

# RNIB recognises Tesco's drive to become an inclusive employer through the Visibly Better programme

**R N I B**  
Visibly Better  
Employer

We are delighted to recognise Tesco as a Visibly Better Employer. RNIB worked with Tesco looking at areas such as recruitment and increasing organisation wide staff knowledge about sight loss. Supporting Tesco to achieve the Visibly Better employer quality standard demonstrates the value that a diverse workforce offers, and that blind and partially sighted people can do a variety of different roles in varying industries by promoting real-life experiences.

## Richard Stanyard, A registered blind Tesco Store Manager shares his experience

Richard Stanyard, Store Manager at Tesco Express, age 32, was registered blind at birth with ocular albinism and nystagmus, which means that his eyes lack melanin (colour), involuntarily move back and forth, and he is unable to see things at a distance.



"I've always had glasses since I was a child. I stood out being the only partially sighted kid at school, the one who had special needs lessons. Growing up registered blind, I've always had to adapt, but this experience made me a very resilient person."

### Joining the retail sector

I have been in retail since leaving school at the age of 16. Since joining Tesco in 2010 I've done several different roles from shelf stacking to working as a Store Manager at Tesco Express. As Store Manager, I run the shop, manage colleagues and keep the store safe.

### Changing culture

When I first started work, you were expected to just get on with things – times have changed and people recognise that you need support. As an employer, Tesco is really supportive of its colleagues – managers want to find out what they can do differently to help you.

The partnership that Tesco has with RNIB is a really important one. Tesco wants to be a great place to work for all and that includes being a great employer for

anyone with sight loss. RNIB has looked at what we do well and areas where we need to do more. Earlier this year we achieved RNIB's Visibly Better Employer standard.

### **Key areas RNIB helped Tesco with:**

- Based on our recommendations Tesco launched their new careers website with new and improved accessibility features.
- Sharing RNIB's eLearning for Employers course with hiring managers. This helped to increase awareness of how to support existing staff and hiring candidates with sight loss.
- Providing access to RNIB resources which Tesco use to increase awareness of creating a more inclusive workplace . By sharing materials through internal communications to highlight key disability awareness days throughout the year.

### **Developing a supportive leadership style**

Tesco is introducing new leadership behaviours that encourage colleagues to be brave and curious. At Tesco we want everyone to be inclusive in their actions and to have the bravery, to ask "What can we do for you?" I think that's something more companies should do.

We're also supporting our management teams to understand disability better. The biggest workplace adjustment for me is that my manager understands I have a visual impairment and how

that might affect my role. My manager helps me come up with solutions. For example, I need to meet certain standards to run my store – if I've missed something my manager will check in with me first to see if I have been able to see everything properly.

I have four shift leaders that work directly for me, and I've helped them to understand my requirements. It's important to be open with my team so that they can support me in the right way and take care of anything that's needed.

### **Making the right adjustments and using the best equipment**

My role as Store Manager involves emailing, going through spreadsheets, and a lot of video calls. In-store, we use a lot of desktop PCs to do our role. But I struggled to use them, as I have to zoom in to be able to see what is on the screen, so Tesco has provided me with an iPad.

Using an iPad is great as it means I can zoom in on anything I want. Just having this tech has made a massive difference and changed the way I do things. If I can't read a piece of paperwork, then I can use the camera to take pictures of things and zoom in to see more. Having this as a resource has really helped me to be more effective in my role.

### **Encouraging professional development within the company**

I've just been accepted onto a programme called the 'Diverse Talent Community'. This programme is for talented colleagues from underrepresented groups at Tesco including any colleague like myself who identifies as disabled. By giving me access to support and development I hope to move to a bigger role in the future.

Programmes like this are key to increasing not just my own but others' confidence that you can get on and that being visually impaired shouldn't hold you back. I wouldn't call myself as a role model, but I am showing others who have sight loss that it's possible to get on. Hopefully, when the next partially sighted person comes along, they feel more confident and that nothing should hold them back!

## **Raising awareness with the Disability at Tesco Colleague Network**

Tesco offers the opportunity to get involved with things like the Disability at Tesco colleague network. I joined the network earlier this year – it's growing all the time. Being part of this has made a big difference and helped me feel more comfortable at work.

Everything the network does comes down to building knowledge and raising colleague awareness. We host events for colleagues to join in person or virtually. We also provide fact sheets and information about disabilities. Working with different partners such as RNIB has also really helped.

Since joining the network, I've volunteered to take part in workshops where we shared our own experiences of living with a disability. Through these conversations, I've learned a lot about people and that everybody somewhere is affected by a disability. Tesco is good at encouraging us to have these open conversations.

Every fortnight the network steering group meets and we discuss and build our plans for the year. By getting involved with the Disability Network

and talking about my disability, I feel that I have been able to help other disabled colleagues in a positive way. It felt like the right time for me to step up and be counted!

## **Breaking down barriers and leading change**

My next career goal is to move out of store into an office role. I want to be a catalyst for change in the disability community and encourage people with a disability to have the confidence to talk about it and to explain what help they need. I'm passionate about making a difference and building a better future for people who have a disability."

## **Tesco is committed to creating an inclusive workplace**

Toni McKay, Tesco Head of Diversity & Inclusion explains 'We're thrilled to have been awarded the Visibly Better Employer standard from RNIB. We're committed to ensuring that everyone's welcome at Tesco and that we are doing the work needed to make Tesco a truly inclusive workplace for all. We recognise that people with sight loss face many barriers to success at work, and with the RNIB's help we are excited to change that for our colleagues now and in the future.'

### **Get in touch**

If you are an employer looking to open up more job opportunities for blind and partially sighted candidates or confidently retain staff who experience sight loss, find out more about the Visibly Better quality standard, email, [VisiblyBetterEmployer@rnib.org.uk](mailto:VisiblyBetterEmployer@rnib.org.uk)