Addressing Barriers to Employment

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University of Montana Rural Institute
www.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition
What Is a Barrier?
Examples of Barriers to Employment

- Personal care needs
- Challenging behaviors
- Different ways of communicating
- Special health care needs
- Difficulty asking for needed supports
- Transportation
- Fear (safety, loss of medical/SSI benefits, etc.)
- Biases, stigma, misperceptions, philosophies and beliefs
Archived Webinars

http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/trainingcalend.asp

- Self-Management Strategies for People to Live and Work Independently
- Technology to Be Independent at Home, School and Work
- In It for the Long Haul--Long-term Supports and Employment
- Getting from Here to There--Transportation Planning and Options
- Social Security Work Incentives
Transportation Options

- Senior transit
- Paratransit
- Ride share
- Carpool
- Pay others for gas
- PASS to purchase vehicle for work
- Telecommuting
- Vans/buses owned by religious or other institutions
Transportation Resources

- Easter Seals' Project ACTION (Accessible Community Transportation in Our Nation)
  http://www.projectaction.org/
- Check with local Vocational Rehabilitation, independent living center, disability agencies
- Connect with local and state transportation departments and authorities
- http://www.montanapublictransportation.com/
What drives me up the wall is the intentional teaching of fear of having any kind of meaningful life because “you will decompensate” or “you are stress sensitive.” The most stressful thing in the world is being a couch potato with nothing to do, nowhere to go, and no one to talk to.

*Ed Knight, Ph.D.*
How to Handle Fear

- Information, information, information!
- U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy
  - http://www.dol.gov/odep/
- Social Security Work Incentives
  - http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/generalinfo.htm
  - http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/archived/archived-publications/rural-fact-sheets
Benefits of Employment

- Provides structure, routine, and regular activity; a positive focus
- Offers the opportunity for social affiliation, networking, and tapping into informal support systems
- Gives a sense of purpose and a chance to “give back” to others (reciprocity)
- Helps shape identity and increases confidence
- A paycheck!!!
- Inclusive communities; sharing unique skills
It All Starts with Attitude

- Address biases, stigma, misperceptions, philosophies and beliefs with education and information
- Do YOU believe people with disabilities can be successfully employed in their communities?
- If you have a disability, do you know how to describe it? What supports/accommodations you need and how to describe them? Do you believe you can work?
- Employment First: Employment is the first priority and preferred outcome of people with disabilities.
- “The premise that all citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life.”
  - Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2015
My name is Mathalia Stroethoff. My Adult Life started June 2013!
Riding the bus.

At home before I say `Goodbye’ I remember:

• my destination cards
• my Griz Card and my I.D. Card
• my phone
• my house key
• my water bottle
Destination Cards.

I ride Mountain Line bus and U-Dash. The buses are loud and my voice is soft.

I swipe my Griz Card and then I show my destination card. The bus drivers think my card is a good idea!

I look out the window and remember to pull the cord just before my stop.
Working independently.

- I work at The Writing Center entering log-in slips on the computer.
- The Writing Center is a very busy place with lots of students receiving help on their papers. The busier they are, the more log-in slips for me to enter.
- Sometimes the computer gets stuck and I have to ask for help.
I use my `I want help` power card because I do not like to interrupt a tutoring session.

I do not need to use it very often but it is on hand when the computer shuts down and I can’t fix it.

Do you see the corner of it hiding in my task list folder in the picture? It is pink.
Running Errands.

- I deliver envelopes around campus.
- I visit new buildings and new people.
- My mom shows me on my iPad.
- The pictures help me to remember.
- Sometimes I use a card to ask for help.
Isaac Baldry
Rural Institute Consumer Advisory Council, MYTransitions
Region 1 Facilitator, National Public Speaker
Proloquo2Go for Communication

✔ Spoken presentations
✔ Texting
✔ Emailing
✔ Facebook
Biggest Challenge: Phone Calls!
Solutions:
1. Program responses
2. List email as preference.
Communication
Problem?
What is it that I am expected to do?
Becomes How is it that I do this?
Focus on Doing!
My Needs:

- Information
  - Details about expectations
  - Timeframe
  - Details on work environment
- Time to think through
- Share my understanding
- In writing for clarity

Work Strengths:

- Organized
- Well prepared
- On Time- start, end, and completion of work
- Thorough
People as barriers: I choose....not!
Tracy Fillbach and Randy Cook
Working at the Newspaper

- Wagon helps me haul the papers
- Job coach assists in the wintertime
Transportation Options

- Friends
- Bus
- Walking
Advice?

With good support you can live on your own, work and have fun. If I can do it other people can do it!
Customized Employment

We aren’t reacting to the labor market, we are creating it.
Two Distinct Approaches

**Labor Market Job Development:** Responding to the needs of employers with applicants who are “qualified” to meet those general needs.

**Customized Job Development:**
Discovering the “strengths, needs and interests” of job seekers and proactively negotiating a job description that meets both the job seeker’s and employer’s specific.
The traditional path to employment...
The traditional path to employment assumes competition:

- Job openings
- Job description
- Skills and experiences required
- Job application
- Interview
- Compete for opening
Customized Employment means individualizing the employment relationship between a job seeker and a specific employer in ways that meet the needs of both.

A Value Exchange

A job seeker brings something of value to the employer and

The employer needs what the job seeker has to offer
We are not looking for job openings...

We are working with employers to identify their unmet needs and to develop mutually beneficial solutions
Unbundling demand

Employers have typically met needs by bundling demands into job descriptions.

Job seekers with complex lives often don’t have the “whole package” to offer.

Customized Employment allows employers to “unbundle” demand and to take advantage of discrete competencies.
Areas of Employer Benefit

Unmet Workplace Needs:
This area focuses on tasks that need to get done but are not getting done in the way the employer would like. It also can include tasks that have not been performed but need to be.

Tasks better performed by others:
This area focuses on aspects of jobs that might better be performed by others at a lower pay grade. This option can directly save money for employers.

Specific benefit to enhance business:
This area focuses on workplace needs for additional productivity in specific tasks. It must be matched with job seeker’s specific competencies.
Why Do a Tour?

- To identify unmet needs of the employer the job seeker can meet
- To verify the ideal work conditions are present
- To identify available supports within the workplace
Developing a Job

Identifying Unmet Needs

- Observe:
  - Busy areas
  - Things left unfinished in a work area
  - Stacks of items
  - Faces of workers for frustration or hurried behaviors
Developing a Job

Identifying Unmet Needs

- **Listen:**
  - To workers describe what they do

- **Ask:**
  - Are there things left undone?
  - Can things be done better or more efficiently?
Referrals & Linkages

**Referrals:** A referral is a recommendation or direction offered by an employer or other respected figure that assists in getting an appointment and making a deal.

**Linkages:** A linkage is any connection or relationship between any and all the parties related to the job seeker that might be used to enhance the chances of successful job development.
The Portfolio

- Originally a job development and representational tool used to negotiate Customized Employment
- Also used at IEP meetings and in other settings to introduce an individual
- Excellent tool for describing health care needs, especially when transitioning to adulthood
- Use with younger children…teach and develop health literacy, self-advocacy
Why a Portfolio?

- Allows for self-advocacy and self-determination
- Facilitates communication
- Tool to ease the transition to handling one’s own affairs
- Eases the navigation of services
- Describes impact of disability
Skills and Attributes

- Works as part of a team
- Personable
- Greets people by name and remembers people’s personal info
- Follows procedures and work rules exactly
- Great work ethic
- Organized
- Contributing community member
- Works until the job is done
- Enjoys public speaking
- Loyal
- Focuses on tasks and works at steady pace
Tasks Martin can do for your business:

- Data entry
- Quality check
- Stock shelves
- Track inventory
- Organize
- Alphabetize
- Run cash register
- Run errands and deliveries
- Read to people
- Facilitate activities
- Take messages and answer phones
- Make reminder phone calls
- Conduct surveys and solicit feedback
- Promote products
- Sales
Conditions of Employment

- Likes to work with others
- Avoid isolation
- Avoid smelly places
- Avoid food
- Looking for an environment where it is valuable to know and remember names and people
- I want to enjoy the work and be successful
- Works well with coworkers and customers
- Steady worker
My wheelchair is very well-fitted for my needs. I can reach to the ceiling. I can get into my closet for dishes. I can open the refrigerator and freezer. I have an elevator lift, right and left leg lifts, and tilt on my wheelchair.
This is my ECO talker.
Life is a Journey…

- The first job, business, apartment, relationship, etc. doesn’t have to be ideal
- Take a chance…try things, gain experience
- Not every journey, no matter how carefully planned, will go smoothly – allow for changes in direction
Questions?

http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/
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