Let’s Get to Work
Best Practices in Employment Preparation

By
Pamela Clark, M.A.
Director of Autism Schools
The Help Group
Summit 2013
It is important that our students with special needs be provided with an educational experience that links the classroom to real-world work experiences.

When looking for a career development model, one important consideration should be that it is a continuum of educational experiences.
Continuum Characteristics

- The model should be developmentally based.
- The model components should not exist in isolation and should not be mutually exclusive as to the activities in each.
Phases of the Continuum

1) Community Awareness
2) Interests and Job Awareness
3) Pre-Vocational Development
4) Vocational Skill Preparation
5) Skills Application
6) Specialized Services/Referrals
Students need an understanding of themselves.

- Abilities
- Values
- Interests

Also an understanding of others and the world of work.
Examine individual interests and abilities

- Interest Inventories
- Ability Assessments

Skill Requirements of the Job
Six assessment areas:

1) Job Awareness
2) Needs
3) Interests
4) Skills and Abilities
5) Work Habits
6) Daily Living Skills
Vocational Skill Development

- Target the development of the related academic and job skills required for a specific occupational area.

- Based on on-going assessments and put into an individual educational plan.
Skills Application

- Working in the REAL World
- Use real work as the developmental strategy
- This completes a comprehensive approach to preparation of the individual
Specialized Services/Referrals

- Most services are provided by the school or school system
- Important to include Regional Center
- May include Department of Rehab
Critical Considerations

- The ability to interact with co-workers and supervisors is essential to job retention.
- The program should place strong emphasis on social skill development.
The Help Group’s Vocational Education Program

- Serve young adults between the ages of 18 and 22 with special needs.
- The program works to promote growth and development using a structured curriculum combining classroom instruction with real-world application.
Assessment Drives Instruction

While Career Development curriculum provides instruction at various levels, effective assessment and accurate evaluation are essential. Assessment should drive instruction.

Career Inventories:

- Combination of formal and informal assessments
- Interviews
- Observation of the individual
Evaluation can occur at various levels

- Self-Evaluation
- Staff Evaluation
- Job Site Evaluation
**Employee Performance Review**

**Employee Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Justin M.</th>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>Eder Velasquez</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Sales Associate - Intern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1/14/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review Period</td>
<td>09/12 to 01/13</td>
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**Ratings**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 = Poor</th>
<th>2 = Fair</th>
<th>3 = Satisfactory</th>
<th>4 = Good</th>
<th>5 = Excellent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Knowledge</strong></td>
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<td>Understands &amp; performs assigned duties and job requirements</td>
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<td><strong>Comments</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Work Quality</strong></td>
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<td>Accomplishes accurate work with minimal assistance or supervision</td>
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<td><strong>Comments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance/Punctuality</strong></td>
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<td>Demonstrates punctuality and begins work as scheduled</td>
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<td><strong>Comments</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Initiative</strong></td>
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<td>Takes effective action without being told</td>
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<td><strong>Comments</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Communication/Listening Skills</strong></td>
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<td>Offers assistance, is courteous and works well with customers and fellow workers</td>
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<td><strong>Comments</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Dependability</strong></td>
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<td>Manages own time effectively</td>
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<td><strong>Overall Rating</strong></td>
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**Verification of Review**

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<tr>
<th>Manager Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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Student Evaluation

Worksite: ________________________________________________

Job Coach: ______________________________________________

1. Overall my internship was (Circle ONE):
   
   Very helpful
   
   Helpful
   
   Okay
   
   Not helpful

2. At this worksite I felt:
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

   Because
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

3. Some important things I learned were:
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

4. The most helpful part of this internship was:
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
5. Something I have improved in is:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

6. A work goal I have set for myself is:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

7. Some changes that would make the internships better are:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

8. I believe this internship will help me get a job YES/NO (Circle ONE)

9. The internship helped me learn new job skills YES/NO (Circle ONE)

10. The Job Coach was helpful and gave me good feedback YES/NO (Circle ONE)

11. Some changes that would make the Job Coach more helpful are:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

12. I would/ would NOT (Circle ONE) recommend the internship program to my friends because:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Other Comments:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
Vocational Training

Provides hands-on learning through managing and working at on-campus businesses in addition to receiving site-based training at local community businesses and establishments.
Vocational Training

Simulated Work Environment

- Pair classroom instruction with various multiple classroom businesses and school-wide enterprises.
  - E-Commerce
  - Student run café and coffee shop
  - Campus maintenance
  - Gardening
  - Clothing Resource Program
  - Student Run Store
  - Various Office Jobs and Errands
Vocational Training

Off–Campus Internships

- Job coaches provide support to the individual within a real-world work experience in a natural environment.
  - Best Buy
  - Walgreens
  - Dollar Tree
  - Kmart
  - YMCA Preschool
  - Regal Cinemas
  - Sharkey’s Restaurant
Internship Considerations

Internships are designed to provide a realistic, meaningful work experience for the individual.

- Length of work shift
- Length of internship
- Tasks
- Intern expectations
- Role of the manager
- Role of the job coach
Students show the most growth in all areas—academic, social, emotional and behavioral when provided a safe, predictable and structured learning environment.

The Bridgeport Vocational Center works under the philosophy that the way to strengthen skills is to highlight what a student is doing correctly by attending to appropriate behaviors.
Students work toward building necessary skills to deal effectively with their need for attention, assistance or break time, handling anger, frustration and over-excitement appropriately, and developing social and problem-solving skills which allow them more control in dealing with negative situations.
Positive behavior support plans should include strategies from each of the following categories:

- A) Instructional Materials
- B) Responses that Enable Desired Behavior
- C) Reinforcement Strategies
Instructional Materials

- Teach Classroom Limits
- Model behavior
- Shape approximations of desired behaviors
- Incorporate multi-modalities
- Offer choices
- Teach communication skills
- Teach desired behavior
- Teach self-management skills
- Teach social skills
Strategies to Elicit Desired Behavior

- Adult proximity
- Verbal redirection
- Physical prompts or assists
- Restating requests
- Rule clarification
- Ecological manipulations
- Purposeful rewarding of desired behavior
Reinforcement Strategies

- Self reinforcement
- Peer reinforcement
- Social reinforcement
- Activity reinforcement
- Tangible reinforcement
- Primary reinforcement
Token Economy – It Works!

- School-wide System
- Classroom System
- Individual Plans
Point Sheets are based on school-wide and individual goals.

Students should be active participants in development of target areas and self-evaluation and points/evaluations.
All of the components of this presentation should be considerations when looking for a model Vocational Education Program.
References

The Help Group’s Vocational Education Center
Work Experience: A Resource Manual;
Arizona State Task Force