



LEAD CENTER

Alternative Assessment Strategies to Open Doors to Employment for Youth: Discovery and Group Discovery

NAWDP Youth Summit
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TODAY'S SPEAKERS

Rebecca Salon, PhD.

LEAD Center, Project Director
National Disability Institute

Jamie Robinson

LEAD Center, Workforce Subject Matter Expert
National Disability Institute



The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD) is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations led by **National Disability Institute** with funding from the **U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy**, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11.



LEAD CENTER MISSION

- ▶ To advance sustainable individual and systems level change that results in improved, competitive integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency outcomes for individuals across the spectrum of disability.



OBJECTIVES

Participants in this session will:

- ▶ Gain a better understanding of alternative approaches for assessing the capabilities, interests, and ideal conditions for employment for youth with barriers to employment that lead to a better job match and job retention
- ▶ Explore Discovery, Guided Group Discovery & Self-Guided Discovery as approaches and strategies that promote success and represent best practices for working with youth with and without disabilities
- ▶ Identify formal and informal support available for youth from public and private sources
- ▶ Discuss successes and barriers faced by youth and workforce professionals in achieving employment outcomes and economic self-sufficiency



TRADITIONAL JOB SEARCH APPROACH

- ▶ Employers
 - ▶ Write and post job descriptions
- ▶ Jobseekers:
 - ▶ Fill out applications
 - ▶ Send resumes
 - ▶ Interview
 - ▶ Wait



"I'm looking for a job in customer service. So, I'm distributing my resume."

This is a very competitive process.

What are some of the pros and cons of using a traditional approach to employment?



CUSTOMIZED JOB SEARCH

- ▶ Think about some situations that might require someone to focus on a customized job search.
- ▶ What are some of the pros and cons to customizing your job search?



TRUE OR FALSE?

No matter how someone finds a job, just about everyone customizes their job after they have worked for a while.



DISCOVERY IS:

- ▶ A process a job seeker goes through to figure out and identify his/her own needs and interests as well as what an employer might need.
- ▶ Strengths-based and can include self-assessments, interviews with family and friends, and even informational interviews with employers.



DISCOVERY REQUIRES YOU TO:

- ▶ Be open and honest with yourself and others
- ▶ Focus on what you do well, the environment where you feel most successful and the tasks you enjoy
- ▶ Take personal responsibility for your job search and build a personal job search network



CAREER DEVELOPMENT PHASES

- ▶ Assessment/Exploration
- ▶ Education/Training
- ▶ Active Job Search
- ▶ Retention/Advancement/Job Change
- ▶ Leisure/Recreational/Social
- ▶ Other due to Life Challenges, Crises, etc.

PHASES CHANGE OVER TIME!



BUILDING A JOB SEARCH TEAM

▶ A job search team is a group of people who you can rely on (who you know well and trust) for job-related advice, support and feedback:

- ▶ Family
- ▶ Friends
- ▶ Teachers
- ▶ Counselors
- ▶ Neighbors
- ▶ Others



THE DISCOVERY PROCESS LEADS TO A BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

- ▶ A Blueprint for Employment :
 - ▶ Summarizes what you learned about yourself during the discovery process
 - ▶ Provides you with some structure as you take your first (or next) step towards employment



BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

SECTION 1



Identify your team

JOB SEARCH NETWORK OF SUPPORT		
<i>Person</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Contact information</i>

SECTION 1



BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

SECTION 2

Contributions: What you have to offer

ALL ABOUT YOU	
INTERESTS	SKILLS
TASKS	POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS
CONTRIBUTIONS	CONDITIONS

SECTION 2



EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS

ACTION ORIENTED	METICULOUS
AMBITIOUS	ORGANIZED
APPROACHABLE	PATIENT
CONFIDENT	POSITIVE/UPBEAT
COOPERATIVE	PUNCTUAL
CREATIVE	RESOURCEFUL
DEPENDABLE	RESPONSIBLE
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR	SELF-MOTIVATED
FLEXIBLE	TEAM-ORIENTED
HARDWORKING	WORKS WELL UNDER PRESSURE



BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

SECTION 3

Consider issues around disability and other complex life circumstances

CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT	ACCOMMODATIONS, DISCLOSURE AND FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

SECTION 3



DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF WORK & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (INCLUDING PREFERENCES)

- ▶ When it occurs – time
- ▶ What you do – tasks
- ▶ Interactions – people, email, phones
- ▶ Pacing – speed
- ▶ Environment – outside, inside, noise, quiet
- ▶ Expectations – supervisor, co-workers, customers
- ▶ Communication – sending & receiving information



OTHER CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT?

What are
condition of employment
that you might want to explore?



BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

SECTION 4

Taking action

ACTION ITEMS			
<i>I will</i>	<i>I will ask for support from...</i>	<i>By when?</i>	<i>Complete (✓)</i>
1.			<input type="checkbox"/>
2.			<input type="checkbox"/>
3.			<input type="checkbox"/>
4.			<input type="checkbox"/>
5.			<input type="checkbox"/>
6.			<input type="checkbox"/>
7.			<input type="checkbox"/>
8.			<input type="checkbox"/>
9.			<input type="checkbox"/>
10.			<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 4



WHY DO YOU THINK...

....that the Discovery process avoids discussing and describing jobs by job title?



ANOTHER DISCOVERY APPROACH

- ▶ **IDENTIFY CAREER DEVELOPMENT PHASES and RATIONALE**
- ▶ **CREATE A LIST** identifying specific/marketable tasks, potential jobs, and/or life activities -- keeping in mind the settings and environments well suited to the **individual's** interests, attributes and stated goals.
- ▶ **IDENTIFY** local employers (companies) and/or community partners (organizations and people) to explore and **CONSIDER** your options for engagement (e.g., job lead, informational interview, site visit/assessment, work trial, OJT, volunteer opportunity, social/recreational activity, etc.)
- ▶ **DETERMINE** the people/resources to be part of the individual's support team.
- ▶ **NEXT STEPS & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** With and/or on behalf of this individual (e.g., arranging for an informational interview (tour), develop a task list of employer needs you observed that the job seeker could do; identify additional contracts/ideas/leads for potential opportunities AND learn more about the job seeker.



1 FACTOR PREDICTING POST-SCHOOL CAREER SUCCESS:

WORK EXPERIENCE IN HIGH SCHOOL



#2 FACTOR PREDICTING POST-SCHOOL CAREER SUCCESS:

SUPPORTS TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT



WHAT COUNTS AS WORK EXPERIENCE?

Any activity that puts youth in the workplaces and offers opportunity to learn about careers, jobs and work behavior

Work Experiences include:

- ▶ Job shadowing
- ▶ Job sampling
- ▶ Internships
- ▶ Apprenticeships
- ▶ Paid jobs (part or full time; part of the curriculum or not; during or after school)



WHEN IDENTIFYING INTERESTS

Don't Forget

EXPOSURE

PRECEDES

INTEREST



DIFFERENT APPROACHES FOR PEOPLE WHO FACE SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

- ▶ Place and Train vs. Train and Place
- ▶ Negotiating a job description with tasks that a person CAN do vs. trying to “fit” them into an existing job description
- ▶ Making the upfront investment in Discovery or another form of assessment to better ensure that a job is a good match vs. the Place and Pray model
- ▶ Figuring out ways to support the person long-term in a job that is a good fit, with one or more people in their support network



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT (CE)

- ▶ Customized employment (CE) is a universal strategy designed to personalize the employment relationship between an employer and employee to meet the needs of both.
- ▶ CE creates an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate or employee and the identified business needs of an employer.

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/CustomizedEmployment.htm> and
<http://www.leadcenter.org/employment>



WIOA, FOR THE FIRST TIME, DEFINES CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

- ▶ Definition of customized employment (Title IV):
 - ▶ Competitive integrated employment
 - ▶ Based on individual determination of strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability
 - ▶ Designed to meet specific needs of the individual and employer
 - ▶ Carried out through flexible strategies



CE OFFERS A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO JOB DEVELOPMENT AS WELL

- ▶ 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 applicants and negotiating a job description that meets both the applicant’s and employer’s specific needs.



CE CIRCUMVENTS A COMPARATIVE AND MORE COMPETITIVE APPROACH

Traditional job development strategies:

- ▶ Vocational Assessment
- ▶ Resume development
- ▶ Interview practice
- ▶ Responding to posted jobs (workforce system, posted ads, Craig's List, etc.)
- ▶ Applications and Interviews

A Customized Approach:

- ▶ Discovery
- ▶ Profiles that may include portfolios, picture or video resumes
- ▶ Informational interviews/connections
- ▶ Matching of skills and employer needs
- ▶ Employment proposals



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT: A UNIVERSAL HUMAN RESOURCES BEST PRACTICE

“We saw first-hand how customization fosters a workplace that is happier and more engaged, and how organizations achieve marketplace advantage through improved employee performance and productivity. Why? Because when jobs are customized to individuals...people’s work tasks become better aligned with their actual strengths.”

Susan Cantrell & David Smith. (2010). Workforce of One: Revolutionizing Talent Management Through Customization. (p. 6-7)



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT: A UNIVERSAL HR BEST PRACTICE (CONT'D)

“The great organizations of today and tomorrow capitalize on difference and they provide supporting structures to enable individuals to bring out their best at work.”

“Improving how people perform through customized work experiences could even be considered the “last” competitive advantage, one that’s thus far untapped.”

Susan Cantrell & David Smith. (2010). Workforce of One: Revolutionizing Talent Management Through Customization. (p.8, 14)



WHAT ARE NEGOTIATED JOBS?

- ▶ Identifies needs of employers that match the skills and interests of a job seeker.
- ▶ Job creation removes the job seeker from the comparative process by focusing on tasks that could benefit the business.
- ▶ A proposal is developed to address how job seeker can meet needs of employer.
- ▶ The employer only has to decide if this individual can meet one or more unmet need.



DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF WORK & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (INCLUDING PREFERENCES)

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COMPONENTS OF A CUSTOMIZED APPROACH

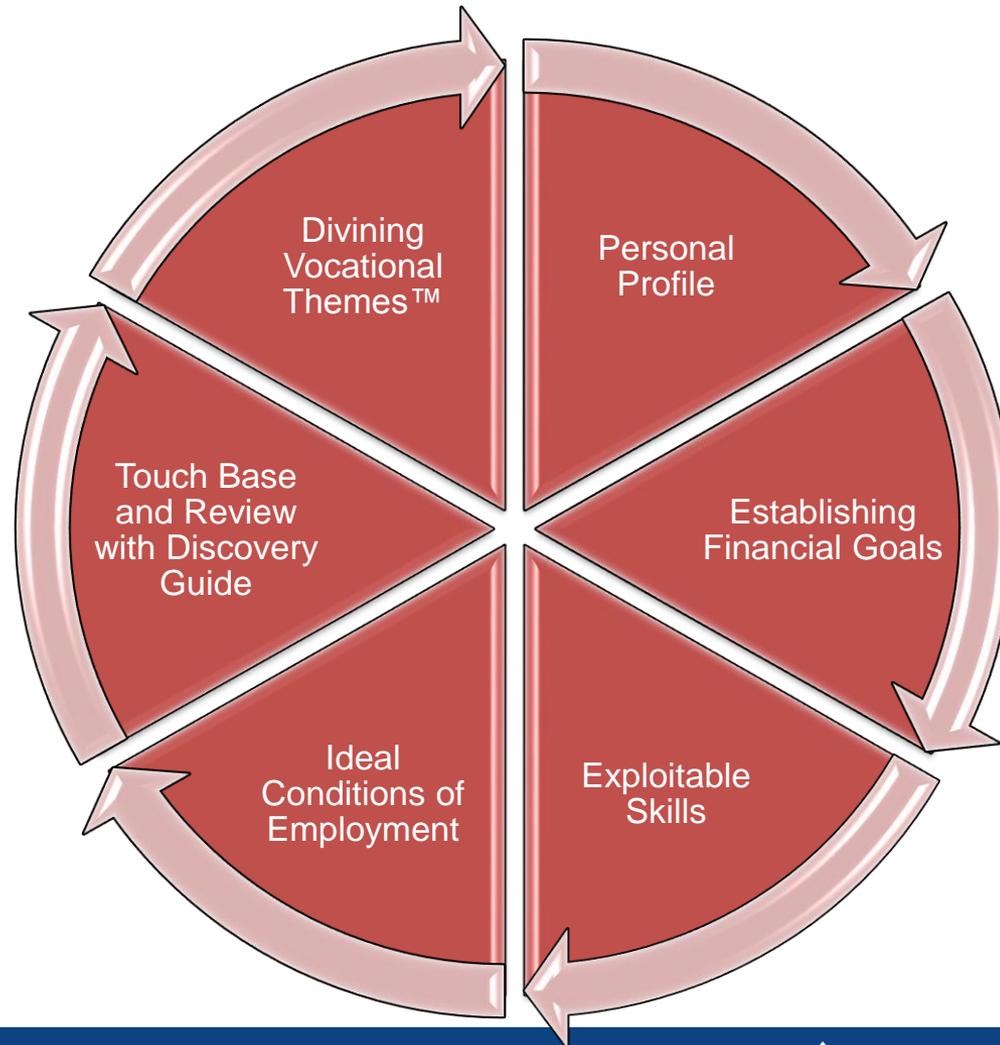
- ▶ Discovery (Gathering Information)
- ▶ Development of a Profile (Written summary of what was learned in Discovery)
- ▶ Development of a Customized Employment or Job Search plan
- ▶ Engage in Local Research and conduct Informational Interviews (Discovering employer and community needs)
- ▶ Propose employment opportunities or, for self-employment, assess business feasibility
- ▶ Always take advantage of the person's networks and your own



THE PHASES OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT



PHASE 1: DISCOVERING PERSONAL GENIUS™



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

- ▶ APSE (Association for Persons in Supported Employment)
www.apse.org
- ▶ Marc Gold & Associates
www.marcgold.com
- ▶ Griffin-Hammis Associates
www.griffinhammis.com
- ▶ Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)
<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/CustomizedEmployment.htm>
- ▶ TASH
<http://tash.org/>
- ▶ TransCen
<http://www.transcen.org>



WHAT CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Offer assistance and accommodations to all customers rather than just to a particular population.
- ▶ Make information on all services available to all customers, avoiding assumptions that certain people may not be interested in some services.
- ▶ Provide choices (e.g., technology; physical settings; assessment approaches and tools; on-line, face-to-face and self-directed approaches; accommodations for learning styles; etc.)



WHAT ELSE CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Eliminate unnecessary complexity and/or contacts
- ▶ Offer accommodations to everyone for literacy and language needs (e.g., include graphics, color-coding, larger print, etc.)
- ▶ Create on-line or video-taped versions of forms and materials, including orientation information



RESOURCES

- ▶ On the www.leadcenter.org site:
 - ▶ **FAQs: Using Customized Employment's Discovery and Group Discovery Models to Promote Job Seeker Success in American Job Centers** at http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable_version/CE-and-Group-Discovery-FAQs.pdf
 - ▶ **Customized Employment State Resources** on <http://employmentfirst.leadcenter.org>
 - ▶ **Webinars on the Youth Provision of WIOA from a Disability Perspective**, on Customized Employment (Introduction and [Beyond the Basics](#)) and more.
- ▶ **ODEP Webpages on Customized Employment** at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/CustomizedEmployment.htm/>



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ **DEI Technical Assistance Project** <http://www.dei-ideas.org/>
- ▶ **Disability and Employment Community of Practice** provides disability and employment resources for the public workforce system, including promising practices to promote the positive employment outcomes of persons with disabilities.
<http://disability.workforce3one.org>
 - ▶ For background information on the DEI:
https://disability.workforce3one.org/page/tag/dei_project
 - ▶ For the American Job Center Access Guide:
<https://disability.workforce3one.org/command/view.aspx?look=2001405840432475887&mode=info&pparam>
 - ▶ For the American Job Center Access 30-Second Training Series:
<https://disability.workforce3one.org/view/1001403833465878171/info>
- ▶ **Job Accommodation Network (JAN)** – <http://askjan.org>
- ▶ **ADA National Network** – <http://adata.org/static/contactus.html>



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Rebecca Salon

Project Director

rsalon@ndi-inc.org

Jamie Robinson, Workforce

Subject Matter Expert

jrobinson@ndi-inc.org



QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SESSION!

