

Prison Threshold Dialogue (4) Cycle 1 on 19 February 08

7 Prisoners, 1 Governor, 1 Prison Officer and 1 from PD participated in the dialogue

'I know I should be pleased for him (cell-mate released on conditional discharge), but I've had four pad mates go out recently and I thought I was just going to settle down. It does get you thinking when your mates keep going out.' (Offender)

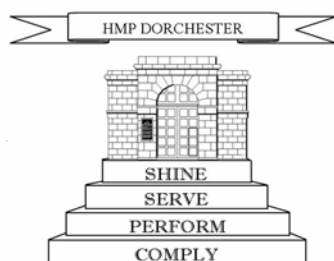
'We've got enough self-confidence to speak up here. I don't think everyone's like that though, there's lots of people in prison who won't speak up, won't ask for the help.' (Offender)

'When I'm doing a board or making a decision based on someone's offending history, I'm looking for trends. How long has it been since their last offence? Has the severity of the offending gone down? Those are the kind of things I'm looking at.' (Staff)

There's very tight assessment process for ETS. If you're the wrong type of person it can actually make you much worse. Say you're an armed robber for instance. You've already got skills in focused thought processes. ETS is designed to help people who've offended on impulse or without thinking all the consequences through first.' (Staff)

'I went down to Poole Probation, I'd been being supervised for a year and I tried to play along and do everything right. But when it came to it, they wrote me a shocking pre-sentence report – the judge said he'd never seen one like it.' (Offender)

Theme: Normal Life Stuff



'For me it's about life skills, money management, cooking. How to shop in Tesco to make my money last. That's the normal life stuff that I need help with. I've been in care and custody most of my life so I've never had to do those things for myself.' (Offender)

'I got my Carat worker to write me a reference. It doesn't have any weight in court, but it can be used to show a different side to the story. You have to balance out whatever that negative report is saying.' (Offender)

'The thing that amazes me is that, as a member of staff, if I write something about you on file which could affect you in the future – you have an automatic right to see what's been written about you. I will write negative things and I'm prepared to go face to face with people to explain myself. I don't see any of that happening here though. Probation don't seem to operate under those rules.' (Staff)

'I want to go on an Outward Bound course – normally that's for kids but they should do it for adults. Anything that gets me out and about. I used to work for The National Trust and that was great. I'm not fussy - send me out clearing scrub or picking litter off beaches, pay me a wage and I'll do it all day every day.' (Offender)

'This prison has really shocked me. I'm used to being at big London nicks where no one gives a ****. Staff in this jail are really on the ball – getting on, doing their jobs properly and trying to get the best help to you that they can. It's been an eye-opener – I don't know what else to say.' (Offender)

The next Prison Threshold Dialogue will take place on Tuesday 26th February @ 2.00pm in the Chapel, HMP Dorchester