

Putting yourself in other people's shoes

'I was overwhelmed by how good it was! The training was very well constructed, productive and made everyone think,' says Shobhna A Pabari, manager and proprietor of Community Careline Services, Havering Ltd, a domiciliary care agency. 'Buz has a wealth of experience gained over the years and a unique way of putting things across. She helps you to put yourself in the shoes of people who have dementia.'

Shobhna found the training she undertook with Buz Loveday so stimulating and informative that she encouraged the organisation's human resources manager, Jan Crease, to take part.

'I absolutely agree that this training gives you a new insight into the world of dementia, Jan says. 'It has really enabled us to open the eyes of our staff.'

Jan and Shobhna believe it is Buz's truly person-centred approach that has made such a big difference to the way their staff are now working with service users with dementia.

'Buz has a knack of making everyone feel that they are important – which includes the people doing the training as well as the service-users. We try and model ourselves on her example when we deliver the training ourselves. I think this helps staff realise that all clients are individuals with personal needs and you have to reflect these in the care you give them,' Shobhna explains.

Jan found the exercises around compiling a person's life history very helpful. 'It's about finding out as much as you can about the service users, their family and their lifestyle. So you can create a care plan personalised to his or her needs,' she says.

It is not just service users who are benefiting from the effects of the training. Jan explains: 'Relatives can go through a lot of trauma because they feel they don't understand their loved ones anymore. Buz has given us information which we can share with relatives, to help them understand what the person is going through and the reasoning that lies behind their behaviour.'