

DXC Dandelion Program Extends Reach with LifeSherpa

CHALLENGE

Provide high levels of remote support to improve workplace integration and inclusivity for neurodiverse people.

SOLUTION

Employment support powered by the LifeSherpa support platform.

RESULTS

Scalable solution that virtually delivers executive functioning and mental health support to help neurodiverse talent succeed.

“Using LifeSherpa, I was able to support Gavin while working from another office, Gavin was able to manage his anxiety, gain an understanding of usual work practices and appropriately communicate with his supervisor.”

— Sharon Whip, Autism Support Consultant, DXC Dandelion Program

DXC Dandelion Program

DXC Technology is a \$25 billion IT company with 6,000 clients in 70 countries and a worldwide leader in corporate responsibility. To increase workforce participation for people on the autism spectrum, DXC established the Dandelion Program. The Program helps neurodiverse talent develop technical and executive functioning skills and achieve sustainable employment in high demand IT jobs.

Advancing Neurodiversity in the Workplace

Since its inception, the [DXC Dandelion Program](#) has assisted 140+ individuals across Australia and New Zealand with employment opportunities. Working with strategic partner [Untapped Group](#),

and collaboration between government, private organizations, academia and the community has made this possible.

The Program identifies and trains individuals who deliver cyber security, data analytics, software testing and other IT services to government agencies and commercial clients including banks. On-the-job support, training and education teaches neurodiverse individuals how to address key challenges in the workplace:

- **Managing Mental Health** – stress, anxiety, mood, blockers, emotional regulation
- **Executive Functioning** – focus, time management, following directions, skill building, team interaction
- **Life Skills** – reminders and checklists to help get things done

- **Job Performance** – timeliness, consistency, communication, adhering to policies and procedures

As the DXC Dandelion Program progressed, it needed to expand the pool of employers. But physically deploying on-site support to assist Program participants was not only expensive. It created dependencies on human interaction, which are often difficult to overcome.

Going Beyond Four Walls

The DXC Dandelion Team had to find a scalable, cost-effective way to deliver the necessary support to help neurodiverse employees become self-reliant in the workplace.

“The issue we needed to focus on was sustainable employment. We started sourcing best of breed world practice and tools to assist us achieve this goal. LifeSherpa is one of the platforms we identified that would help us **provide greater support and independence for individuals on the program**,” says [Michael Fieldhouse, Social Impact Practice Executive and Dandelion Program Executive](#).

In June of 2018, DXC launched a LifeSherpa pilot program with 10 individuals and 5 support personnel. Today, the DXC Dandelion Program uses LifeSherpa to support remote and “out-placed” Program participants in locations all across Australia.

LifeSherpa turns smart devices into virtual coaches, which assists neurodiverse individuals in overcoming executive function challenges. It also enables a distributed support model, allowing the DXC Dandelion Team to deliver one-on-one support remotely and cover the gaps between work and home—all to drive higher levels of independence while reducing anxiety.

The Right Assistive Tool

Versatile and configurable, LifeSherpa supports standard and individualized routines with notifications and reminder functions for

both support staff and Program participants. LifeSherpa developers work closely with DXC to customize the platform to meet the Program's needs.

Using LifeSherpa has given the DXC Dandelion Program the ability to help neurodiverse individuals gain work experience while improving their confidence and productivity through:

- **On-the-spot job coaching** and self-help tools
- **Secure communication** via in-app text, voice and video
- Emotional regulation management with **well-being status updates**
- **Skill-building tools** including daily routines, checklists and analytics to report progress
- **Job management tools**, procedures and tailored check-ins for work area and tasks

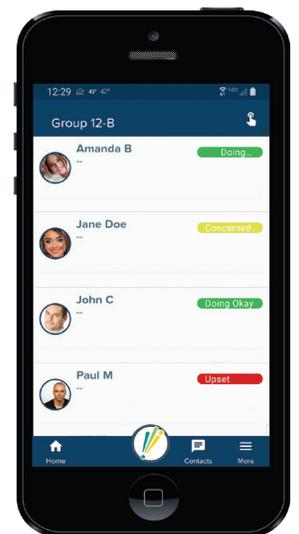
Fewer Workplace Incidences

The remote support enabled by LifeSherpa has helped the DXC Dandelion Program decrease on-the-job meltdowns and emotionally charged incidences by 30%.

With LifeSherpa, Autism Support Consultant Sharon Whip is better equipped to manage Program participants' anxiety and stress.

“LifeSherpa makes it easy for Program participants to keep in touch with me,” says Sharon. **The color-coded User Status function lets individuals tell me, with one tap, when there's a change in their emotional well-being. So, I can see in seconds if someone needs support.**

Green says doing okay,
yellow tells me upset or sad and
red means very upset.”



“Recently I quickly de-escalated several situations thanks to the User Status function,” explains Sharon Whip. “For example, I was in a meeting when a client, who I’ll refer to as “Gavin” changed his status to yellow. Through messaging, he said he was really anxious because a computer update was taking a long time and keeping him from his work. I explained the importance of updates and suggested he tell his supervisor what was happening. Five minutes later his status was back to green.”

“Because I was able to support Gavin while attending another meeting, Gavin was able to manage his anxiety, gain an understanding of usual work practices and appropriately communicate with his supervisor. LifeSherpa meant the difference between Gavin coping or having terrible anxiety. Without it, he would definitely have had to break from work or even leave for the day.”

Ever-Expanding Support Mechanisms

For the DXC Dandelion Program, LifeSherpa’s well-being status function, standard and individualized routines and ‘just in time’ training and assistance are only the beginning.



Future enhancement plans include end-to-end statics so participants can witness their own progress, increasing user autonomy for creating routines and exploring the integration of the autism-focused Mental Health Modules commissioned by DXC and developed by [La Trobe University](#).

“We are looking at this scalable and sustainable solution [LifeSherpa] to not only provide ongoing education and training but to improve integration and inclusivity in the workplace,” states Michael Fieldhouse.

To see how LifeSherpa can help your organization, request a demo [here](#).

About LifeSherpa

LifeSherpa is the digital support platform that makes life and work easier for everyone—manager or staff, neurodiverse or neurotypical. The company was founded by Doug Meeker, digital media and technology veteran and father of a son with autism. LifeSherpa grew out of Doug’s passion to help his son Scott, and others, meet life’s challenges.

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Untapped Group works in partnership with DXC Technology and their Dandelion Program to expand the breadth and reach of autism at work initiatives and develop a sustainable neurodiverse employment ecosystem.

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