

Mentorship as a Way to Increase Sustainable Integrated Employment Outcomes



Who were the partners in the development of this model:

- **Dane County High Schools**
- **Long Term Support Funder: Dane County Dept. of Human Services**
- **Division of Voc. Rehabilitation (DVR)**
- **Local Businesses**

Dane County's Transition Policy for HS Graduates with Developmental Disabilities

- Created through parent advocacy in early 1980's when integrated supported employment was first introduced.
- Provided continuity of service to sustain the support needed to keep the grad successfully employed at his/her jobs.

Policy Impact: Student/Family and Schools

- Motivates student and parents to expect community employment as the outcome of public education
- Enlists schools as a vital partner in securing employment prior to exiting high school.
- Highlights the need to have trained transition teachers who are skilled at job development and job retention
- Requires the Long Term Support Funder (i.e. Dane County) to partner well with schools and families so that job placements by schools are sustainable over time.

What do we mean by Sustainable Jobs?

- Highest level of independence possible.
- Highest level of community integration possible.
- Least dependence upon paid supports possible.
- Reliable follow-along and support to ensure job retention.

What are the biggest threats to sustainable jobs?

- Bad job matches that require over use of on-site job coaching
- Inadequate individualized systematic instruction
- Poor follow along support that leads to job loss

Mentoring that Focuses on Two Key
Areas:

Customized Job Development
and
Job Retention

Finding a Mentor

- Competent and confident with experience
- Search among pool of recently retired agency directors/staff or transition teachers
- Consider asking your best agency to free up a staff member to mentor staff from other agencies (if rapport is good and competition not too great)

I. Mentoring that Focuses on Customized Job Development

- Good job development/job matching starts with good assessment information
- Virtually impossible to customize position without that information
- School programs have the opportunity to generate great assessment information through their vocational training programs
- Look at information across environments, people and tasks. Gather info. from families.

In preparation for customized job development...

- Participate in a variety of job training experiences:
 - Semester at Hotel- laundry and general cleaning
 - Semester at Insurance company-mailings, scanning and shredding
 - Semester at restaurant- rolling silverware, setting tables and food prep
 - Semester at hospital-stocking gowns on linen carts, labeling in pharmacy.

Information one might obtain

- Student prefers combination of sedentary and moving around tasks
- Likes routine, but also needs variety
- Has good fine motor skills
- Likes to work more around women than men
- Is sensitive to noise and heat
- Prefers casual work environment
- Prefers not to work in too close proximity to other students

Use assessment information to customize job search

- Match skills and interests.
- Approach businesses in a different way than traditional job development
- Talk to businesses about identifying their unmet needs, while highlighting the skills of the individual
- Encourage schools to highlight strength in resumes/
brochures

Effective Job Development Mentoring

Focuses on:

- Importance of assessment
- Importance of job matching
- Job creation vs looking for existing position
- Key phrases “unmet needs”
- Having an arsenal of tools: materials to share including written description of program, ideas of tasks, visual resumes
- Using a variety of contacts including teams
- Must get out there. Too easy to say no on the phone. Make appointments to go out together.

Keep sustainability in mind: Job Developing for more than one person

- Presenting rationale to the employer
 - Acknowledge range of support required by individuals
 - With limited public funding, sharing support is more cost effective for individuals with higher needs
 - When paired, workers have complementary skills to accomplish tasks that meet business needs
 - No additional cost to business: 20 hours x 1 person = 10 hours x 2 persons

Staybridge



Staybridge



The Management Group



The Management Group



Lottery



Lottery



II. Mentoring that focuses on Job Retention:

We all know that:

- Great job matches are hard to find
- Finding employers willing to customize positions is difficult to do
- Job development can take a long time, and can be frustrating at best, and often disappointing
- You don't want to be doing this again in another 6 months for the same consumer!!!

How do you provide good supports?

- What did you say you would provide?
- Follow through on everything promised
- Develop a relationship with employer, co-workers
- Be in tune with how employer is feeling
- Let employer know how much you appreciate their support and what it means to consumer/family

Good supports=Good retention

- Want your consumer to get off to a good start
- Cementing that relationship with employer/co-workers
- Presence builds trust
- Does not mean you over support where it isn't needed.
- If fading, explain and involve employer in process.
- You always communicate that you are accessible/
want to hear if issues arise (especially the small stuff)

Good Communication=Good Retention

- Often times more than 1 staff person involved in training
- How are you being consistent with training, set up etc?
- Details of job. Is there a method for writing it down?
- Think about Job Site description
- Attending to details is going to establish credibility with employer.

Don't forget the little things that matter

- Remembering names
- Getting the supported worker to greet people/ learn names...even if not verbal. (Photos for home staff)
- Birthdays (keep cards at site)
- Random acts of good will (filling the candy dish, bringing in treats for break etc)
- It is corny, but bosses day is a great opportunity to say thanks

Bad things happen: How you handle the bumps matters

- How quickly do you address concerns
 - How quickly do you address big concerns
- Always be ready to apologize....and demonstrate your concern for the workplace (noise, etc.) as this can diffuse problems

Make sure your job coaches don't tick people off!!!!

- Dress code, cell phones, not looking busy, etc. etc. etc.
- Always thank people for bringing problems to your attention.

Anticipate Future Expansion/Job Development

- Must know site: volume of work
- Identify potential for future work either for consumer or another individual
- Need to be constantly aware of future expansion
- Use opportunities to expand: “John probably wouldn’t be a good fit for the task, but I know someone else who could do this.”
- Sometimes can start open ended, eg. Charter starts with 1 person, later expand to 2. Know when it is appropriate to ask.

Mentoring Works!!

- Increases the **COMPETENCE** of professionals who have the drive and motivation but lack formal training and experience.
- Increases the **CONFIDENCE** of professionals by walking alongside them as they learn.
- Increases the likelihood that you will attain **CONSISTENT** sustainable outcomes.
- Develops **CAPACITY** by teaching others how to do the work after you are gone.

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