



WHO IS THE GROW COMMUNITY?

SALLY, 22 - CORIO



Sally is a single mum who didn't finish year 10 and has never had a job before. Sally recently completed a business essentials course and is keen for part time work.

Sally's major barriers are not having any work experience or work-related referees. Sally also has social anxiety and knows that she does not interview well, even though she has been working on these skills with her local job provider.

JAMES, 42 - CORIO

James was an engineer for many years before he had to flee his home country due to war. James spent several years in a refugee camp before he was settled in Australia. Since coming to Australia, James has found it hard to find full-time ongoing work but has had several farm labouring jobs.

James speaks English but has a strong accent so sometimes people find it hard to understand him.



JENNY, 54 - WHITTINGTON



Jenny has four grown up children and is now looking to re-enter the workforce after 30 years at home. Before becoming a mother, Jenny completed a secretarial course and worked with a local accountant for three years as the office manager.

Jenny has applied for 40 jobs in the past month ranging from entry level office work to retail work. Jenny hasn't even been granted an interview. Although Jenny hasn't been in the workforce for 30 years, she still has lots of transferable skills.

CODY, 18 - COLAC

Cody has lived with 11 different families and been to five schools between the ages of 6 and 16. Cody has been living independently in transitional housing for the past two years and has just completed his senior VCAL.

Cody has depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and lacks positive adult role models in his life. Cody is really keen to work but has not been able to keep a job for more than three months.



BARRIERS & INFLUENCES

Rather than just looking at the individual barriers for a person looking for employment, we need to look at the influences on unemployment.

These are the things these individuals have no control over and have not contributed to. We can break these influences into three categories: environmental, systems and personal influences.

Environmental influences - refers to the community or geographical area within which a person lives:

The economic state of the community, the educational options and access to community and health services in their area such as: mental health services; alcohol and other drug services; and dental health.

Also, if the community is in a regional or remote area this is also an important factor, as these services are often not obtainable.

Systems influences - these don't just refer government systems but also organisational systems:

Online recruitment for example is making it difficult for people who don't have access to the internet and a computer. In some cases, the recruitment, induction and training process is all done online.

Traineeship and apprentice positions now have requirements that can make them feel out of reach for many, such as:

"You will have excellent references and a proven interest in this trade as well as a great work ethic. You must have reliable transport, a white card and a year 12 completion."

Personal influences - refer to a person's immediate environment such as their family situation, role models and immediate community:

These influences tend to shape a person significantly. For example, if no one in your family has ever finished year 12 or had a job then you are more likely not to finish school and be long-term unemployed.

BARRIERS

People (especially people from low socio-economic communities or families) can face multiple and complex barriers to work. Looking for work can be a soul-destroying undertaking for someone that is trying their hardest to find employment.

It is often stated that *'unemployed people don't have jobs because they just don't want to work'* and that might be the case for a small percentage but is not the case for most unemployed people.

When we break it down into the individual barriers that some of these people face, it is understandable that they can feel overwhelmed and disheartened.

Individual barriers to employment include:

- no access to internet
- mental illness
- lack of education
- lack of self worth
- physical health issues
- housing issues or homelessness
- no experience
- no licence
- bias
- social isolation
- criminal record

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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