



HOW TO work with VIPs

Getting a VIP along to your centre can help raise your profile and get the attention of local media. It's also a great draw for new visitors, and a real treat for established learners. You could even make a high-powered friend for life!

Here are our top tips for working with VIPs.

Find your VIP

If you know a local celebrity – brilliant! If not, do some research on Google and try approaching them via their agency or even on Twitter. It's very easy to find your local MP, Mayor or Councillor - get in touch with your Local Authority for the contact details of the Mayor and Councillors, or visit www.theyworkforyou.com to find the contact details of your MP.

Invite your VIP

Sending an email is quicker and easier than sending a letter, but making a phone call is better still as you can have a proper chat with your VIP. Think about the details of what you'd like them to see and do at your centre, and when you'd like them to come along. Remember, Friday is the day MPs spend in their constituencies, so it could be a good day to choose. Make sure you pick a day when you've got lots of learners in and lots of learning going on!

Think about what to do with your VIP

Always be on hand to meet your VIP personally when they first arrive at your venue, introducing yourself and explaining what your centre does, and why it's such a vital resource for the local community. It's a good idea to offer them a cup of tea too! You could get your VIP to officially open an event - like an open day, and say a few words about why they're there. Alternatively, you could keep things lower key and take them on a tour of the centre, introducing key staff, volunteers and star learners. If they're tech savvy they might even want to spend some time trying one of the Learn My Way courses, or join in on one of your classes - going round to chat to learners as they take part in activities.

Plan, plan, plan!

The last thing you want is for your VIP to come along to an empty centre so try to make sure you've got a full centre by encouraging your regular learners to bring a friend or even inviting a local group.

** Remember - Make sure your star learners are there to chat to your VIP about how far they've come!





Take some pictures

Always take pictures of your VIP visit so you can send them on to your local media, and display them in your centre. Local press and media love a VIP visit, so make sure they're on your guest list too, and give them as much notice as you can. Just remember to warn your VIP that the press will be attending!

Stay in touch

Don't let the end of the visit be the end of your relationship with your VIP. Send a thank you note after the event, along with some pictures, and keep them updated on the progress of learners they met, and invite them back again for another event or visit!

