

A smiling man with short hair, wearing a red polo shirt and a black apron, is leaning on a stack of light-colored wooden planks. He is wearing a tan elbow brace on his right arm. A name tag on his apron reads "RICHARD". The background shows a warehouse setting with more stacks of lumber.

EMP

EmploymentSolutions

**ANNUAL
RESULTS**
2015/
2016

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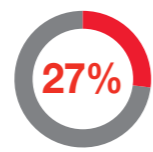
Managing Director
EDGE Employment Solutions

EDGE STATS & FACTS:

Average tenure of a candidate placed by EDGE



EDGE has secured over **6,568** jobs for people with disability



of EDGE's own employees have a disability



Front cover Richard Townsend / Bunnings Belmont

TOP EMPLOYERS (BY CURRENT WORKERS)

Employer	Numbers of workers supported by EDGE
Wesfarmers (Coles, Bunnings, Kmart, Officeworks, Target)	57
Woolworths (Woolworths, Big W)	35
Dôme	12
Department of Health	9
McDonalds	9
University of Western Australia	7
Collins Foods	6
Disability Services Commission	6
Spotless Group	6
St John of God Australia	6
Ramsay Healthcare	5

Eight great reasons to employ people with disability*

*Reference: CCIWA

1. Increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, increased morale, a more positive organisational culture and reduced Worker's compensation.
2. Employees with disability generally have very good problem-solving skills.
3. The number of OHS incidents for an employee with disability is six times lower than that of an average employee.
4. Lower turnover of employees with disability.
5. Employees with disability have less sick days compared to an average employee.
6. People with disability generally have a very positive work attitude and work ethos.
7. It enhances the company's image among its staff, customers and community.
8. There will be benefits to existing staff who find working with people with disability rewarding.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

What a busy year 2015/16 has been! Whilst we faced a few challenges along the way it certainly was a year of great success. Some of the performance highlights include growing our register by around 22%, improving our Star Performance by an average of 20% and returning the agency to a surplus position. These results are particularly pleasing when we consider them in the context of the tough economic environment that prevailed in 15/16.

Like all recruitment agencies, EDGE relies on employers continuing to employ staff and grow their businesses. This was a difficult year for many employers and resulted in many reducing the number of people they employ rather than hiring. It is with this difficulty in mind that it is fantastic to report that via our strong relationships with employers and the work of our very capable staff we were able to support a further 220 clients into quality jobs this year.

Our commitment to post placement and ongoing support continues to differentiate us in the market and we were rewarded again this year with very strong repeat business opportunities. EDGE's dedication to individualised on-the-job support consistently results in us outperforming the national average when it comes to the percentage of placements that last more than a year. This is great for the clients we place, their employers and our funder the Department of Social Services (DSS).

EDGE's strong brand and culture of delivering a professional service experience has seen demand for our services increase significantly across the year. Where some providers struggled to find clients to serve, EDGE's register grew by 22% in 15/16. Whilst this growth is pleasing, like any service provider we must continue to refine and improve the quality of the service that we offer. To measure service satisfaction EDGE engaged external consultants who conducted over 165 client satisfaction surveys and facilitated a number of focus groups across the year.

Whilst EDGE is a Not-For-Profit, we have a responsibility to our stakeholders to remain financially viable and contemporary in our service delivery. This year, after two consecutive years of losses, EDGE returned a modest financial surplus.

STATS & FACTS:



This impressive turnaround largely came about as a result of cost savings, operational efficiencies and the focus and hard work of the EDGE staff under the strategic guidance of our dedicated Board of Directors. This is a pleasing result and there is more work to be done as we explore growth opportunities, alternative revenue streams and a broader range of services for our stakeholders.

The Disability Sector is currently undergoing unprecedented reforms, be it the roll out of the \$22 billion dollar NDIS or the Federal Government's review of Disability Employment Services. EDGE is highly involved and invested in these reforms and continues to advocate for better funding and supports for people with disability to gain and maintain quality employment. There is no doubt that these are exciting times for the sector and more importantly for the people that the sector serves. It is our hope that these major reforms will see a more equitable and inclusive society in the future.

EDGE only achieves the wonderful outcomes that we achieve because of the support that we receive from our stakeholders. This year has seen the Staff and Board of EDGE turn it up a notch and successfully deliver impressive results in a particularly challenging environment, my thanks to you all. I would like to also acknowledge our funder DSS, who provide us with the means through which we deliver services.

We look forward to the ongoing constructive dialogue as we work to improve Disability Employment Services in Australia.

To the consumers who entrust us to support them on their employment journey, we thank you for choosing EDGE. We take this responsibility seriously and will continue to work to improve the services that we offer you. Finally, to the progressive and informed employers who are walking the talk when it comes to diversity in employment, a big thank-you. We congratulate you on being forward thinking in your employment practices and we look forward to supporting your ongoing success.

Patrick Moran MBA UWA
MANAGING DIRECTOR



EDGE AT WORK - RETAIL PREVAILS

As one of Australia's largest employers, Woolworths not only embraces and promotes diversity within the workplace, they also take great pride in their commitment to youth employment. Giving many young people under 25 their first start in the workforce, Woolworths provides a platform for them to build skills that they can use throughout their entire working life.

21 year old Jessica Acquarola is one example of the many young Australians who have had the chance to start their career at Woolworths. For Jessica this began as a short work experience opportunity in 2011 during her final years of school at Mercedes College, Education Support. When school finished Jessica was offered a few hours of paid casual work, and later with the help of EDGE, she was able to convert this into a permanent part time position at the CBD store on St Georges Terrace.

EDGE STATS & FACTS:



EDGE assisted over **25** workers to complete traineeships and apprenticeships in the past year

EDGE has supported over **525** candidates to secure traineeships and apprenticeships since 2005.

Margaret Kerr, Woolworths Service Team Member has been working with Jessica from the beginning. She recalls meeting the shy young school girl and can't believe the transformation from then to now.

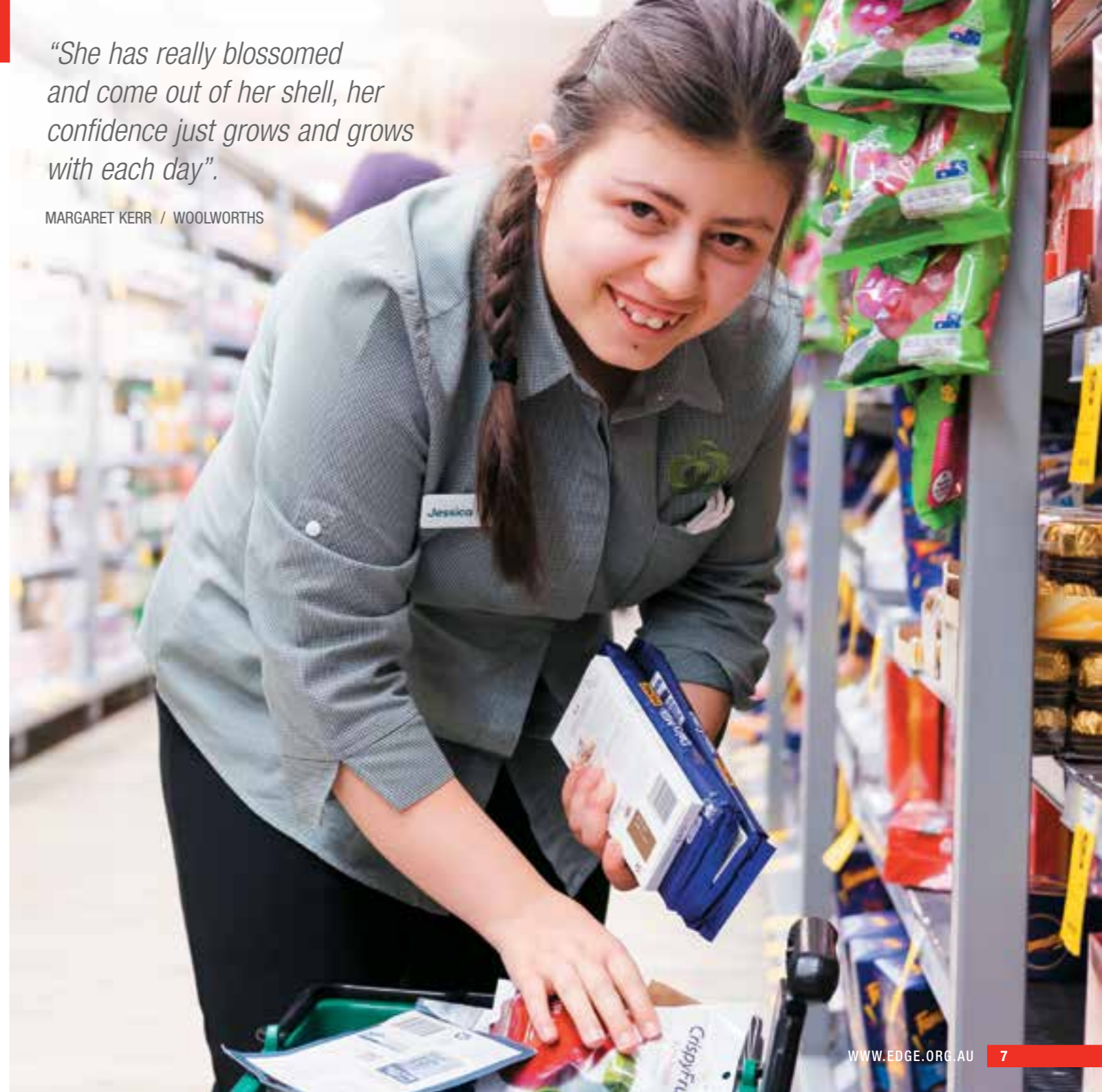
Early on Jessica was extremely nervous. Customer interaction was daunting and Jessica's anxiety meant that she often struggled to seek assistance from her team members. Gratefully for Jessica, Margaret took her under her wing and together with the weekly support from EDGE, she has come on in leaps and bounds. "She has really blossomed and come out of her shell" shares Margaret. "Her confidence just grows and grows with each day".

Five years on and Jessica is loving her job at Woolworths and enjoying the vibrancy of city life. She has a great working relationship with her team members and knows the ENEX store back to front. Ask her anything, and Jessica can proudly tell you exact the location of almost any product in an instant.

In addition to her part time role at Woolworths, Jessica also undertakes volunteer office work at the Department of Housing. Having studied and completed her Certificate II in Business Administration at TAFE, Jessica's goal is to gain paid administrative work to fill the days around her Woolworths shifts. When asked where she sees herself in the next 5 years, Jessica feels the variety and balance of retail versus office life would suit her to a tee.

"She has really blossomed and come out of her shell, her confidence just grows and grows with each day".

MARGARET KERR / WOOLWORTHS



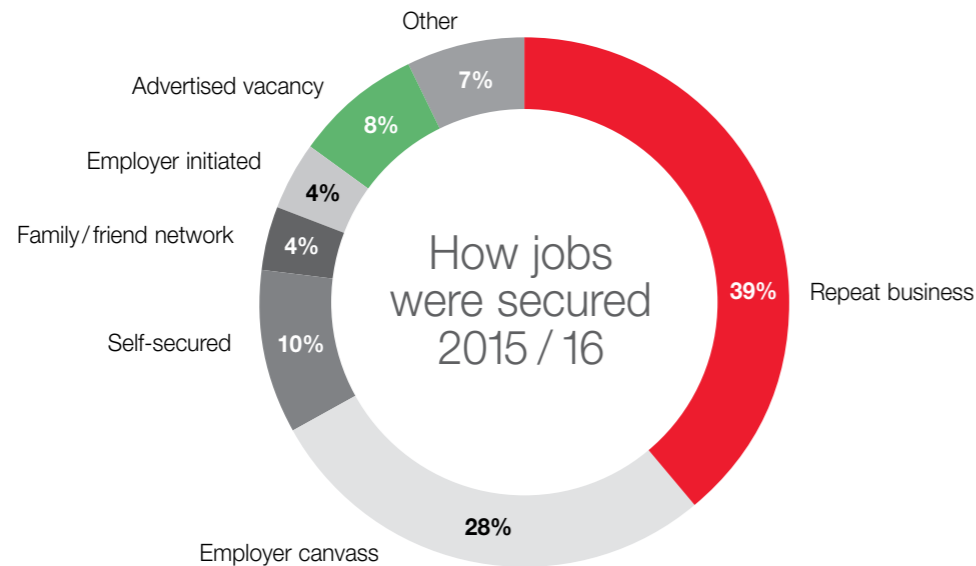
JOB SEARCH

Each job seeker, plus anybody they wish to bring along, is interviewed by a Customer Relations Advisor. At the interview, vocational skills and career interests are discussed and an individual employment plan is developed. The plan identifies jobs that match the job seeker's skills, lifestyle and interests.

The job seeker is then introduced to one of EDGE's specialist Employer Consultants who works with them to secure a job in accordance with the individual employment plan. As part of its commitment to quality, EDGE seeks to match jobs to people - as opposed to matching people to jobs.

Starting with the job seeker and finding the right job with the right employer increases the likelihood of people with disability securing and retaining satisfying and meaningful employment.

Last year EDGE's specialist Job Search team secured more than 220 new jobs for jobseekers across a wide range of industries. These jobs included basic entry-level roles, traineeships and apprenticeships right through to high-level professional appointments.



WHAT EMPLOYERS SAY

“Employing a person with disability is one of our best business decisions in years.” *MEERKATS*

“Employing people with a disability has allowed Iluka to engage and benefit from a highly motivated workforce, which has further strengthened our company’s culture with regards to Diversity and Inclusion.” *ILUKA*

“The program has increased the awareness by staff and managers in seeing the ‘ability’ rather than the ‘disability’.” *DOTAG*

“Employing people with disabilities is a strategic imperative for RAC as it promotes diversity of thought and better reflects our membership base and the WA community.” *RAC*

EDGE AT WORK - BUILDING A BRIGHT FUTURE

19 Year old Louis Harvey is carving out a fine future for himself. Now a fulltime trades assistant at Master Cabinets in Wangara, Louis originally started fine tuning his career aspirations whilst still in school at Woodvale Secondary College.

Louis readily admits that the academic side of school was never his forte. Getting into the workforce and starting a trade was far more appealing. With guidance from his teachers and the Supported Work Experience & Training (SWEAT) program at EDGE, Louis tried his hand at a number of different trades such as bricklaying, plumbing and carpentry.

Louis knew early on that carpentry was the avenue he wanted to pursue. Unlike some of the other trades, he was excited by the artistic side of carpentry and the creative possibilities it offered. With his mind set Louis left school in year 11 to complete a six month Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship and commenced work as a roof carpenter soon after. Louis looks back on this first job as a great learning experience. He quickly discovered that working off a beam more than 6-7 metres high was no mean feat and probably not the avenue of carpentry best suited to him.

Luckily for Louis, his Job Coordinator Luke Griffin had just the right alternative in mind. Familiar with Master Cabinets and their inclusive culture, Luke facilitated a meeting with General Manager Alex Dudek, which marked the beginning of a new full time trade role for Louis.

With over 15% of the Master Cabinets workforce having a recognised disability, Alex Dudek knows a thing or two about accommodating diversity. He is quick to point out however, that a worker's disability is often the least remarkable thing about them. "Their application, the way they carry out their duties and the way they interact with the team is just like anyone else".

Alex equally has a great deal of praise for Louis and is constantly impressed with his level of drive and determination. "He picks things up really quickly and is always pushing to do more and more" Alex reports.

Louis knows that he has a way to go before reaching his ultimate dream of becoming a qualified carpenter, but is grateful for the daily learning opportunities at Master Cabinets and for the ongoing support he receives from EDGE and all of his co-workers. "They make me feel supported and give me confidence. They challenge me and always offer tips and advice on how to do things the smart way rather than the hard way".



"He picks things up really quickly and is always pushing to do more and more."

ALEX DUDEK / MASTER CABINETS
GENERAL MANAGER

EDGE AT WORK - RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

At only 29 years of age Christopher Bell is a proud home-owner and he couldn't be happier with the direction his life is taking. After moving out of his family home a little over a year ago, Chris now lives just a hop, skip and a jump away from work at Joondalup Health Campus and is enjoying the freedom of independent life. While Chris keeps very busy with a host of different activities such as bowling, cooking, exhibiting his artwork and listening to music, maintaining a long term stable job continues to be the anchor point of his success. As well as the income to fund his home and busy lifestyle, Chris shares that "work keeps me busy and gives me company".

"They're a really supportive group" says Job Coordinator Lauren Baptist of Chris's colleagues. Chris has become increasingly independent under their guidance over his 8 year tenure. Where once Lauren was required to be onsite to support Chris 2-3 days per week, she now only checks in with Chris and the team once every 2-3 weeks.

As well as the income to fund his home and busy lifestyle, Chris shares that "work keeps me busy and gives me company".

Reece Langford, Purchasing and Supply Officer at JHC, has now been working with Chris for over 4 years and is grateful for the support from EDGE. Reece tells how Lauren is always available to offer encouragement and suggestions on how to best supervise Chris, but at the end of the day he sees Chris as just one of the team. Chris helps to keep work morale high and Reece enjoys hearing about his week and sharing a laugh with him. Chris too appreciates the workplace camaraderie and always feels very included.

"They look after me a lot" says Chris. He lights up as he goes on to recount the time he got to be a Chef for a day. Knowing how much Chris loves to cook and of his ambition to run the hospital kitchen, Executive Chef John Creasey arranged a surprise for Chris when he arrived to work one morning and gave him his very own Chef's uniform and reign of the hospital kitchen for a day. Inspired by this opportunity, Chris now tests recipes at home to share with John and aims to one day be working alongside him in the JHC kitchen. "Now the last thing on my mind" says Chris, "is getting a girlfriend and getting married".



JOB SUPPORT

Once a job is secured, EDGE seeks to establish an ongoing partnership between the newly appointed worker, their support networks and the employer. With over 30 years experience in providing on-the-job support to workers with disability and their employers, the Job Support team are highly experienced and committed to ensuring all parties understand their roles and expectations in order to create successful employment outcomes. Our dedicated team of Job Coordinators will plan and deliver individualised and tailored supports, from meeting with key co-workers to clarify the duties to be performed, to determining the needs for any additional training or strategies to promote inclusion and independence in the workplace. As these strategies begin to take effect, support will naturally decrease but be rest assured EDGE will continue to support on an as needs basis.

Workers supported by EDGE in 2015/16 had an average tenure of 46 months and earned an average of \$20.50 per hour, which is 15% higher than the adult minimum wage. More than 93% of workers supported by EDGE are paid at full award wages. 60% of workers supported by EDGE are not receiving a benefit (ie. Not relying on any benefits from Centrelink).

EDGE offers a variety of training courses to assist employers build a productive and diverse workforce. These courses provide employees with the knowledge, skills and confidence to better train and support

their colleagues with and without disability. Since its inception in 1991, a total of 2075 supervisors & co-workers have attended the very popular "Mentoring Coworkers with Disability" course. Courses can be tailored to your organisation's needs and desired learning outcomes.

Contact our experienced Training Coordinators on 9286 6600 to see how we can help your organisation achieve it's diversity goals.

EDGE continues to partner with public and private sector organisations to review and deliver on their diversity goals. By utilising EDGE's 32 years of knowledge and experience, organisations are addressing barriers and implementing strategies to create a sustainable change in their employment practices. In doing so they are creating more inclusive cultures for people with disability and are often gaining an edge over their competitors.

STATS & FACTS:



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

EDGE formally monitors customer satisfaction through a series of four standardised, independently conducted surveys of job seekers, workers, family members and employers respectively. A total of 226 telephone surveys were undertaken during the year.

Job seekers rated EDGE very highly overall, and higher than 86% in 15 out of 16 areas such as: really listening to them; respecting their job interests; caring about them and their careers; respecting their privacy; knowing about their job skills and job interests; feeling welcome; letting them know what they are doing to get them a job; and feeling okay about telling EDGE if they are unhappy.

Workers rated EDGE highly overall, and higher than 85% in 20 out of 22 areas such as: really listening to them; caring about them; respecting their privacy; providing the promised support; being there when needed; working hard to find out what the worker needs and wants; working hard to help them keep their job; feeling comfortable with the way they were talked to; being well regarded and treated by workmates; feeling OK about telling EDGE if they are unhappy; and being better off for having registered with EDGE.

Family members rated EDGE very highly overall with an average satisfaction rating of 86% across 24 areas such as: really listening to their son or daughter; explaining things clearly to them; respecting their privacy; respecting their son or daughter's job interests and career goals; feeling OK telling EDGE if they are unhappy; explaining the Job Co-ordinator's role; their son or daughter being well treated by workmates and being better off for having registered with EDGE.

Employers rated EDGE very highly overall and above 84% in all 11 areas such as: matching the job duties to the worker; the quality of EDGE's on-the-job training; level of contact from EDGE; overall support provided by EDGE; the responsiveness of the Job Co-ordinator to requests for assistance.

EDGE STATS & FACTS:

OVER 39%
of all jobs secured
by **EDGE** are
'repeat business'

44
workers were
assessed and
exited as
independent
in 2015/2016

EDGE AT WORK - 30 YEARS OF SUCCESS

At a time when people are changing jobs as frequently as they change their underwear, Richard Townsend stands out from the crowd. He is living testament that on average, people with a disability have a greater tenure in the workplace than the general workforce. This year in 2016 as Richard celebrates his 50th birthday, he also reaches a momentous 30 year milestone working for Coles and then Bunnings under the Wesfarmers umbrella.

Richard can't remember a time when he hasn't loved to work. Even though pain is a daily reality and he has difficulty walking with ease, Richard has always been determined that he wasn't going to let this stop him. He couldn't wait to leave school and get a job.

Starting out at Coles Belmont in 1986, Richard proudly served 25 years before deciding a change of scenery was in order. Given his passion for gardening and landscaping, Richard longed to work for Bunnings. He couldn't have been happier when EDGE assisted him to transfer from Coles to his local Bunnings store in Belmont.

EDGE STATS & FACTS:

At June 30th 2016
EDGE was
supporting over
consumers

830

It is easy to see how the age old adage applies;

*"Choose a job you love,
and you will never work
a day in your life."*

Five years on and Richard is still living his dream. So enthusiastic is he about his job that he arrives to work at an hour early each and every morning and waits for his shift to start.

"Try as I might, I just can't keep him away" laughs Dean Fuller, Bunnings Belmont Operations Manager. Dean has a great deal of respect for Richard and counts him as one of his most valuable team members. "He takes great pride in his work and tackles each and every job with enthusiasm. We love having him around".

When asked what he loves most about his job, Richard can't decide. "I'm the jack of all trades here" shares Richard. He loves making his way around the entire store tidying the aisles, meeting with the reps and helping the customers. Whether at work or at play, Richard can always be found at Bunnings. Even when his shift ends he can't bring himself to leave right away. Richard then spends additional time shopping for more tools and gardening equipment to take with him for his many home maintenance projects.



*"He takes great pride in his
work and tackles each and
every job with enthusiasm".*

DEAN FULLER / BUNNINGS
OPERATIONS MANAGER

EDGE AT WORK - WHAT DAILY GRIND?

Alex Brewer finds fun in every day and is rarely seen without his captivating smile. It is hard to believe that there was a time, not long ago, when Alex admitted to being shy and self-conscious about his disability. Alex was born with Microtia, a deformity of the ear structure causing complete hearing loss in his right ear. Later diagnosed with dyspraxia and developmental delay, school wasn't always an easy place to fit in and Alex often struggled with being different.

Not long before completing his final year of school in 2013, Alex became the first person under 18 in Australia to be fitted with a magnetic bone anchored hearing aid that provided an immediate improvement to his hearing and ability to communicate. After leaving school Alex registered with EDGE and three weeks later was presented with an opportunity to apply for a position at Dôme Café Eastend. Although somewhat nervous at the prospect, he had a good feeling after meeting with the café manager and decided to go for it.

Alex believes the experience of working at Dôme has allowed his confidence to grow and agrees that it has provided the perfect platform for his vibrant personality to shine. He will tell you unequivocally that the people make his job most enjoyable and he looks forward to interacting and having a laugh with his colleagues and customers.

"There is no reason why I can't do it all!" Alex

And they love him too. Although officially employed at the Eastend café, Alex is highly sought after by other Dôme franchise managers. "They always ask for Alex" says Lisa Johnson, EDGE Job Coordinator. Lisa credits his popularity to his fun-loving and infectious personality. He readily accepts all shifts offered to him and thrives on meeting new people. "Alex is a shining example of a person with a disability who doesn't let it hold him back".

When Alex isn't busy working shifts from one Dôme café to another you will find him at TAFE learning to speak Australian Sign Language (AUSLAN) or volunteering his time at Australian organisation Hear for You to mentor high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

When asked what the future holds, Alex is full of ideas and excited about the opportunities that await him. In Alex's own words, having a job offers the "independence and freedom" to choose his own path, whether it be trying his hand at a supervisor role within Dôme, managing a franchise or even becoming a disability support worker and opening his own café that hires people with a disability? "Why not? is my motto now" asserts Alex. "There is no reason why I can't do it all!"



"Alex is a shining example of a person with a disability who doesn't let it hold him back."



Rusty Nelligan / Coles

EDGE
EmploymentSolutions

EDGE Employment Solutions

Subiaco

38 Hood Street WA 6008

Joondalup

Shop 9, 87 McLarty Street WA 6027

Cockburn Central

Shop 9, 817 Beeliar Drive WA 6164

Telephone (08) 9286 6600

www.edge.org.au

