

APSE Adopts Supported Employment Competencies

by Dale Dileo

These competencies are based on the work of APSE's various workgroups on certification, quality indicators, and competencies; involving the volunteer efforts of several people: Karen Flippo, Pat Rogan, Tammara Geary, Debra Martin Luecking, Pat Keul, Tom Harrison, Brenda Harvey, Dale Dutton, Renee Drouet, Bob Niemiec, Rebecca McDonald, Sue Killam, Linda Quinn, Dale DiLeo, Rob Hoffman, and the New Jersey APSE Chapter.

OBJECTIVES: Will demonstrate knowledge of...

Introduction to Supported Employment

1. Supported employment contrasted with traditional vocation services: Factors that led to the emergence of supported employment, the difference between supported employment and traditional vocational services, and the unique characteristics of supported employment, including the difference between the "readiness" and the "place-train" models of supported employment
2. Underlying values and definition of supported employment.
 - a) *define "normalization" and its guiding principles.*
 - b) *identify how support strategies can enhance or detract from the image of a worker with a disability.*
 - c) *discuss the benefits of integration at the workplace for people with disabilities.*
 - d) *differentiate between individual and group approaches to employment.*
3. Informed choice, self-determination, and active participation throughout the employment process.
4. Rights and responsibilities of individuals in supported employment.
5. Roles and responsibilities of administrators and program managers in facilitating supported employment.
6. Roles and responsibilities of employment specialists, families and friends, and employers in providing and facilitating supported employment opportunities.
7. Legislation and regulations related to supported employment, including the ADA, WIA and the Rehabilitation Act, TWWIA, IDEA, the Fair Labor Standards Act, EEOC, and other DOL and IRS laws.
8. Best practices in supported employment services from intake to follow-along.
9. Best practices in school-to-work and community living transition.
10. Funding options for supported employment, including VR, MH, DD, and Medicaid Waivers.
11. History and status of supported employment services in your state.

Assessment and Career Planning

12. Traditional vocational evaluation: effectiveness and limitations for people with significant disabilities.
13. Person-centered planning processes, including personal futures/PATH planning, developing circles of support, and their relationship to career planning.

14. Personal career profile development.
 - a) *encourage the active participation and decision-making of the person served in the career planning process.*
 - b) *interview the individual and others who are familiar with his or her abilities and work history.*
 - c) *identify the impact of an individual's cultural and social background, including class, race, gender, culture, and ethnicity, as well as role in family, church, and community; native and spoken language; and family income.*
 - d) *review individual records and collect pertinent information related to employment.*
 - e) *observe the individual in his or her current daily routines and environments.*
 - f) *explore non-work needs that may impact the achievement and maintenance of employment outcomes.*
 - g) *assess the individual's preferred style of learning, work skills and tolerances, and preferred modes of communication.*
 - h) *integrate relevant employment information regarding each person served into a vocational profile.*
15. Situational assessments, paid work trials, job tryouts, volunteer work, or job shadowing: uses and procedures.
 - a) *develop career exploration sites aligned with the interests and desires of each individual.*
 - b) *assess needed environmental or job-task modifications for the person to succeed in his or her choices of employment settings.*
 - c) *assess the availability of community supports and transportation.*
 - d) *conduct effective situational assessments, paid work trials, job tryouts, volunteering, and job shadowing.*
16. Assisting individuals to develop personal career goals and meaningful career plans.
17. Writing meaningful vocational objectives.
18. Making referrals to appropriate agencies, organizations, and networks based on individual career plans.

Marketing and Job Development

19. Marketing plans targeted to employers.
 - a) *gather current information about local job opportunities, including labor trends, employer needs, and job requirements.*

- b) *use local employment studies, conduct market surveys, research business groups, and other methods for updating information about employment opportunities in the local job market.*
 - c) *develop a viable Employer Advisory Committee.*
 - d) *target and identify types of businesses to contact based on the needs and interests of job seekers.*
 - e) *develop a system for compiling and organizing information on businesses.*
 - f) *develop a file of pertinent information on each employer identified.*
 - g) *maintain updated information on new area businesses, type of jobs available, and locations of job sites within the community.*
 - h) *analyze the gathered information to identify trends in the local job market.*
20. Effective marketing messages for supported employment.
- a) *position the agency as an employment service.*
 - b) *target messages to audience needs.*
 - c) *describe services that the agency provides to employers.*
 - d) *use language and images that do not disclose the presence of disabilities in the job seekers represented.*
21. Effective marketing tools for supported employment.
- a) *publication strategies for marketing employment services, including: employment brochures, employment fact sheets, cover letters to businesses*
 - b) *presentations to individuals and/or parent groups, advocacy groups, local civic organizations, service providers, and employers.*
 - c) *participation in community business organizations.*
 - d) *consultant to businesses on disability issues.*
22. Job seeker portfolios, including resume, letters of introduction, and references.
23. Personalized job development and relationship marketing, utilizing personal networking.
24. Maximally involving job seekers in the job search process, including participation in completing job applications and interviews.
25. Understanding workplace cultures and climates.
26. Job matching strategies.
27. Employer contact, including approaches and presentations.
28. Negotiating typical job designs, including hours, wages, tasks, work area, breaks, orientation, training, and supports.
29. Job carving: identifying and recommending job carving options.
30. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations that govern non-disclosure of disability to employers.
- a) *identify job development and marketing issues that arise related to disclosure.*

b) *appropriately handle employer questions about job seekers' disabilities.*

31. Work incentive provisions available to employers for hiring employees with disabilities, including: Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Arc Wage Reimbursement Program, Disabled Access Tax Credit, Architecture?/Transportation Tax Deduction, VR On-the-Job Training Wage.
32. How to close employer contact meetings that result in a job or interview offer.

On-the Job Training and Supports

Job Acquisition

33. Appropriate communication with relevant team members (e.g., job seeker, parents/caregiver, rehabilitation counselors) to ensure all members are fully informed.
34. Social security benefits and their impact on employment.
35. Preparations for the first day on the job (e.g., transportation, employment-required medical examinations and testing, special equipment, uniforms).

Job Analysis and Design

36. Comprehensive job analysis
- a) *identify strategies for creating or designing jobs that make use of integrated and natural supports.*
 - b) *evaluate the integration potential offered by a position, including physical, social, and cultural factors.*
 - c) *determine effective methods to establish natural supports within work environments.*
 - d) *list job duties and requirements of the job in sequence and the approximate time required to perform each task.*
 - e) *identify and describe each job skill that an employee will be required to perform.*
 - f) *identify job modification and accommodation strategies.*
 - g) *identify reinforcers natural to the work site.*

Worker Orientation

37. Travel/transportation arrangements and training for getting to and from the job.
38. Strategies for establishing effective entry into a job.
- a) *maximize hours on the job, including natural social times (breaks and lunch).*
 - b) *ensure the new employee is introduced to coworkers by worksite personnel.*
 - c) *Adhere as closely as possible to typical new employee orientation and training procedures.*
 - d) *Ensure necessary modifications and accommodations are in place.*

Workplace Supports

39. Strategies for developing workplace supports.
- define natural supports and rationales for their use.*
 - analyze work cultures to better understand sources of support and social relationships at the worksite.*
 - facilitate training of supported employees by coworkers.*
 - identify artificial support strategies that can stigmatize or stereotype supported employees.*
 - facilitate mentor relationships between supported employees and coworkers.*
40. Systematic training, including task analysis, natural cues and reinforcers, error correction procedures, and self instruction techniques.
- task analyze job duties that require instruction.*
 - conduct a baseline assessment from a task analysis.*
 - analyze baseline data.*
 - establish an instructional plan that includes: schedule for training, instructional procedures, natural prompts, natural reinforcers, reinforcement procedures, and evaluation/data collection procedures.*
 - utilize effective verbal, visual, auditory, and/or tactile prompts.*
 - understand individualized reinforcement strategies, including: reinforcement preferences and hierarchies, satiation effects, effect of quantity and quality, and natural versus artificial approaches.*
 - define the various reinforcement schedules: continuous, fixed ratio, variable ratio, fixed interval, variable interval, and how to fade reinforcers to naturally occurring levels.*
 - identify and promote use of naturally occurring reinforcers and natural cues.*
 - develop data collection procedures using frequency, duration, interval, and performance scoring.*
 - describe how to enhance natural cues and reduce dependence on prompts.*
 - describe strategies to systematically fade prompts and other forms of assistance.*
 - analyze a graph to determine the progress of a worker over time.*

Job Site Adaptations

41. Job adaptations and accommodations that match the needs of the worker and employer.
- identify commonly available and non-stigmatizing accommodations and modifications.*
 - develop individualized adaptations.*
 - teach the use of assistive technology.*
 - assess the ongoing need for, and appropriateness of, adaptations and accommodations.*

Appropriate Social Behavior on the Job

42. Assisting individuals to meet the social behavior expectations of the workplace culture.
- identify cultural norms of the workplace culture.*
 - describe behaviors in measurable and observable terms.*
 - assess the communicative functions of behavior.*
 - identify consequences that may maintain interfering behaviors.*
 - identify considerations before implementing behavioral procedures.*
 - describe the relationship between behavior and environment, including the events and situations that predict occurrences of behaviors.*
 - Develop appropriate strategies for supporting individuals to acquire social behaviors.*
 - understand methods of reinforcement procedures, including DRO, DRI, DRL and Alt-R.*

Stabilization

43. Maximizing worker job performance and social integration.
- monitor worker on-task behavior.*
 - develop strategies to increase worker productivity, if necessary.*
 - assist the worker in using self-management strategies.*
 - expand worker performance so it generalizes across supervisors, job duties, and diverse social contexts.*

Ongoing Supports

44. Sources for long-term, ongoing support.
45. Supporting individuals, families, and employers/coworkers over time.
46. Evaluating quality in supported employment services through outcome measurement, satisfaction indicators, and process indicators.
47. Ongoing review of the supported employee's performance
- determine supervisor's satisfaction with assistance provided by employment consultant.*
 - determine supervisor's satisfaction with performance of supported employee.*
 - determine additional or different support needs.*
 - obtain additional information regarding supported employee's progress from family members, coworkers, counselors, or support coordinators.*
 - conduct on-site observations to evaluate job performance.*
 - record progress in a consistent manner.*
48. Collaborative working relationships with other human service professionals.
49. Supporting the job seeker and family in self-advocacy.
50. Circles of support as an ongoing resource.

- 51. Community resources that will assist supported employee in maintaining and improving his or her quality of life.
- 52. How to handle job stress and burnout.

Managing Benefits

- 53. Work incentives and disincentives.
 - a) *advise individuals about the impact of work on their benefits.*
 - b) *write a PASS plan.*
 - c) *apply for an IRWE.*

Organizational Change

- 54. Ethics and challenges of operating both integrated and segregated vocational services.
- 55. Strategies for promoting a unified vision and values within your organization.
- 56. Strategies for changing the organizational structure to support integrated employment.
- 57. Strategies for human resource practices that promote and reward integrated employment outcomes.
- 58. Working as a member of a cross-functional team.
- 59. Working as a generalist versus specialist.

Special Populations

- 60. how to support youth with disabilities transitioning to employment.
- 61. how to support people with mental illness.
- 62. how to support people with traumatic brain injury.
- 63. how to support people with sensory disabilities.
- 64. how to support people with autism.
- 65. how to support people with physical disabilities.
- 66. how to support people in culturally-sensitive ways, including Hispanic, African-American, and other cultures.

Self-Employment

- 67. Pros and cons of self-employment.
- 68. Examples of supported self-employment, business partnerships, and business ownership.
- 69. Job creation.
- 70. Developing viable business plans.
- 71. Sources of funding and resources.

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