

Florida Provider Network



University of South Florida,
Division of Applied Research and
Education Support
Funded by the
Florida Developmental
Disabilities Council



Awareness Marketing for Jobs for People with Disabilities

Campaign for Disability Employment Launched

The Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE) is a collaborative effort to promote positive employment outcomes for people with disabilities by encouraging employers and others to recognize the value and talent they bring to the workplace. Working to raise awareness and change attitudes, the CDE has developed a What Can YOU Do? public education effort. Its aim is to reinforce that people with disabilities want to work and that their talents and abilities positively impact businesses both financially and organizationally.

The Campaign offers a range of education and outreach tools, all designed to engage employers, people with disabilities, family and educators, and the general public. The centerpiece is a community-building Web site, <http://www.whatcanyoudocampaign.org>, which offers users the chance to learn, express their commitment to disability employment efforts and share what they "can do."

FPN Demonstrates Effectiveness of Online Training

FPN Uses Live Web-Based Training to Build Skills in Vocational Services



In an effort to promote cost-effective training practices in vocational services across such a large geographic state as Florida, the SCIETT Florida Provider Network has hosted two statewide professional development opportunities over the web. The trainer, Dale DiLeo, presented from a broadcast computer. Using PowerPoint, he guided participants who were at their own computers, through a topic online. Participants could follow the presentation and listen to the audio. The screen each user saw is illustrated above. The large window at right is the presentation, while small windows at left supplement the training by illustrating the following:

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Using the Web for In-Service Training...

- a video feed of the presenter,
- a list of participants and their roles,
- a chat room to post comments or questions so the user does not have to interrupt the speaker, and
- a note box where facilitators can post answers to comments or questions.

The software used was Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro, a program that streams video, audio, and interactive content in a live, virtual classroom. All the user needs to participate is a web browser and Adobe Flash Player software, already installed on more than 98% of Internet-connected desktops worldwide.



Clip of the chat room in Adobe Connect.

Attendees join meetings at the click of a URL, with no annoying wait times or downloads. In the rare case that a user needs to download Flash Player, it's a quick and easy process that takes less than a minute, even on slow connections.

Adobe Flash is the technology behind most video and interactive media on the Internet today. For web conferencing,

Flash technology enables the use of video, audio, and interactivity to create an almost-in-person experience for all attendees.

The first training, held November 17, was titled "Adult Learning Principles." Part of the SCIETT Project's goals is to build training capacity in local regions. This training discussed principles of adult learning in order for new trainers to engage and maximize participants in obtaining skills related to the employment of people with disabilities.

The second training, "Overcoming Today's Job Development Challenges," was held December 3. Finding quality employment in today's job market requires careful planning, marketing support, and a toolbox of job development strategies. This two-hour online session covered the key principles needed for finding jobs for people with disabilities. Topics included utilizing networking and the web to establish business relationships, understanding disclosure of disability, knowing and using the tools job seekers and job developers need to represent their best qualities (from resumes to skills portfolios), and organizing a system of job leads for business outreach.

For more information relating to the SCIETT Project please contact Brenda Clark at the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences at University of South Florida. Her email address is bclark@fmhi.usf.edu or phone 813-528-0595.



The Florida Able Trust Disability Mentoring Day 2009 Community Liaison Winners

Largest DMD Program Growth 2008-9

Carol Bowen/Will Miles, coordinating 425 participants in Okaloosa/Walton Counties. This program experienced a growth of more than 300 mentee and mentor participants since last year.

Large Market Population

Rose Lee Archer, coordinating 610 mentor/mentee participants in Palm Beach, Broward, and Martin counties.

April Baker, coordinating 451 mentor/mentee participants in Duval, Clay, St. Johns, Baker, and Nassau counties.

Medium Market Population

Darlene Maynard, coordinating 366 mentor/mentee participants in the Panhandle Area.

Emily Kennelly, coordinating 164 mentor/mentee participants in the Tallahassee/Leon County area.

Small Market Population

Mary Coody, coordinating 53 mentor/mentee participants at Madison County High School.

Pepper Anderson, coordinating nearly 20 participants at Palatka High School (Putnam County)

Most Motivated New Program Coordinator

Rogue Gallart, Central Florida DMD Planning Committee. Gallart joined the Florida team in March of this year and worked diligently to coordinate a new DMD collaboration between the Center for Independent Living of Central Florida, Seminole County Public Schools, Orange County Public Schools, and Osceola County. Together, this team worked with nearly 450 mentor/mentee participants during October's activities.

Save the date for DMD 2010: Wednesday, October 20!



Finding and Hiring Quality Staff for Employment and Transition Services

By Dale DiLeo

How often has a new employment specialist been hired, but the person didn't meet expectations on the job? Although vocational professionals are aware of the importance of a good job match, we often forget to take the time to ensure one happens on our own team.

Finding and hiring the right people to enable job seekers with disabilities to have job opportunities and quality support is an important part of building an effective job placement team. Bad hiring makes life miserable for all, slows down agency outcomes and ultimately limits the individuals being served.

Not only that, if vocational professionals cannot make good hiring decisions internally, how can they act as a consultant for employers on hiring? Your credibility as an employment professional is on the line with employers every day based on all the staff who work with them. This means everyone needs to be proficient at hiring qualified candidates, as well as supporting each other to build skills and attitudes on the job.

Superperson: The Ideal Employment Specialist?

Good hiring begins with a knowledge of what type of person you are looking for. This means evaluating the work needs of the setting, as well as the social aspect of how work gets done. As you consider what kind of person to hire, you begin to envision the "ideal" individual, or someone who will:

- competently do the work that needs to be done
- fit in socially
- contribute positively to the work team
- be motivated by the challenge
- be satisfied by the pay available

In other words, we develop a picture of superman or superwoman, the perfect employee. Unfortunately, in the real world, there are few people who will qualify as ideal. We are all human, with skills, personalities, moods and difficulties. The trick is to make the best decision based

on a variety of factors, and to assist the person with good training and social support. Most candidates present a range of strengths and missing skills. For those things that may be missing, you will need to consider whether:

- the person is someone who can "grow into" the job – a person with innate ability or intuitive sense who will learn quickly because of good personal qualities
- the person will be able to do the job with a reasonable accommodation – an accommodation is not a concept limited to people with disabilities, it is also good management of resources.

Individuals who need time, support or accommodation are worth investing in, despite limited experience. Remember that you are an expert at job skill training, modification and support. These skills also can be applied to support the people that you hire.

Competencies Needed to Provide Career Services

As part of considering what kind of person succeeds in providing vocational support, you should begin with a set of core competencies you expect the person to be able to master. For example, although there are numerous traits a staff person should have in providing effective career services, use a list of competencies to serve as a starting point in thinking about core qualities. (*See box next page.*)

Roles and Job Descriptions

There are many different ways to organize staff so they can find jobs related to consumer's career goals and provide support. Most agencies, however, usually have the following basic kinds of direct service positions. As agencies grow and specialize, they may develop other kinds of positions as well.

The Employment Specialist/Business Consultant

The position of employment specialist is the point where vocational services actually are provided. Most employment specialists have direct service roles related to:

- guidance in career planning
- job development and marketing
- job analysis

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Finding and Hiring Quality Employment Staff

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- job support
- job accommodations
- employer consultation
- troubleshooting
- transportation
- facilitator of social and work support

The Marketing/Job Development Specialist

Many job placement professionals recommend that most if not all of the agency's human resources are involved to some extent in marketing and job development. This is because it broadens the range of opportunities available. However, coordination and consistency are crucial. These can come from a marketing plan and a job development specialist responsible for coordinating everyone's activities in relation to the plan. Typically, a marketing and job development specialist will be involved with:

- familiarity with career goals of individuals served
- market plan development
- creation of agency and program marketing tools
- creation of personalized marketing tools
- consulting with local business on human resource needs
- networking with business
- acting as an employer resource for specific expressed business needs
- coordinating business advisory group
- public relations and community education
- providing business training
- outreach to employers with hiring needs
- development of job opportunities and interviews
- preliminary job analysis for job matching

Recruitment, Application and the ADA

Professionals must assure that qualified persons with disabilities are not screened out during recruitment and application. You must consult with employers in this area, and also apply the same guidelines to your own hiring.

Flexible Hiring through Job Carving

In this era of tight resources, you need good personnel allocation. Like employers, you must hire the best people you can find and compensate them fairly. An employee earning \$25,000 may become twice as productive as one who makes \$20,000.

Learn to identify hiring needs clearly and to spell out recruitment activities to include all kinds of people. Also, be flexible, as you never know where a "star" employee will be found. Even though you have worked to clearly identify your work needs and the kind of person you are seeking, don't rule out potential workers because they do not fit the profile perfectly.

Sometimes a person will have the right personality, but will lack a critical skill for a fixed job description you have developed. For example, he or she may be unavailable at a key time or have a driving restriction. This doesn't necessarily mean that the person must be eliminated from consideration. You might be able to carve out a position that will work for the person and for you by adjusting responsibilities, schedules or equipment.

Customizing jobs specifically for an individual is more likely to meet the individual's needs, thus making he or she more productive. If you feel the fit is an otherwise good one, this can help you open up consideration of more kinds of people. This allows you to practice what supported employment preaches – hiring a greater diversity of people.

Desirable Competencies

- What supported employment is and how it works
- Business consultation (diversity, productivity, supervision)
- The experience and implications of having a specific disability
- Career and life planning
- Marketing and job development
- Promoting social relationships
- Skill training and behavioral support
- Job modification and adaptation
- Work culture analysis
- Job analysis
- Working with families
- Counseling
- Policy compliance
- Assistive technology
- Accessing specialized expertise
- Promoting self determination

Desirable Personality Traits

- Motivated to succeed
- Sense of humor
- Problem solving skills
- Able to work cooperatively
- Advocacy
- Able to learn and grow
- Respectful of others
- Flexibility