

Online reference checking helps Interaction find the right people to support the community

Interaction is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to building independence for people with an intellectual disability. Founded by a group of parents in 1979, Interaction provides 24/7 access to vital support and accommodation services for some of the most vulnerable in the community. To support this mission, finding the right people is critical, and now, a partnership with Referoo is making this easier than ever before.



The Challenge

Interaction supports more than 550 adults, children and families and hires 70+ support workers each year, and like many not-for-profits today, is constantly being challenged to do more with less.

The recruitment process had long presented a challenge for Interaction, and it recently made the shift from a HR-centred recruitment model to a hiring manager one to ensure recruitment was undertaken by the people who had on-the-ground knowledge of community support work.

Tasked with recruitment admin on top of their business-as-usual, these managers quickly became disillusioned with the paper-based reference-checking process.

“Our hiring managers quickly realised how hard paper-based reference checking was, in terms of constantly calling people and missing them, trying to fit that within business hours, it was a constant game of phone tag. A lot of our workers are shift workers and so too are their referees so it makes it hard to reach them at a convenient time. To say we were overwhelmed is an understatement,” said Kirstin Rowberry, HR Assistant at Interaction.

“Even when you got someone on the phone, it often felt like you were inconveniencing them, and so you sort of rushed through and risked missing the point of the reference check,” she added.

For Interaction, this process was causing significant delays in the recruitment process and increasing the time it took to get more qualified people out in the community delivering lifechanging services.

“We could go up to two, three weeks waiting for a reference,” Kirstin explained. “The team waiting for their support workers would be questioning what was happening and when the new hire

could start, but our hands were tied. We couldn't keep badgering referees, but we also couldn't hire the person without the reference check.”

Kirstin says she knew Interaction needed a different way, and so she began looking for a partner who could support them to speed up the recruitment process and remove the bottle neck caused by reference-checking.



Solution

Kirstin reviewed a number of online reference checking solutions, but says it was Referoo that really stood out.

“We tried a couple of reference-checking solutions and found that Referoo was not only the most user-friendly, but the most cost-effective as well. We loved that we could support a local, home-grown solution too. We did a trial, and everyone was just really impressed with how it all worked. “

The support Kirstin received from Referoo throughout the whole process was also an important differentiator. “Referoo have been amazing. Chris, one of the Directors at Referoo, has worked with me throughout the whole period to make sure we got the solution we needed.”

She says there was a lot of pressure to get it right, both because this was the first system of this type Interaction had implemented, and because she was personally championing the change.

“I was initially nervous because I was the one that was driving it and trying to convince the whole organisation, the hiring managers, and the executive teams that Referoo was going to be the solution to our problems.

“Chris really accommodated our need to roll this out as a step-by-step process and supported our hiring managers through the change. He provided webinars and recordings to make training and communicating easier.

“I didn't have to drive the change all by myself, it was a really supportive process. I felt comfortable that Referoo was the right system for us from really early on.”

Results

Kirstin says that not only has Referoo saved them time and money in recruitment, it has also led to better quality references.

“With Referoo, it takes less than 24 hours for a reference check to come back, and it’s more detailed and in-depth as well. We love that we can tailor our reference checks to the role and add in really specific questions that are important in our space.”

The ability to see how a reference check is progressing has also helped Interaction to save time and stay on top of recruitment.

“Referoo offers so many different avenues to complete the reference check, which really worked for us. We can see the progress of each reference and it really helps us to stay on top of the recruitment process.”

Working with vulnerable people, Referoo’s security and fraud detection features are also critical for Interaction.

“We rely on the screening process to ensure our candidates and their references are genuine before they go out in the community in support roles, where a lot of trust is placed on them.

“In our Referoo trial, I experienced the benefits of these features first-hand when a reference came back as being from the same IP address as the candidate. We asked the candidate why their referee was at their house and they disclosed that it was because they live together. This obviously puts the reference into question, and we didn’t end up hiring that person. There is no way we could have known that before.”

Kirstin says she has received glowing feedback from across the business. “I have genuinely loved Referoo from day one. And the feedback from my hiring managers has just been amazing. It has literally been the best decision that we could have made, and we have received so many compliments saying that this has worked so well. We couldn’t be happier with Referoo,” she concluded.

