

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

Empowering Lives

FOUNDATION

People – Purpose – Employment

Empowering people to live connected lives by helping them discover their purpose and talents through social experiences and customized meaningful employment.



Overview of Customized Employment

Customized Employment is a strategy that provides persons with complex lives and significant barriers to employment with an alternative to traditional demand jobs. According to the new definition used by the US Department of Labor, Customized Employment refers to:

Individualizing the employment between employees & employers in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an personalized determination of the strengths, needs, and interest of the person. And is designed to meet the specific unmet needs of a local employer. (Federal register, June 26, 2002, Vol 67. No. 123 pp 43154-43149)

Customized Employment relies on negotiated rather than a traditional approach to employers; ie: filling out applications and waiting for a call for an interview. Job developers must be available to assist job seekers in developing personalized profiles, proposals, and visual resume. Job Developers meet with local employers to find their un-met needs, and introduce the job seeker prior to setting up an interview.

This approach to employment offers the promise of welcoming all persons with all abilities, who wish to secure meaningful employment. It defines the critical role of employment related task to empower the job seeker making paid employment a viable option for everyone.

DISCOVERY

The Discovery profile differs from comparison-based testing procedures and assessments in that it utilizes already existing information gathered through a relationship between the job seeker and the Discovery Consultant. During this time, we Discover the job seekers Interest, Contributions, and Conditions for Success. Discovery is used as a guide for customizing an employment relationship between a job seeker and an employer. This process considers the job seekers entire life experiences rather than a single instance of performance. A discovery profile tells the job seekers story as an introduction to a local employer, that creates a positive employment outcome.

The Discovery journey begins with a Discovery Consultant, who meets with the job seeker and their family at their home. These visits along with other discovery activities give the individual and their family information about their powerful roles in this process, while allowing the provider to compile basic information needed to begin the process.

The provider then schedules time to spend with the job seeker doing the activates that comprise their typical days. They will also accompany the job seeker to various activates, volunteer opportunities, and try a novel activity together. This interaction allows the discovery consultant to get to know the job seeker, learning their interests, contributions, and unique conditions for success, while spending time in the community where the job seeker is searching for employment.

The Narrative or Visual Resume: Capturing the information of Discovery

The Discovery profile introduces the job seeker to a local employer through a story about how they can help a local business through customized employment. The tools to tell the story are a written profile story, visual resume or video resume, the customized employment meeting, and a job development blueprint. After the profile is complete and a potential list of community employers is gathered according to interest. The job seeker leads the customized planning meeting, comprised of family, friends, support personnel, and community leaders that they feel can help them achieve meaningful employment. During this meeting, we discuss “what’s working & what’s not working”, Interests and tasks to be performed, various contacts for employment, and develop a blueprint for employment used in the job development process. For students, the profile becomes a work in progress during transition years, to guide in class selection; based on interest, contributions, and conditions for success. During the last year of schooling, a visual resume is created and a customized planning meeting is held to develop a job development blueprint, this assures employment options can be ready for transition upon graduation or post-secondary schooling

Customized Job Development

While the customized planning meeting clarifies the job seekers preferences and conditions for employment, it does not provide the job seeker with meaningful employment. Job finding efforts are initiated based on the “Blueprint” created during the customized planning meeting.

It is essential to explore any of the job seekers relationships, social capital, or their support circle’s relationships with targeted employers. This helps to make initial contact with prospective employers. In most cases, conventional job descriptions will not be appropriate for an applicant. Therefore, the job developer & discovery consultant must look beyond job openings to find unmet needs that the job seeker can contribute to their business in meaningful employment. Armed with the knowledge from the profile, the provider can search for job tasks and work cultures that fulfil the job seekers interest; meets their conditions for success, and matches their contributions. The job developer tours specific employers to assess their unmet needs, by looking at job tasks, employee routines, and work place culture. A successful Discovery placement will result in training a job seeker on the tasks they are being hired to perform, and training the employer on how to work best with their employee. This allows them to have a typical employer & employee relationship with natural supports from co-workers. Jobs are developed when an employer needs the task offered by the job seeker and a negotiation occurs to address their conditions for success. The “blueprint” match and the negotiation paired with the employers un-met needs result in meaningful employment, and the employer getting a reliable, loyal, employee to provide those unmet needs.

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