

# **The Work Experience Survey (WES) Manual: A Structured Interview for Identifying Barriers to Career Maintenance**

## **Second Edition, 2022**

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[Download the Work Experience Survey \(WES\) here.](#)

### **Foreword**

We would like to thank the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (New York, New York), its Indiana and Kentucky Chapters, and the many employed people with disabilities who assisted in developing the original version of the WES. Finally, we wish to acknowledge the many rehabilitation researchers and practitioners who have used the WES in a wide variety of research and clinical settings. The first editions of this manual and the WES instrument itself were developed as non-copyrighted, public domain products of the Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation at the University of Arkansas.

### **Part 1: The Work Experience Survey (WES)**

This manual and service provider's guide presents the Work Experience Survey or WES (see Appendix A). The WES is a structured interview protocol that enables people with disabilities who are employed or planning to be employed to direct their own accommodation planning, with guidance and input from rehabilitation professionals, employers, healthcare providers, and other resources. The purpose of accommodation planning is to (a) enable the individual to identify and reduce or remove barriers to access to the job site and (b) productivity on the job. Administered in an in-person or virtual interview by a rehabilitation professional, the WES consists of the following six sections: (a) background, disability, and work experience information on the respondent; (b) accessibility checklist; (c) essential job functions checklist; (d) job mastery scale; (e) job satisfaction scale; and (f) accommodation plan. This manual describes the WES and demonstrates its applications. Information is provided on accommodation strategies and resources as well.

By completing the WES with a rehabilitation professional, people with disabilities accomplish important process and outcome goals. The process goals have to do with self-determination and empowerment as people participate in the identification and implementation of their own on-the-job accommodation strategies. The outcome goal is job retention, a result of central importance to both the WES participant and the rehabilitation professional.

The need for the WES is documented in recent statistics that illustrate the difficulty that employees with disabilities have in retaining and advancing on their jobs. Experts have repeatedly found the career pattern of workers with disabilities to be characterized by lateral movement from one entry-level job to another, often interspersed with extended periods of unemployment (Krause et al., 2020; Strauser, 2021). Smart (2020) cited a 24 percent rate of labor force participation among working-age adults with disabilities, compared to an 80 percent rate in the general population. Perhaps most troubling is the fact that most state-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) consumers who are competitively employed at case closure report two years later that their income levels have dropped below the incomes they reported at the time of enrollment in the VR program (Cimera et al., 2015).

## WES Applications

The career maintenance and advancement difficulties experienced by persons with disabilities substantiate the need to use the WES in a wide variety of postemployment applications, for example, disability management and return to work programs, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) consultation with employees and employers, and psychosocial services to counter the intrusiveness of severe disabilities. Each of these applications is described in more detail in the paragraphs to follow.

**Using the WES in Disability Management and Return to Work Programs.** Data from the WES enable employers to improve the services and outcomes of their disability management programs. Disability management can be defined as the use of interdisciplinary supports to (a) minimize the impact and cost of disability to employers and employees and (b) promote return to work and stay at work outcomes for workers with disabilities (Schultz & Gatchel, 2016). Information from the WES helps the employer and employee to collaborate in identifying cost-effective accommodations that have the potential to control rising disability and turnover costs, which are consuming an increasing share of employer resources (Strauser, 2021). Furthermore, the WES is as appropriate for older workers as it is for people with disabilities, an important point given the increasing numbers of older individuals in the labor force and the fact that the incidence of disability increases as a linear function of age (Wickert et al., 2013). Information from the WES also helps employers retain trained workers during a time when decreasing numbers of workers with adequate skills are available in the labor market (Strauser, 2021; Umucu, 2021).

**Using the WES in Responding to the ADA.** Use of the WES is compatible with the intent of the ADA in that the WES provides information that enables people with disabilities to maintain productive vocational roles (Rubin et al., 2016). But the ADA does more than simply place a value on employment; it requires accommodation of employees with disabilities so that they can perform essential job functions, as long as the accommodations do not constitute an undue hardship for the employer (Job Accommodation Network [JAN], 2021; Roessler & Rumrill, 2018). Data from the WES are useful throughout the process prescribed by the ADA to resolve problems that people with disabilities face in performing their jobs. Feldblum (1991) originated the steps of the accommodation process as follows, and that process still holds today in ADA regulations (JAN, 2021):

1. The employee or applicant may initiate the request for an accommodation to which the employer is required to respond.
2. The individual and the employer collaborate in a process of identifying the barriers that limit the worker's abilities to perform essential functions of the job.
3. Using the person with a disability as a source of information, the employer identifies a variety of accommodations.
4. The employer assesses the cost effectiveness of each of the accommodations to determine which ones can be made with the least economic hardship to the business.
5. The employer implements the most appropriate accommodation with due consideration of the person's preferences in the case of two or more accommodations deemed equal in cost effectiveness.

Information from the WES can help the employee understand specifically what his or her work limitations are, the priority to place on those limitations, and examples of reasonable accommodations. This information is useful throughout the five steps of the accommodation process. Moreover, the WES enables the employer to involve the person with a disability in the accommodation process as Feldblum suggested in step three.

**Using the WES to Respond to Disability’s Intrusiveness.** Finally, at a more general level, completing the WES enables respondents to gain greater control over the intrusiveness of illness and disability. In addition to their physical effects, chronic illnesses and disabilities are intrusive psychosocial stressors that increase role strain, disrupt economic and vocational stability, and can create a sense of helplessness and external control (Livneh et al., 2019; Smart, 2020). Through the WES interview, people with disabilities can assume leadership roles in the accommodation process. Hence, they gain a greater sense of self-efficacy, that is, the belief that they have the power to achieve desirable outcomes and avoid negative ones (Bandura, 1986). Experiences that enhance self-efficacy are desirable antidotes to the negative impact of disability and chronic illness on personal control.

## **Sections of the WES**

By completing the WES, people with disabilities identify their on-the-job barriers to accessibility and productivity, formulate feasible solutions to those barriers, and prepare accommodation plans. The accommodation plan describes how techniques such as job restructuring, worksite modification, and/or the addition of new technology will enable the person to maintain productivity. Barrier identification, solution generation, and accommodation planning are demonstrated in the WES sections to follow. A full version of the WES is presented in Appendix A.

**Background, Disability, and Work Experience Information.** The first section of the WES elicits demographic information about the worker, details concerning his or her disability, and in-depth information about the person’s current job and employment history.

**Table 1 on the following page provides the full text of Section 1.**

# Work Experience Survey (WES), 2022 Edition

## Section 1: Background, Disability, and Work Experience Information

### Background

Case No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Gender \_\_\_\_\_
3. Race/Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Marital status: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of years of education: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Highest educational degree completed: \_\_\_\_\_

### Disability

7. Disability of record (primary diagnosis): \_\_\_\_\_
8. How old were you when you acquired this disability?: \_\_\_\_\_
9. How did you acquire your disability? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Describe how the disability affects your functioning, e.g., weakness, chronic fatigue, limited vision, poor balance, low stress tolerance. Rank order the entries in terms of their impact. The first effect listed should represent the greatest problem.

1.
2.
3.

11. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the severity of your current symptoms?

1

2

3

4

5

No current  
symptoms

One or more symptoms,  
occasionally limiting daily  
functioning

Multiple severe  
symptoms, significantly  
limiting daily functioning

## Work Experience

12. What is your current job title?: \_\_\_\_\_

13. List three essential job functions that you perform regularly, e.g., operate heavy equipment and vehicles, retrieve data using a computer, develop publicity materials, or perform administrative duties.

1.

2.

3.

14. Total number of years employed: \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Number of months on current job: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Number of hrs. working per week: \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Annual Gross Income from current job: \_\_\_\_\_

18. How would you describe your employment?

Permanent: Full-time

Nonpermanent: Full-time Temporary/Seasonal

Permanent: Part-time

Nonpermanent: Part-time Temporary/Seasonal

19. Would you prefer to work?

Fewer hours than you currently do

More hours than you currently do

About the same number of hours that you currently do

20. On a scale of 1 to 5, how closely does your current job match your personal interests and skills?

1

2

3

4

5

Does not match  
at all

Reasonably  
good match

Perfect match

21. How satisfied are you with your current job?

1

2

3

4

5

Very dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Neutral

Satisfied

Very satisfied

22. How certain are you that you will be employed 1 year from now?

1	2	3	4	5
Not certain at all		50/50 chance		Completely certain

23. How would you describe your job performance?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent

24. Have you ever requested a job accommodation?

Yes                  No

If “Yes,” were you satisfied with your employer’s response to your request?

Yes                  No

If “Yes,” what accommodation did you receive?

25. Based on your experience in the workplace, use the 1 to 5 scale below to indicate your impression of employers. Check the box that best describes your answer.

My employer...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
is receptive to hiring people with disabilities.					
helps people with disabilities stay on the job.					
meets legal obligations to employees with disabilities.					
treats employees with disabilities the same as any other employees.					
is familiar with employment protections in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).					

26. How satisfied are you with your current work-life balance?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

27. How satisfied are you with your current quality of life?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

28. How satisfied are you with the transportation needed to maintain your employment?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

29. How satisfied are you with your access to technology on your job?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

30. How satisfied are you with your future employment prospects?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

31. How satisfied are you that your current housing meets your accessibility needs?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

**Assessing Accessibility.** Adapted from a checklist originally published by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (1985), the accessibility section addresses barriers that the worker may experience in entering the worksite, using necessary services and facilities, and exiting in emergency situations, among other accessibility domains (see Table 2). Should an accessibility issue not be in the checklist, a box is provided for the respondent to list any other accessibility problems. The final question asks the person to describe solutions for his or her two most important accessibility barriers.

**Table 2 on the following page provides the full text of Section 2.**

## Section 2: Accessibility

Check any problems you have getting to, from, or around on your job. List any other accessibility problems not included in the list. Describe solutions for your two most important accessibility barriers.

Parking	Elevators/Escalators	Seating/Tables
Bathrooms	Identification signs/labels	Evacuation routes
Temperature	Entrance	Getting to and from work
Public walks	Door widths	Food access/cafeteria
Water fountains	Stairs/Steps	Office supplies/equipment
Ventilation	Ramps (slopes/access)	Computer/other technology
Public transportation	Lighting	Online information
Public telephone	Access to personnel offices	Access to employee assistance programs/other support services
Work surfaces/areas	Floors/Floor covering	Email
Hazards	Warning devices	Home-based work station
Passenger loading zones	Access to general use areas	

List any other accessibility problems:

Describe solutions for your two most important accessibility barriers.

1.

2.

Solution 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

Solution 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

**Assessing essential job functions.** Adapted from the RehabMatch program and Department of Labor research (Greenwood, Johnson, Wilson, & Schriener, 1988), the section on essential job functions is divided into six categories: physical abilities, cognitive abilities, task-related abilities, social abilities, working conditions, and company policies (see Table 3). This section enables the person to check any essential job functions or working conditions that constitute problems. The final question in the section asks the individual to describe two potentially helpful accommodations. These accommodations might involve one or more of the strategies suggested in Title I of the ADA (Roessler & Rumrill, 2018), for example, restructuring of existing facilities, restructuring of the job, modification of work schedules, reassignment to other positions, modification of equipment, installation of new equipment, flexible personal leave policies, provision of qualified readers or interpreters, and modification of application and examination procedures.

**Table 3 on the following page provides the full text of Section 3.**

### Section 3: Essential Job Functions

Check any essential job functions or conditions<sup>1</sup> that pose problems for you. Describe the two most important job modifications that you need, e.g., modifying existing equipment or work schedules, adding new technology, or changing the type of work you do.

#### Physical Abilities

Working 8 hours	Reaching	Using both legs
Standing all day	Talking	Using left hand
Standing part of the time	Seeing well	Using right hand
Walking for 8 hours	Hearing well	Using left leg
Sitting	Handling	Using right leg
Stooping/kneeling	Keyboarding	Lifting _____ lbs.
Climbing	Raising arms above shoulders	Carrying _____ lbs.
Pulling	Twisting/turning	
Pushing	Using both hands	

#### Cognitive Abilities

Immediate memory	Thought processing	Problem solving
Short-term memory	Reasoning description	Planning
Judgment: safety	Decision making	Organizing
Judgment: interpersonal		

#### Task-Related Abilities

Repetitive work	Able and licensed to drive	Access to internet
Work pace/sequencing	Attain precise standings/limits	Use keyboard
Variety of duties	Follow specific instructions	Use voice input/ output with computer applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
Work volume	Writing	
Perform under stress/ deadlines	Remembering	
Little performance feedback	Speaking/communication	
Read written instructions	Initiating work activities	
	Use telephone/call phone	

#### Social Abilities

Working alone	Interacting with supervisor	Connecting virtually with others
Working around others	Supervising others	
Working with others	Working with hostile others	

#### Working Conditions

Too hot	Obstacles in path	Outdoors
Too cold	Dust	Sometimes outdoors
Temperature changes	Fumes	Always inside
Too wet	Odors	Emergencies
Too humid	Noise	Other distractions
Slippery surfaces	Lighting	

## Company Policies

Inflexible work schedule	Vague job descriptions
No accrual of sick leave	Infrequent reviews of job
Lack of flextime	Rigid sick/vacation leave policies
No “comp” time	Inflexible rules regarding working from home
Inflexible job descriptions	

Describe the two job accommodations that would be most helpful to you, e.g., restructuring of the job, modifications of work schedules, reassignment to another position, modification of equipment, or provision of readers and interpreters.

1.

2.

Accommodation 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1

2

3

4

5

Not at all  
Optimistic

Minimally  
Optimistic

Neutral

Somewhat  
Optimistic

Very  
Optimistic

Accommodation 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1

2

3

4

5

Not at all  
Optimistic

Minimally  
Optimistic

Neutral

Somewhat  
Optimistic

Very  
Optimistic

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from RehabMatch. Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Assessing job mastery.** The job mastery scale (Cronbach's Alpha = .74) was adapted from the Career Mastery Inventory developed by John Crites (1990). In addition to providing his permission for use of the items, Crites determined that the content of the items was appropriate for assessing job mastery concerns. The abbreviated measure includes items representing the six domains of the Career Mastery Inventory: getting the job done, fitting into the workforce, learning the ropes, getting along with others, getting ahead, and planning the next career step. At the close of the section, the respondent is asked to describe one solution for each of his or her two top-priority job mastery concerns (see Table 4).

**Table 4 on the following page provides the full text of Section 4.**

## Section 4: Job Mastery

Check any concerns that affect your success in completing career advancement tasks.<sup>2</sup> Describe one solution for each of your two most important concerns.

### 1. Getting the job done

Believing that others think I do a good job.

Knowing what I need to know to do my job.

Understanding how my job fits into the “big picture,” i.e., the meaning of my job.

Having what I need to do my job (knowledge, tools, supplies, equipment, technology).

### 2. Fitting into the workforce

Scheduling and planning my work ahead of time.

Doing a good job.

Working mostly because I like the job.

Willing to make changes when necessary.

### 3. Learning the ropes

Knowing who to go to if I need help.

Knowing my way around work.

Understanding company rules and regulations.

Feeling a “part” of what is going on at work.

### 4. Getting along with others

Eating lunch with friends at work.

Looking forward to seeing my friends at work.

Having many friends at work.

Knowing what is expected of me socially.

### 5. Getting ahead

Having a plan for where I want to be in my job in the future.

Knowing what training to complete to improve chances for promotion.

Understanding what I have to do to get promoted.

Talking with supervisor about what I need to do to get promoted.

### 6. Planning the next career step

Considering what I will do in the future.

Wanting to become more specialized in my job.

Knowing what the opportunities are in this company.

Having a good idea of how to advance in this company.

Describe one solution for each of your two most important career advancement concerns.

1.

2.

Solution 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1

2

3

4

5

Not at all  
Optimistic

Minimally  
Optimistic

Neutral

Somewhat  
Optimistic

Very  
Optimistic

Solution 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1

2

3

4

5

Not at all  
Optimistic

Minimally  
Optimistic

Neutral

Somewhat  
Optimistic

Very  
Optimistic

<sup>2</sup>Selected items from the Career Mastery Inventory. Used with permission of the author, John O. Crites, Crites, Career Consultants, Boulder, Colorado.

**Assessing job satisfaction.** The job satisfaction checklist (Cronbach's Alpha = .78, see Table 5) was adapted from the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment developed by Dawis and Lofquist (1984). Respondents evaluate their satisfaction with their current jobs in terms of the 20 work reinforcers in the Minnesota theory. An example work reinforcer "I do things that make use of my abilities" may be responded to in one of three ways: (a) Too little, (b) About right, and (c) Too much. Respondents complete the section by listing two ways to make their jobs more personally satisfying. The changes identified may involve either decreasing or increasing the presence of a given reinforcer on the job.

**Table 5 on the following page provides the full text of Section 5.**

### Section 5: Satisfaction<sup>3</sup>

Rate your current job on each of the following statements by checking one response for each item. Describe two ways to make your job more personally satisfying.

In my job...	Too little	About right	Too much
I do things that make use of my abilities.			
The job gives me a feeling of accomplishment.			
I am busy all the time.			
I can work alone on the job.			
I do something different every day.			
My pay compares well with that of other workers.			
The job provides for steady employment.			
The job has good working conditions.			
The job provides an opportunity for advancement.			
I get recognition for the work I do.			
I tell people what to do.			
I am “somebody” in the community.			
My co-workers are easy to make friends with.			
I can do the work without feeling it is morally wrong.			
I can do things for other people.			
The company administers its policies fairly.			
My boss backs up the workers with top management.			
My boss trains the workers well.			
I try out some of my ideas.			
I make decisions on my own.			
I have a good idea of how to advance in this company.			

Describe two ways to make your job more personally satisfying.

1.

2.

Solution 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

Solution 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

<sup>3</sup>Work reinforcers from the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment. Dawis, R. & Lofquist, L. 1984. A psychological theory of work adjustment. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

**The accommodation plan.** The final section of the WES constitutes the essential elements of an accommodation plan that the worker can use to approach his or her employer with an accommodation request. In this section, the interviewer reviews Sections 2-5 of the WES with the participant and asks him or her to identify the three most important barriers to job retention from those sections, a solution for each barrier, and resources that can be consulted to help remove or reduce those barriers. The interviewer may suggest any resources that he or she has used in previous professional practice.

**Table 6 on the following page provides the full text of Section 6.**

## Section 6: Review

Review Sections 2–5 of this survey and list the three most significant barriers to success in your work. Describe their solutions and people/resources who can help. Be specific.

**Barrier 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

Who can help? How can they help?

**Barrier 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

Who can help? How can they help?

**Barrier 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

Who can help? How can they help?

This edition of the Work Experience Survey was developed and validated by Stuart Rumrill, M.S., CRC; Richard Roessler, Ph.D., CRC; and Phillip Rumrill, Ph.D., CRC. The Work Experience Survey is a non-copyrighted, public access product of the University of Kentucky Human Development Institute.

## Administering the WES

Rehabilitation professionals may administer the WES in a face-to-face, telephone, or virtual interview (Roessler et al., 2017; Rumrill, Roessler, & Denny, 1997) with individuals with disabilities who are either employed or about to begin employment. Whether conducted virtually or in person, the WES interview requires 30 to 60 minutes to complete. Compared to telephone interviews, face-to-face contact enables the administrator to elicit more information from the respondent because it provides greater opportunity for feelings of trust to develop and for clarification of responses. Prior to administering the WES, rehabilitation professionals may wish to mentally "walk through" the interview using their own jobs as models.

The general procedure for completing WES Sections 2 through 5 is as follows:

1. Engage the person in identifying barriers to accessibility, performance of essential job functions, job mastery, and job satisfaction.
2. Ask the person if any of his or her problems were overlooked, that is, not included in the checklist. If so, record the additional barriers in the appropriate section.
3. Encourage the person to suggest reasonable accommodations for the barriers; do not hesitate to share knowledge of accommodations that might prove feasible in the person's employment setting.
4. Help the person complete Section 6 based on a thorough review of information in the preceding sections.
5. Remind the person that Section 6 constitutes the basis for initiating a review of accommodation needs with the employer; it enables the person to state barriers to productivity in priority order as well as reasonable accommodation options for each barrier.

The WES administrator should make every effort to encourage respondents to elaborate on their impressions of their work environments, job duties, and barriers to their productivity. Such information is particularly useful when the rehabilitation professional is not familiar with the job that the person performs. For example, the WES administrator may not understand the details when a person states that he or she is an assembler. One respondent who worked on an assembly line used an air gun to place coverboot wire around control panels on washing machines. Clearly, most WES administrators would need additional information to understand the demands of this task.

Respondents may also have difficulty discriminating between their job titles and their job duties. For example, a public school teacher needs to consider specific teaching functions and any barriers encountered in performing those functions. Essential functions of the teaching process include tasks such as reading, grading, talking/lecturing, writing, supervising children's activities, and attending faculty meetings. Even functions such as supervision and lecturing can be broken down into more specific tasks.

Throughout the administration of the WES, the interviewer should explain the meaning of any terms that are unfamiliar to the person. For example, cognitive items in the essential functions section may require clarification. Also, past respondents have questioned what temperature and ventilation have to do with accessibility. The interviewer should explain that excessive heat or cold or poor air circulation could influence one's breathing which, in turn, affects mobility.

Some respondents have also requested clarification in responding to the section on job satisfaction (Section 5). The administrator should instruct respondents to consider all items in relationship to the concept of job satisfaction. For example, in presenting the item "I do something different every day," the administrator

should ask, "Are you satisfied with this?" If he or she responds "yes," the correct answer is "about right." If the respondent says "no," the correct response would be one that indicates dissatisfaction, that is, "too little" or "too much." The interviewer must probe to determine whether the person does "too little" or "too much" of the same thing every day. It is helpful to remind participants that the answers "too little" and "too much" are negative answers, that is, they indicate dissatisfaction with the availability of a reinforcer. If the respondent is satisfied, the correct answer should be "about right." For example, "I tell people what to do" could be answered by "too much" if the respondent has to do this frequently and does not like to do it. People who feel overworked should respond to the item "I am busy all of the time" with "too much." If they like the challenge of a busy job, they should answer "about right." If they feel they are not busy enough and would like to be busier, the answer is "too little."

Parts of the WES such as Sections 2, 3, and 4 may be helpful for individuals with disabilities who are not working but would like to work. Information in the WES can help them identify suitable types of jobs and work environments and the assistive technology they might need. They can also consider community agencies, technology resources, and employer-based services that are available to assist them in resuming work. Using the WES for prospective employment is basically a "needs" assessment, for example, how accessible would the work site have to be, how warm or cool would the work area have to be, could job duties involve walking long distances, what types of accommodations would be needed, and what resources are available. The WES is also helpful for those individuals who have not disclosed their disabilities and have some discomfort about disclosure. The WES can help them focus on concrete information, involve them in constructive activities, and assist them in identifying appropriate people and agencies for resources. This type of focusing, and the resulting knowledge, may lessen their concerns about identifying their disabilities.

## **Part 2: A Demonstration of the WES with Employees with Multiple Sclerosis**

With an unemployment rate as high as 50% to 80% within 10 years of disease onset (Rumrill & Bishop, 2019), people with multiple sclerosis (MS) are appropriate candidates for the WES. Research underscores the need to intervene at the worksite to remove barriers as soon as employees determine that their MS is affecting their performance (Leslie et al., 2015; Roessler et al., 2015). Jackson et al. (1991) placed barriers in the workplace in two categories: (a) access to the workplace and work environment and (b) ability to perform expected tasks (see Sections 2 and 3 of the WES). Prompt identification and removal of barriers in both categories (early intervention) helps to maintain the employee's feelings of job mastery and job satisfaction, thereby reducing the probability of job loss (Rubin et al., 2016).

Research evidence supporting the relationship between (a) accessibility and essential function barriers and (b) perceived job mastery and job satisfaction concerns among 45 people with MS who participated in WES interviews (Rumrill et al., 2004) underscore the importance of barrier removal and, therefore, the importance of completing the WES. Removing barriers to accessibility and performance of essential functions via accommodations is related to a reduction in problems in job mastery and an increase in the level of job satisfaction. Fewer job mastery problems and higher levels of job satisfaction increase the probability of job retention. Hence, early intervention in the workplace with the WES is needed to identify barriers and implement reasonable accommodations.

**Job satisfaction and barrier removal.** Because barriers impair the worker's ability to perform adequately and to gain reinforcement from work, research on job satisfaction with people with disabilities supports early intervention focusing on barrier removal. Rubin et al. (2016) stated that job satisfaction is a direct function of the person's ability to get what he or she wants from work. Through barrier removal,

rehabilitation professionals can increase individuals' capabilities to perform well and to get what they want from their jobs. Several authors have reported that utilization of accommodation strategies is one positive predictor of job retention (Leslie et al., 2015; Strauser, 2021). Inge et al. (2016) found that, although people with MS lacked awareness of workplace accommodations, they were very interested in such information. Therefore, this administration manual is valuable to many employed people with disabilities because it introduces the WES as a means for identifying barriers and accommodations and, in the sections to follow, overviews accommodation strategies and resources. In the final section, the Guide recommends procedures for presenting accommodation needs to one's employer. Before moving to these sections, the reader is reminded of the underlying rationale for the WES: Barrier reduction is related to increased job mastery and increased job satisfaction. Increased job mastery and job satisfaction improve the probability of job retention.

### **Part 3: Information on Reasonable Accommodation Strategies and Resources**

Research findings from the WES and employed persons with disabilities indicate a strong relationship between one's ability to gain access to the workplace and to perform essential job functions and feelings of job mastery and job satisfaction. Accordingly, the first application of the WES involves assisting the employee in identifying barriers to worksite accessibility and job performance. The second application should involve the employee in suggesting accommodations that would reduce or remove those barriers.

Title I (Employment) of the ADA requires most employers to participate in identifying and providing reasonable accommodations that enable qualified individuals with disabilities to do their jobs (JAN, 2021). Hence, use of the WES to identify accommodations to remove on-the-job barriers is consistent with the law of the land. Specifically, Title I of the ADA describes nine categories of reasonable accommodations: restructuring of existing facilities, restructuring of the job, modification of work schedules, reassignment to another position, modification of equipment, installation of new equipment, provision of qualified readers and interpreters, modification of application and examination procedures, and flexible personal leave policies. The paragraphs to follow provide descriptions and examples of each category; much of the material is based on ADA regulations as interpreted by Roessler and Rumrill (2018) and JAN (2021).

**Restructuring of existing facilities.** One of the primary requirements of Title I is that the work environment must be accessible to persons with disabilities. All facilities that are or will be used by an employee or applicant with a disability must be reasonably modified to accommodate the person's individual needs. This does not imply, however, that all facilities must be entirely accessible to all persons with disabilities. Title I regulations make it very clear that reasonable accommodations are to be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis. The following are examples of how existing facilities can be restructured to create accessible work environments:

- Installation of a wheelchair ramp at the entrance of a building
- Installation of an automatic electric door opener
- Reservation of widened parking spaces for wheelchair users
- Renovation of restrooms
- Installation of flashing alarm systems for persons with hearing impairments
- Installation of handrails and textured detectable warnings on stairways for persons with visual impairments

For additional information on restructuring existing facilities, employers, employees, and rehabilitation professionals can consult the Accessibility Guidelines and the Union Accessibility Guidelines. Both

publications are available from the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Specific technical assistance information can be obtained from the Architectural and Transportation Compliance Board.

**Restructuring of the job.** A job may be restructured for an employee with a disability if the accommodation involves marginal functions. Job restructuring may include transferring certain tasks to another employee, assigning different tasks to the person with a disability, and eliminating tasks that the person with a disability cannot perform. For example, a marginal function of an administrative assistant's position might involve answering telephones for thirty minutes each day. A person who is deaf would be unable to perform that function, which would require the employer to assign telephone duties to another employee. Job restructuring is an effective and usually inexpensive means of accommodating an employee with a disability, but it is limited to the marginal or secondary responsibilities of the position. Essential functions, which should be specified in written job descriptions, are not subject to restructuring.

**Modification of work schedules.** Modified work schedules offer a reasonable accommodation that is usually inexpensive and often easy to arrange. This option includes both flexible (working the same number of hours on a different schedule) and reduced time assignments. The effects of a disability may seem to necessitate significant changes in an employee's schedule, but slight modifications can often yield impressive results. For example, a person with MS who encounters chronic fatigue has difficulty sustaining her physical stamina in the afternoon. Rather than reducing her schedule to mornings only, she might request an extended two-hour lunch period in which she could take a nap and regain her strength for the afternoon. She might then work an extra hour at the end of her shift to make up the time.

**Reassignment to another position.** In some cases, an accommodation is not possible for the employee's present position but would be feasible for another job. If the employer and employee agree that the other position would be more appropriate, they may consider reassignment to that position as an accommodation option. Reassignment may not be used to limit, segregate, or otherwise discriminate against the employee. The position should be vacant at the time of reassignment or expected to be vacant within a reasonable time frame. If the employee is qualified for the new position, it should be equivalent in pay and status to the previous job. If the employee is not qualified for reassignment to an equivalent-status position, the employer may reassign him or her to a lower-grade position.

**Modification of equipment.** Unless associated costs constitute an undue hardship for the employer, employees with disabilities must have access to the equipment that is routinely used on their jobs. Often, existing equipment can be modified with slight expense and minor inconvenience. The following are three examples of modifications to existing equipment:

- An administrative assistant with MS experiences numbness in her hands and has difficulty typing on a standard keyboard. Her employer purchases a large-key keyboard and a voice-activated software program so she can access the computer more efficiently.
- A man with a hearing impairment works as a telemarketer but finds it difficult to use a telephone set at standard volume. His employer installs a voice amplifier inside the receiver.
- A woman with a visual impairment works as a computer programmer but finds it difficult to read the monitor. Her employer installs a software package that enlarges images on the screen.

**Installation of new equipment.** When existing equipment cannot be modified, the employer must consider new equipment that enables the employee to perform the essential functions of his or her job. The employer is only required, however, to provide equipment for that particular job, not equipment to be used outside

of work in the person's daily life. As with all other types of reasonable accommodations, costs of new equipment must not constitute an undue hardship for the employer. The following are examples of new equipment accommodations:

- A man with rheumatoid arthritis has limited use of his hands. His job as a warehouse organizer requires him to complete online forms and process work orders. His employer installs a voice-activated computer system that does not require fine motor dexterity for him to perform his job.
- A woman with a visual impairment works as a magazine editor. To assist her with the large volume of reading that is required, her employer provides a closed-circuit magnification machine and a voice-output program for her computer that reads aloud to the worker.

**Provision of qualified readers and interpreters.** Readers and interpreters are often provided as reasonable accommodations for persons with visual and hearing impairments. Trained assistants facilitate access to written and spoken information, and they can serve a valuable function in enabling employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their jobs. Again, the undue hardship provision applies, and small employers may have difficulty providing personal assistance services on an ongoing basis. In most cases, however, readers and interpreters are only needed for a small portion of the day.

**Modification of application and examination procedures and training materials.** Title I requires that application and examination procedures and training materials be made accessible to people with disabilities based on individual need. Applications and examinations must assess the ability, not the limitations, of the individual to perform the position's essential functions. If the application process requires an examination, the employer must give advance notice so that the employee can request accommodations. Examination accommodations may include readers, scribes, extended time, a quiet environment, and elimination of sections that the applicant cannot complete due to disability.

If training/continuing education is offered, employers are required to make reasonable accommodations. Training accommodations may include accessible sites, modified formats for materials (e.g., Braille, large print, or simplified language), and modified administration of training (e.g., interpreters, readers, job coaches, or extended time).

**Flexible personal leave policies.** Flexible personal leave is considered a reasonable accommodation when an employee requires time off due to his or her disability. The employer may consider allowing the employee to use accrued leave, advance leave ("borrowing" from future accrued leave), and/or leave without pay. Flexible leave policies may be implemented to accommodate both the employee's disability and his or her responsibility for family members (spouse or dependent children) who have disabilities.

Understanding the types of accommodations that are available to facilitate job retention will assist the WES respondent in applying information from the structured interview to the ADA's accommodation request process. Before that process begins, however, the interviewee should be informed of the numerous resources that support the integration and inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

**Resources: Who Can Help Implement Reasonable Accommodations?** The Accommodation Plan (Section 6 in the WES) asks the respondent to identify solutions and resources for his or her top-priority accommodation needs. One excellent resource in this regard is the ADA National Network (800-949-4232 [V/TTY], [adata.org](http://adata.org)), which includes 10 regional technical assistance centers funded by the Federal government to assist people with disabilities and employers free of charge in implementing the requirements of the ADA. The worker may also want to contact his or her state's Assistive Technology Project

([at3center.net/stateprogram](http://at3center.net/stateprogram)) and the state Vocational Rehabilitation program ([rsa.ed.gov/about/states](http://rsa.ed.gov/about/states)). In addition, the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) at West Virginia University is a free and confidential resource with information about accommodations in the workplace and many other aspects of inclusion and ADA implementation. Contact JAN at 800-526-7234 (voice), 877-781-9403 (TTY), or visit [askjan.org](http://askjan.org).

In addition to knowledge of accommodation resources, rehabilitation professionals and workers with disabilities need information on programs that provide legal assistance. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC; 800.669.4000 [voice]; 800.669.6820 [TTY]; [eeoc.gov](http://eeoc.gov)) enforces Title I provisions prohibiting discrimination in employment and offers information, referrals to other sources, and technical assistance regarding Title I. The U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division (202.353.1555 [voice]; 800.877.8339 [TTY]; [www.justice.gov/crt](http://www.justice.gov/crt)) enforces and provides information on Titles II and III of the ADA, which cover government services and public accommodations in commercial facilities. The Internal Revenue Service (800.829.1040 [voice]; 800.829.4059 [TTY]; [irs.gov](http://irs.gov)) provides information to businesses and people with disabilities regarding tax credits, exemptions, and deductions.

Rehabilitation professionals should also encourage their clients to consult disability advocacy groups for information on employment accommodations. Examples of these consumer organizations include the American Association of People with Disabilities (202.521.4316; [aapd.com](http://aapd.com)), the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (800.344.4867; [nationalmssociety.org](http://nationalmssociety.org)), the American Council for the Blind (800.424.8666; [acb.org](http://acb.org)), the ARC (800.433.5255; [thearc.org](http://thearc.org)), the United Spinal Association (800.962.9629; [unitedspinal.org](http://unitedspinal.org)), and the Epilepsy Foundation of America (800.332.1000; [epilepsy.com](http://epilepsy.com)).

#### **Part 4: Requesting Reasonable Accommodations: An Employee-Initiated, Collaborative Process**

Once employees have completed the WES interview and incorporated suggestions from rehabilitation professionals and other resources, they are ready to begin collaborative accommodation planning with their employers. During this cooperative process, people with disabilities have an important ally in Title I of the ADA. Title I (Employment) requires most public and private employers to provide reasonable accommodations that enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their jobs (EEOC, 2021). The ADA not only guarantees people with disabilities the civil right to access employment opportunities, but it also requires considerable involvement of the individual with a disability in the accommodation process. Under Title I, the employee must (a) identify disability related barriers that are thwarting job performance; (b) initiate a request with the employer for a review of his or her accommodation needs; and (c) implement, with the cooperation of the employer, reasonable accommodations (Roessler & Rumrill, 2018). In other words, the accommodation process follows a "3-I" model: identify, initiate, and implement. This 3-I model is fully operationalized in Roessler and Rumrill's (2018) "win-win" approach to reasonable accommodations, and rehabilitation professionals and workers with disabilities are encouraged to consult that guide following the administration of the WES.

First developed for the National MS Society in 1992 and updated regularly since then the "win-win" approach begins when the worker discloses his/her disability status to the employer. Until that disclosure is made, the worker is not entitled to reasonable accommodations. Roessler and Rumrill (2018) recommended that a friendly, non-adversarial dialogue with the employer is the most effective way to arrange reasonable accommodations. Rehabilitation professionals and other advocates can guide the worker and employer through the process.

According to Roessler and Rumrill (2018), formal, legalistic language should be avoided to every extent possible. The “win-win” approach focuses on enhancing productivity and continuing success instead of emphasizing health-related problems and work limitations. It emphasizes the mutual benefits of reasonable accommodations; both the employee and employer win when the person stays employed.

The following are the recommended steps of the “win-win” approach. Note that these steps are written as if they are being directed to the worker himself or herself.

1. Request an in-person meeting with your supervisor or the HR director in your organization.
2. State that you want to discuss your accommodation needs and emphasize your desire to be even more productive on the job.
3. State that you have a disability, unless your employer already knows that you do.
4. Specify the duties or tasks that you wish to discuss.
5. Rather than focusing on the difficulties you are having with job performance, emphasize how the accommodations you will implement will enable you to continue working productively.
6. Cite the accommodation(s) that you have identified as effective.
7. State how the accommodation benefits your job performance.
8. Describe the resources available to assist in implementing the accommodation and the nature of the resource.
9. State what you think the approximate cost will be.
10. Ask for agreement from the employer and confirm agreement with an affirming statement (“Will this work for you?” “Good, I appreciate it.”).
11. Restate the agreement, clarifying your responsibilities and responsibilities of the employer.
12. Close the interaction with a positive statement about the accommodation arrangements and your appreciation for the employer’s time and assistance.
13. Monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the accommodations that are implemented and follow up if accommodations are not implemented.

The collaborative steps outlined by Roessler and Rumrill (2018) underscore the importance of effective communication between the employee and employer, and rehabilitation professionals should encourage their clients in the postemployment phase to enter the accommodation request process with a good-faith effort to emphasize the mutual benefits of reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations improve job performance and reduce turnover, both of which have clear benefits to the employer. Moreover, the majority of employment accommodations cost nothing or very little to implement (Rubin et al., 2016), and it is important for both parties to consider cost-benefit issues.

Once the accommodation is in place, the employee should monitor its effectiveness and inform the employer of its suitability. If the accommodation involves technology, the employee may need training in its use. Most importantly, the employee must determine whether the accommodation enables him or her to be more productive on the job. Following an appropriate amount of on-the-job experience, the employee should discuss the effectiveness of the accommodation with the employer.

**Administrative and Legal Recourses.** As the word “reasonable” implies, accommodations must not constitute an undue hardship for the employer. Hence, the employer makes the final decision as to which accommodations will and will not be provided. However, in the event that the ADA’s non-adversarial accommodation process breaks down and fails to result in mutually acceptable solutions, the employee does have administrative and legal recourses. Rehabilitation professionals should refer inquiries to the

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (complaints must be filed within 180 days of the discriminatory action), state human rights agencies, disability advocates, and/or attorneys if the employee believes that his or her employer is unwilling to provide reasonable accommodations. Remedies under Title I include hiring, reinstatement, punitive and compensatory damages, and court orders to stop discriminatory conduct.

## **Part 5: Conclusion**

In keeping with rehabilitation professionals' commitment to provide responsive, comprehensive, and client-directed services for individuals with disabilities, practitioners must develop more effective strategies for promoting long-term career development following initial job placement. Developed as a postemployment intervention for adults with significant disabilities, the Work Experience Survey is an easy-to-administer interview that enables the respondent to identify his or her on-the-job barriers, propose reasonable suggestions for removing those barriers, and specify resources that can assist in implementing reasonable accommodations.

Although it comprises a powerful intervention in its own right, the WES is intended to be used as a vehicle for participation in a more elaborate intervention - encouraging employees with disabilities to invoke their rights to accommodations under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The process begins with the WES, but it is most effectively accompanied by (a) detailed information about accommodation strategies; (b) introduction to resource agencies that can assist in implementing accommodations; and (c) instruction regarding the ADA's nonadversarial accommodation request procedure, cooperative communication strategies, and remedies for employer discrimination. By using the WES as an introduction to the process of identifying, appraising, and removing on-the-job barriers to career development, rehabilitation professionals can offer their clients a much needed postemployment service.

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## Work Experience

12. What is your current job title?: \_\_\_\_\_

13. List three essential job functions that you perform regularly, e.g., operate heavy equipment and vehicles, retrieve data using a computer, develop publicity materials, or perform administrative duties.

1.

2.

3.

14. Total number of years employed: \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Number of months on current job: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Number of hrs. working per week: \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Annual Gross Income from current job: \_\_\_\_\_

18. How would you describe your employment?

Permanent: Full-time

Nonpermanent: Full-time Temporary/Seasonal

Permanent: Part-time

Nonpermanent: Part-time Temporary/Seasonal

19. Would you prefer to work?

Fewer hours than you currently do

More hours than you currently do

About the same number of hours that you currently do

20. On a scale of 1 to 5, how closely does your current job match your personal interests and skills?

1

2

3

4

5

Does not match  
at all

Reasonably  
good match

Perfect match

21. How satisfied are you with your current job?

1

2

3

4

5

Very dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Neutral

Satisfied

Very satisfied

22. How certain are you that you will be employed 1 year from now?

1	2	3	4	5
Not certain at all		50/50 chance		Completely certain

23. How would you describe your job performance?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent

24. Have you ever requested a job accommodation?

Yes                  No

If “Yes,” were you satisfied with your employer’s response to your request?

Yes                  No

If “Yes,” what accommodation did you receive?

25. Based on your experience in the workplace, use the 1 to 5 scale below to indicate your impression of employers. Check the box that best describes your answer.

My employer...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
is receptive to hiring people with disabilities.					
helps people with disabilities stay on the job.					
meets legal obligations to employees with disabilities.					
treats employees with disabilities the same as any other employees.					
is familiar with employment protections in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).					

26. How satisfied are you with your current work-life balance?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

27. How satisfied are you with your current quality of life?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

28. How satisfied are you with the transportation needed to maintain your employment?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

29. How satisfied are you with your access to technology on your job?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

30. How satisfied are you with your future employment prospects?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

31. How satisfied are you that your current housing meets your accessibility needs?

1	2	3	4	5
Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied

## Section 2: Accessibility

Check any problems you have getting to, from, or around on your job. List any other accessibility problems not included in the list. Describe solutions for your two most important accessibility barriers.

Parking	Elevators/Escalators	Seating/Tables
Bathrooms	Identification signs/labels	Evacuation routes
Temperature	Entrance	Getting to and from work
Public walks	Door widths	Food access/cafeteria
Water fountains	Stairs/Steps	Office supplies/equipment
Ventilation	Ramps (slopes/access)	Computer/other technology
Public transportation	Lighting	Online information
Public telephone	Access to personnel offices	Access to employee assistance programs/other support services
Work surfaces/areas	Floors/Floor covering	Email
Hazards	Warning devices	Home-based work station
Passenger loading zones	Access to general use areas	

List any other accessibility problems:

Describe solutions for your two most important accessibility barriers.

1.

2.

Solution 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

Solution 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

### Section 3: Essential Job Functions

Check any essential job functions or conditions<sup>1</sup> that pose problems for you. Describe the two most important job modifications that you need, e.g., modifying existing equipment or work schedules, adding new technology, or changing the type of work you do.

#### Physical Abilities

Working 8 hours	Reaching	Using both legs
Standing all day	Talking	Using left hand
Standing part of the time	Seeing well	Using right hand
Walking for 8 hours	Hearing well	Using left leg
Sitting	Handling	Using right leg
Stooping/kneeling	Keyboarding	Lifting _____ lbs.
Climbing	Raising arms above shoulders	Carrying _____ lbs.
Pulling	Twisting/turning	
Pushing	Using both hands	

#### Cognitive Abilities

Immediate memory	Thought processing	Problem solving
Short-term memory	Reasoning description	Planning
Judgment: safety	Decision making	Organizing
Judgment: interpersonal		

#### Task-Related Abilities

Repetitive work	Able and licensed to drive	Access to internet
Work pace/sequencing	Attain precise standings/limits	Use keyboard
Variety of duties	Follow specific instructions	Use voice input/ output with computer applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
Work volume	Writing	
Perform under stress/ deadlines	Remembering	
Little performance feedback	Speaking/communication	
Read written instructions	Initiating work activities	
	Use telephone/call phone	

#### Social Abilities

Working alone	Interacting with supervisor	Connecting virtually with others
Working around others	Supervising others	
Working with others	Working with hostile others	

#### Working Conditions

Too hot	Obstacles in path	Outdoors
Too cold	Dust	Sometimes outdoors
Temperature changes	Fumes	Always inside
Too wet	Odors	Emergencies
Too humid	Noise	Other distractions
Slippery surfaces	Lighting	

## Company Policies

Inflexible work schedule	Vague job descriptions
No accrual of sick leave	Infrequent reviews of job
Lack of flextime	Rigid sick/vacation leave policies
No “comp” time	Inflexible rules regarding working from home
Inflexible job descriptions	

Describe the two job accommodations that would be most helpful to you, e.g., restructuring of the job, modifications of work schedules, reassignment to another position, modification of equipment, or provision of readers and interpreters.

- 
- 

Accommodation 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

Accommodation 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from RehabMatch. Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation.

*Work Experience Survey continues on the following page.*

## Section 4: Job Mastery

Check any concerns that affect your success in completing career advancement tasks.<sup>2</sup> Describe one solution for each of your two most important concerns.

### 1. Getting the job done

Believing that others think I do a good job.

Knowing what I need to know to do my job.

Understanding how my job fits into the “big picture,” i.e., the meaning of my job.

Having what I need to do my job (knowledge, tools, supplies, equipment, technology).

### 2. Fitting into the workforce

Scheduling and planning my work ahead of time.

Doing a good job.

Working mostly because I like the job.

Willing to make changes when necessary.

### 3. Learning the ropes

Knowing who to go to if I need help.

Knowing my way around work.

Understanding company rules and regulations.

Feeling a “part” of what is going on at work.

### 4. Getting along with others

Eating lunch with friends at work.

Looking forward to seeing my friends at work.

Having many friends at work.

Knowing what is expected of me socially.

### 5. Getting ahead

Having a plan for where I want to be in my job in the future.

Knowing what training to complete to improve chances for promotion.

Understanding what I have to do to get promoted.

Talking with supervisor about what I need to do to get promoted.

### 6. Planning the next career step

Considering what I will do in the future.

Wanting to become more specialized in my job.

Knowing what the opportunities are in this company.

Having a good idea of how to advance in this company.

Describe one solution for each of your two most important career advancement concerns.

1.

2.

Solution 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1

2

3

4

5

Not at all  
Optimistic

Minimally  
Optimistic

Neutral

Somewhat  
Optimistic

Very  
Optimistic

Solution 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1

2

3

4

5

Not at all  
Optimistic

Minimally  
Optimistic

Neutral

Somewhat  
Optimistic

Very  
Optimistic

<sup>2</sup>Selected items from the Career Mastery Inventory. Used with permission of the author, John O. Crites, Crites, Career Consultants, Boulder, Colorado.

*Work Experience Survey continues on the following page.*

### Section 5: Satisfaction<sup>3</sup>

Rate your current job on each of the following statements by checking one response for each item. Describe two ways to make your job more personally satisfying.

In my job...	Too little	About right	Too much
I do things that make use of my abilities.			
The job gives me a feeling of accomplishment.			
I am busy all the time.			
I can work alone on the job.			
I do something different every day.			
My pay compares well with that of other workers.			
The job provides for steady employment.			
The job has good working conditions.			
The job provides an opportunity for advancement.			
I get recognition for the work I do.			
I tell people what to do.			
I am “somebody” in the community.			
My co-workers are easy to make friends with.			
I can do the work without feeling it is morally wrong.			
I can do things for other people.			
The company administers its policies fairly.			
My boss backs up the workers with top management.			
My boss trains the workers well.			
I try out some of my ideas.			
I make decisions on my own.			
I have a good idea of how to advance in this company.			

Describe two ways to make your job more personally satisfying.

1.

2.

Solution 1: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

Solution 2: How optimistic are you that you could implement this solution?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Optimistic	Minimally Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic

<sup>3</sup>Work reinforcers from the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment. Dawis, R. & Lofquist, L. 1984. A psychological theory of work adjustment. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

**Section 6: Review**

Review Sections 2–5 of this survey and list the three most significant barriers to success in your work. Describe their solutions and people/resources who can help. Be specific.

**Barrier 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

Who can help? How can they help?

**Barrier 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

Who can help? How can they help?

**Barrier 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

Who can help? How can they help?

This edition of the Work Experience Survey was developed and validated by Stuart Rumrill, M.S., CRC; Richard Roessler, Ph.D., CRC; and Phillip Rumrill, Ph.D., CRC. The Work Experience Survey is a non-copyrighted, public access product of the University of Kentucky Human Development Institute.

