

I had been unemployed for about 6 months due to the downturn in employment within a finance/banking environment. I was missing the working environment and the daily interaction with people. I was aware my skills were being wasted and that I did not have the opportunity to gain new skills. I didn't really have any direction or purpose to my day and was aware of time passing by.

I started to look on the internet at various organisations and found the Impetus website. Didn't really find the intranet useful, however Impetus were offering a drop in service, which I thought would be useful as I wanted to be able to speak to someone, who may be able to point me in the right direction. I went along to Intergen House. I spoke to a member of staff at Impetus and she suggested I look through the files to get an idea of what type of role was available and by what organisation. I was amazed at the number of opportunities available and also the variety of roles. I spent a couple of hours perusing the files and found several organisations in Brighton that needed volunteers to do book-keeping/administration. I also spoke to the member staff at Impetus regarding her role. The member of staff at Impetus said they were looking for more volunteers to assist with the drop in service. I applied for the role and was lucky enough to be taken on after having an interview.

Each week I would do a variety of hours in the office. No two days were the same. I had a very varied role, which included greeting and advising the public, up-dating the website, getting feedback from previous volunteers etc. I really enjoyed being part of the Impetus team and felt that I helped both people and local organisations. I loved being part of a work force again and being able to utilise my skills. I felt that volunteering gave me purpose to my day, together with gaining my confidence back. It also enabled me to justify my existence during my period of unemployment and gave me something to add to my CV. I believed I was giving something back to the community, instead of always taking, which gave me a great feeling.

I gained full time employment and therefore had to give up volunteering for the moment. I am keen to suggest to my employer, the possibility of giving something back to the community by having them allow me to have day release from my role. I have suggested to a number of friends that they become volunteers. Volunteering is very worthwhile and offers so many opportunities, for people to utilise their skills, gain experience, and add something extra and different to the CV.

Max, Volunteer