DISCOVERY & CUSTOMIZED WORK-BASED LEARNING

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AFTER TODAY’S TRAINING
YOU WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Describe the Discovering ME process
- Identify some of the possible benefits of this process for students, families, schools and agencies
What do you think is the employment rate for people with disabilities ages 18-64 in Virginia?

Do the math... how many of your students?

Employment Rate - 37%
What do you think your former students/your child will do after graduating from high school if they are not employed?

- Social Isolation
- Living in Poverty
- Unhealthy
- Connections to Criminal Justice System
“Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability”
VIRGINIA’S COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYMENT FIRST

Customized employment is a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both.

Discovery is the critical first step in the Customized Employment process; it guides job seekers through a process of finding out who they are, what they want to do, and what they have to offer.


Lead Center, May, 2015, Frequently Asked Questions: Using Customized Employment’s Discovery and Group Discovery Models to Promote Job Seeker Success in American Job Centers
WHY ARE WE LEARNING ABOUT DISCOVERY?

The Discovering ME process:

1. Promotes career exploration and readiness which the first step of Customized Employment and job placement

1. Is recognized by VDOE as an age-appropriate transition assessment.

1. Helps collect information that can be used in classrooms and in the community.
DISCOVERING ME!

- One size does not fit all!
- Do we expect too much?
- School work is a strong predictor of adult employment.
- We cannot continue to do the same and expect different results.
TRADITIONAL TRANSITION ASSESSMENTS

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:

• Can this student work?
• Which career or type of job will be best?

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DISCOVERY AS AN ASSESSMENT ANSWERS THE QUESTION:

- Who is this person?
- How can this person’s life experiences translate into employment possibilities?

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HOW DO WE BEGIN?
Determine the Team

- Student
- Family members & friends (if invited by family)
- Case manager/teacher
- Para-professionals
- Department of Aging and Rehabilitation/Community Service Board/other agencies
- In-home providers
- Related service providers (PT, OT, Speech)
- Behavior Specialist
Discovering Me Process

Meeting #1 (Collecting)

- Begin collection of information
  - Contributions I can make
  - Interests I have shown
  - My conditions for success
  - Challenges to consider

Meeting #2 (Building)

- Examine 21st Century Workplace Skills and build opportunities
  - Home
  - School
  - Community

Meeting #3 (Exploring)

- Explore Career Clusters and make sure student information, opportunities and career clusters are coordinated
EXAMPLES...
**Students:**
- Provides opportunities to practice self-determination skills
- Builds foundation for individualized work-based learning and job development
- Shifts focus from label and provides focus and motivation for school participation.

**Teachers:**
- Builds better transitions among teachers, grades, schools and adult life
- Meets Indicator 13 compliance
- Builds work-based learning opportunities that are focused on the individual and not on the program

**Families:**
- Encourages families to learn how to teach and support skills at home
- Increases collaboration with schools and community
- Provide families with a strategy for evaluating opportunities and jobs

**For all:**
- Supports early transition planning
- Increases meaningful communication
- Team approach (we are not in this alone)
- Increase in expectations
- Assists in developing coordinated IEP
- No costs/no program to buy
FOUR PLACES ON PATH TO EMPLOYMENT

1. I have a job but would like a better one or to move up

1. I want a job! I need help to find one.

1. I’m not sure about work. I need help to learn more.

1. I don’t think I want to work, but I may not know enough about it.

Where are your students on the path?

Employment First Rule. Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities.
To Learn More....
www.centerontransition.org

http://centerontransition.org/listserv/index.cfm
RESOURCES


Center on Transition Innovations
www.centerontransition.org

The Process of Discovery webcast by Ellen Condon
http://www.worksupport.com/training/viewWebcast.cfm/230

Customized Employment webcast by Ellen Condon
http://www.worksupport.com/training/webcastDetails.cfm/229
RESOURCES

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