, when colleagues need it, and it is relevant to their lives. This builds confidence in Tesco's commitment to accessibility and disability inclusion.

Challenges



Solutions

- **Use data and insights from colleagues.** The network collects data via surveys and on site listening groups to understand the experiences and needs of disabled employees. This data informs the network's strategies to improve support and inclusion.
- **Deliver network communication through existing channels.** Team meetings ("team fives"), communication boards, and notice boards are utilised to reach employees during their working time. Strategic communication planning is used to ensure important information is communicated effectively, at key moments throughout the year.
- **Create a central information hub.** All relevant disability policies, processes and network resources are available on the "Our Tesco" web-based platform, accessible to all colleagues.
- **Share stories and awareness campaigns:** Sharing personal stories from colleagues, such as a Store Director with dyslexia, has helped to raise awareness. These are shared through various channels, including recordings, PowerPoint slides, and the central platform. They are also used as training materials, helping colleagues understand disabilities.

- **Celebrate key moments and events.** Disability focussed celebration activities are successful in gaining colleague participation – people love an event to get behind! These are an opportunity for the network to distribute information and build awareness, both internally and via external platforms like LinkedIn, to engage a broader audience. Briefs are sent to managers for upcoming events to prepare for increased interaction with colleagues and customers.

"We have D&I reps in store, who can walk the shop floor and tell colleagues what is going on [with an event]; they are points of contact who can help colleagues if they want information."

Russell Price, Chair

Successes



International Day of People with Disabilities and #PositivelyPurple

Celebrated annually with various activities to raise awareness about disabilities and the support available. They also use this as an opportunity to thank colleagues who lead by example in disability inclusion. Tesco have been sponsors of the #PositivelyPurple movement consecutively in 2023 and 2024.

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

In response to feedback from colleagues in the ERG/Network listening groups, the ERG/Network now raises awareness about neurodiverse conditions. This is an emerging network initiative, aiming to encourage conversations and understanding, and they have had the National Autistic bus visit several of their sites, to maximise visibility.

Infrastructure and support:

Tesco has a central Diversity & Inclusion team that supports the network's voluntary efforts, ensuring systemic support and alignment with company policies. The network committee consists of representatives from every function within Tesco, which really extends their reach; they have quarterly meetings with the executive team and the network executive sponsor.

Single point of contact: The network has a single email, which anyone can contact, from a work or personal email address. This provides a single channel for colleagues to ask questions, share positive stories and challenges. The network filters these messages, identifying common queries and signposting colleagues to relevant support.

Best practices

Your Top Tip

“My top tip is to truly listen to colleagues that have a lived experience of a disability. This starts from the top and you must have the channels to hear what they say that can then be represented in decisions. Our vision as a network is “Every decision we make at Tesco considers those with a disability”.

Russell Price, Chair

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