

Hello my name's Claire. I'm one of the Area Managers in the North for Co-op Food.

I'm Adam, Store Manager of West Point in Leeds.

My name's Steve, I'm the Store Manager of our Co-op store in Eccles Hill.

Hi, I'm Damian, I'm a Team Leader at West Point in Leeds.

I'm Wendy Oakes, a Learning Facilitator for the North area.

Claire: as a business we're currently trialling headsets as a solution that can give us many good outcomes in store. The main three of these being store safety, and colleague safety while they're at work. Efficiency in store, so speeding up tasks where we've got multiple journeys being completed for tasks with a small action. And customer service, at the minute some of our service, particularly at the tannoy, can come across as quite unprofessional and it can take us a long time to get a product for a colleague. So those are the three main reasons why we're looking to implement a solution like headsets.

Steve: I believe that the perception from colleagues is that they feel vulnerable and unsafe, especially on a late night and when working one on one.

Adam: currently I feel like colleagues might feel unsafe during one on one shifts, particularly on the late shifts. There are a lot of issues where colleagues are having to do tasks that take them longer because they're having to do a lot of walking around store, particularly in larger stores.

If there's a shoplifter in store or if someone's acting suspiciously, it's very hard to make the rest of the team aware. So you'd be doing a lot of running about and doing a lot of running around. It takes up a lot of your time.

Claire: being able to offer a solution, a practical solution, which isn't the whole answer to colleague safety, but feels like we're making steps on the journey to helping colleagues feel safer in store is something that I'm really passionate about and really proud to be trialling.

Steve: we've been trialling headsets and we have been for the past four weeks now, the idea is that every member of staff picks one up at the beginning of their shift, wears it throughout the shift and then at the end of it they hand it back in and sanitize it with the wipes we have to hand.

Wendy: if any customers come into the store and colleagues don't feel safe, they know that just by touching the headset they have communication with other members of staff in the store.

They can speak to the trainer while the colleague is learning, so when they feel confident to be on their own they can just press a button and ask questions about what they're doing.

Damian: between the shop floor and the back we don't have to drag out back stock all the time, if we see a gap we can just call through to someone in the back to see if we've got that product. Especially if a customer is asking for it, it cuts out a load of time. If a shoplifter is here we can communicate with each other and decide what we're going to do in that situation.

Steve: they know that they can communicate with each other, they can immediately let each other know if anything happens, or if someone comes in who doesn't look particularly friendly.

Adam: I must admit at first it took a little bit of getting used to, even just wearing it throughout the day on your head. It feels a little bit alien at first, but after the six months have gone by we've seen a massive improvement, even in efficiency and productivity in store.

It's made a massive change in the way our colleague feel safety-wise, especially in the evening.

Colleague on the till: I feel a lot safer, I'm on my own a lot of the time at the front of store, so now I can get in touch with people a lot easier.