

# Viola's Blog; My experience of the ODP Buddy Scheme

Ever wondered what support is available for people studying for an Operational Delivery Profession qualification? Look no further than this blog from Viola who tells us about her experiences and why she would recommend it;

"Always step into education", advised my Mum and my late Auntie.

The journey follows with resistance and acceptance. Any enthusiasm? It comes with change and knowing that nothing is permanent.

I started my Operational Delivery Profession (ODP) qualification while still in HM Revenue & Customs, I first completed level 3 then I was lucky enough to be able to apply for a CMI level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management.

As soon as I started the level 5 Diploma, I achieved a promotion and moved to Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). I knew that the course would be transferred which is one of the benefits of ODP.

On my arrival at DWP, I realised how difficult it would be to carry on studying whilst training for the new job. I also very soon realised that my office had not heard of ODP, what it even meant and more so what my course was about, so I got lost for a while.

However, I had the desire and passion to complete the course, I explained the details to my manager who accommodated my needs as long as I knew what I was doing. I relied heavily on the Internet, CMI pages, Cap premiership, Intranet, ODP website, management and work colleagues.

When I completed the course, all of my struggles above led to my decision to register to become a buddy both in DWP and also through the ODP Cross-Government Buddy Scheme.

My reason was simple; to work with others to help them achieve their qualification and to keep on strengthening my skills and knowledge.

We are now a team of eight, a few from within DWP and one from the Crown Prosecution Service. Every member who joins the team feels relieved and pleased to belong somewhere, we have all been in similar situations; being unsure how and where to start. Some people in the group have completed some papers and others had not started yet when they joined.

We have telekits monthly and have agreed on a few objectives such as sharing and proof reading to help everyone to get on track. Other objectives we agreed include:

- Motivating each other
- Supporting each other
- Being open minded

- Checking in on each other – (we call it a nudge)

This is going very well, that nudge the members give each other is always a reminder or reality check and it's also interesting to see members seeking each other's advice on specific questions.

I feel that using the brain storming method tool together is a big highlight, raising and discussing any issues is making it easier to communicate with one another.

Many members of the team have different skills, one of the members is an interviewer and success profile trained for higher grades therefore this enables us all to share her knowledge and advice.

However, the main one is having that platform where members express their fears, where they are in their studies, their obstacles and we discuss this together and come up with solutions.

Individually; this is strengthening my communication and leadership skills, I lead the team and organise the meetings. This experience and education led to a management opportunity in my office.

I feel a sense of satisfaction sharing my journey, experience, knowledge and how I overcame the obstacles I was facing.

**I would definitely recommend becoming a buddy, we all have different journeys and experiences and the more we have to share with each other the stronger we become as a profession and as human beings.**

It's a never-ending rewarding experience which can create positive change and vibe even in my personal life."

Viola Namugenyi

You can find out more about the Buddy Scheme here [ODP Buddy Scheme](#).

You can also explore how to connect with your cross-government colleagues on our Loans, Secondment and Interchange tool here [Listr](#).