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Disability no barrier to success

BY JADE WITTMANN
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HE'S a month shy of completing a Certificate III in Financial Services and his employers sing his praises. He has a positive attitude, an interest in administration, accounting and IT and the qualifications to match. He also has schizophrenia.

Beaumont Hills resident Deniz

Erdem is one of many skilled people with a disability to find work through NOVA Employment at Rouse Hill.

He was hired by pet insurance administrator, Petsure, last October and has proved to be a highly valued member of the staff.

Operations manager Gerrad Hennessy said Mr Erdem was an excellent team member.

"He's fantastically reliable," he said.

"He has a good sense of humour, he's an excellent worker and honest as the day is long, so he's good to have around.

"He's had one sick day in the past eight or nine months, which is perfect for us because we're a small business and we need people to be reliable."

Administration team leader Robyn Regan said Mr Erdem impressed staff during his interview with what he knew about the company.

"He was very knowledgeable about Petsure," she said. "He rattled off all the statistics. It was very impressive.

"When we hired Deniz we were in the midst of building an administration team because of restructuring in the company so he was an ideal fit.

"It's a pleasure to be able to have nurtured him and helped him grow in an office environment."

Mr Erdem deals with the receipt of incoming mail, sorting and scanning mail into the company's system each day, archives and general office duties.

"This was like a traineeship," he said.

"It was excellent. They're real supportive and they know my condition.

"I started off with the basics and they added more tasks as I went.

"I'm really enjoying it. I'd stay here.

"There's a lot of growth in the company, especially with pet insurance growing rapidly. People are serious about their pets."

Mr Erdem has gained many qualifications including a Certificate IV in Accounting, Certificate III in Administration, a Certificate II in Information Technology and a security licence, RSA and RCG.

He plans to add to them in the near future.

"I'm doing a diploma in IT at home through distance education and next year I want to go to Open Universities as an undergraduate," he said.

NOVA Employment will hold an open day on Wednesday, September 28 at Rouse Hill High School, 105 Withers Road, Rouse Hill, 11am-1pm. Details: 8814 5076.



Positive experience: Deniz Erdem has made a success of the work role he gained through NOVA Employment. Picture: Natalie Roberts