

## Embracing new standards in visitor care

We collaboratively developed a customer and visitor care training programme with their staff to engage them in delivering the best possible service as well as empower them to train any future staff members.

### Objectives

The Victoria and Albert Museum doubled its visitor figures when they introduced free entry, welcoming more than two million people. The aim was to develop a customer and visitor care training programme to support their 200 front of house staff members.

### Approach

Steps worked closely with the V&A to develop a half-day, front-of-house training programme. This ran 12 times, every other Monday morning, at the V&A's training centre - and also at the museum's Covent Garden and Bethnal Green sites - with up to 12 staff attending each session.

*"All of these people work on rosters and rotas, which made it difficult to take them out of the workplace for training,"* said James Wilson, training and development manager at the V&A. *"To get around this, we wanted to develop a half-day session which could run regularly."*

*"We developed a good working relationship with Steps. Together we evaluated and adjusted the session to respond to our training needs."* James Wilson, Training & Development Manager, V&A

### Outcomes

Following the training, the V&A became one of the first museums to win the Investors in People accreditation.

*"The session was very effective in helping our staff with the training and practical help they needed to give visitors the best possible service when they come to the museum,"* said James Wilson.

The V&A has now evaluated the results from each of the visitor care training sessions. A focus group comprising participants from each session will incorporate all the material gathered into one set of standards and behaviours for visitor care which will be adopted museum-wide.

*"When new people join, we will be able to show them the standards of care we expect from our staff when dealing with visitors,"* said James Wilson. *"We believe these will have a big impact because they will be standards that the staff themselves have developed."*

As a result of this training, James Wilson adds that the V&A is now looking at extending the visitor care training and it is also introducing a full front-of-house development programme encompassing wider issues.