A Guide to Inclusive Job Development

Empowering people with disabilities through employment: a person-centered approach.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Self Advocacy Federation, Pan Disability Connection, Calgary Employment First Network, and the Albertans Advocating for Change focus group for your valuable contributions to this document.

The contributors in the creation of the best practices are the members of the Job Developer Committee which is a sub-committee under the Pan-Disability Connection. It brings together multiple Edmonton based organizations in the field of supported employment. The Job Developer's work with various marginalized populations to help find employment with the end goal of creating belonging and meaning in people's lives as well as supporting and educating employers. The Job Developer Committee strives to collaborate in the interest of finding more effective ways to innovate and break down systematic barriers. We would like to thank all past and present committee members for their knowledge and expertise lent to the best practices. Committee member organizations are on page 19.

Introduction

Utilizing the collective information from our diverse organizations we have put together this guide with the intention of uniting our collective knowledge in the field of Job Development. We hope that this information will be used by new and existing Job Developers within all Human Services sectors to create a baseline of knowledge and work from a common baseline.

Most of the committee is comprised of disability-focused organizations and thus this document will have a disability lens.

Employment is a universal right for everyone. Unfortunately, many marginalized populations face systemic barriers as well as discrimination (conscious and unconscious), which leads to reduced opportunities and access to employment.

Employment is a universal right for everyone. Unfortunately, many marginalized populations face attitudinal (spoken and unspoken), physical, communication, technological, social, systemic barriers and beyond. This also includes discrimination (conscious and unconscious), which leads to reduced opportunities and access to employment. The benefits for access to employment are well known and include increased financial freedom, increased stability, and is a key component of community inclusion. Job development within the Human Services sector arose out of the need to break down barriers and advocate on behalf of those seeking equal access to employment.

Inclusive Employment: Untapped Profit for All

The Truth of Exclusion

People with disabilities have historically been, and continue to be, marginalized and excluded from many aspects of their communities, including employment. Although there have been improvements, recent statistics show exclusion is still prominent.

- 22% of Canadians 15 and over live with at least one disability.[1]

- Almost 15% of people with disabilities live in poverty.[2]

- About 45% of people experiencing homelessness live with a disability or mental illness.[3]

- Of people who live with a disability, about 1 in 4 are categorized as low income. *[4]

- Of Canadians aged 25 – 64, approximately 59% of people with disabilities are employed, while their counterparts without disabilities show an 80% employment rate.[5]

- Among unemployed Canadians, 22% of people without a disability were in low income, compared with 35% for those with a physical–sensory disability, 46% for those with a mental–cognitive disability, and 47% for those who had a combination of both.[6]

*Low income is defined as living in a household that earns less than half of the median Canadian income.

Benefits of Inclusive Hiring

Including people with disabilities in the workforce not only provides individuals with a sense of fulfillment and an opportunity for financial autonomy, but it also has a major impact on employers and society as a whole.

Life Satisfaction

Unemployed Canadians report significantly lower life satisfaction compared to their employed counterparts.[7] On top of having fewer means to meet material needs, psychology studies have shown that unemployment can lead to a lower sense of self-worth and higher levels of mental distress.[8]

Accommodations for People with Disabilities can be Inexpensive and Effective

Accommodations are often viewed as something that is only required for people with disabilities. However, the fact is that all people require some kind of accommodation but are just not aware of it. For example, some people may prefer to take many smaller breaks to walk around rather than taking longer breaks. Others may choose to work with headphones at times to help minimize distraction.

When employers begin to embrace the use of accommodations, they can reap the benefits of providing all employees with the opportunity to be more productive – not just people who live with disabilities.

Research regarding accommodations specifically for people with disabilities has shown that accommodations are overwhelmingly positive. For example:

In a survey of 718 employers, about 59% reported that providing workplace accommodations was FREE. Of accommodations that had a cost, most were a one-time cost of $500.[9]

Out of 714 employers, 75% reported that their workplace accommodations were either 'very effective' or 'extremely effective'.[10]

Hiring People with Disabilities is Profitable

Of surveyed employers 61% reported eliminated costs associated with training new employees due to staff retention, 38% reported saving workers' compensation & insurance costs, and 29% reported increased productivity.[11]

All the above speaks to what prominent business-man Mark Wafer has found throughout his many Tim Horton's franchises in Ontario. He has hired 135 people with disabilities and has reaped significant benefits. He has never had to fill out a WSRB claim for an employee with a disability, he has maintained a lower-than-average turnover rate, and he is experienced improved workplace morale.[12]

An Inclusive Approach Benefits Everyone

Innovating with disability in mind often results in a universal design approach that benefits everyone.[13] Take ramps and automatic doors, for example. Parents using strollers and delivery workers and aging peoples are some populations that make use of these regularly. Employees with disabilities can provide a unique perspective and be major catalysts of such innovations.

Definitions of Commonly Used Words

Job Developer

- A person who supports others to obtain employment through relationship building with job seekers and employers and works to job customize, advocate, and educate.

Job Carving/ Job Customizing

- A person-centered approach to defining job duties by matching the person's skills, interests, and accommodations and optimizing that to the employer's needs.

Job seeker/ Candidate/ Applicant/ Employee

- A person seeking or receiving paid employment.
    - *Candidate and applicant are more commonly used when speaking with businesses.

Supported Employment

- Supported Employment is a person-centered and community-based approach to assisting people to prepare, obtain, and maintain integrated, competitive paid employment. The type of support is variable and is dependent on a person's and employer's needs.

Employment

- Legally mandated wages for paid work that complies with industry and employment standards and takes place in an integrated (not exclusionary) community setting. This does not include unpaid activities such as volunteerism and work experience.

Volunteerism

- Non-paid work in a community setting working alongside other volunteers at a not-for-profit organization or a for-profit business that has consistent volunteers and tasks/duties different from paid roles. Could be used to fulfill an individual's interests, help build employable skills, and/or contribute to a resume.

Work Experience

- Unpaid work for a very short term (within a specified time frame) with the goal of testing career options, building skills, and making connections. Longer-term work experience (within a specified time frame) is legal standard paid work. Can include job shadowing and working interviews. The expectation of a work experience is, in effect, to turn into paid employment.

Internship

- Longer-term (up to a year) legally standard paid work which is career-oriented and industry-specific.

Job Search

- All activities that involve seeking out opportunities for meaningful employment.

Workplace Accommodations

- Accommodation means making changes to certain rules, standards, policies, workplace cultures, and physical environments to ensure that they don't create an undue hardship to a

person because of the person's mental or physical disability, religion, race, gender, or any other protected ground. However, the exception is if the accommodation causes undue hardship. Undue hardship occurs if the accommodation would create onerous conditions for an employer or service provider, for example, intolerable financial costs or serious

disruption to the business.[14]

Mentorship

- A mentorship is a short unpaid opportunity for a person to connect with a mentor in their chosen field. The mentor typically shares experiences, learning and insights from their own career journey and an in-depth understanding of the field and/or job. This can potentially lead to internship opportunities.

Employment Retention and Sustainability

- Gradual reduction of support offered by the Job Developers once independence and retention is secured. This can include continued relationships with both the employee and employer to help support and retain employment, but at a lesser extent or on as needed basis, initiated by the employer or employee.

The Process of Identifying Employment Opportunities

When finding employment, every person must discover their own person-centered processes and strategies for Job Development that work best for them within their agency guidelines. Each organization is unique and may have differing methods or parameters placed on them. This process is meant to guide Job Developers while conveying the importance of each step and creating a base level of knowledge. Each component of this process is on a continuum and needs to be approached flexibly.

*Language is important- keep in mind who your audience is and have your language reflect that.

Establishing a Welcoming and Safe Environment.

It is our responsibility as professionals to establish a safe and welcoming environment when people access supports. This will make a significant impact on the entire process.

1. Have your organization's communication methods accessible.

a. When starting the process with someone, ask what communication accommodations they may need.
2. Be neutral in approach to see if someone is ready. Keep an open mind to the abilities of the job seeker or the value they might offer to an employer.
   a. Don't judge based on perceived employability.
3. Ask for preferred pronouns.
   a. Use gender-neutral language.
4. Be aware of questions and language that might trigger someone, such as gendered language, past agency experiences, or a bad work experience.
   a. Be flexible and open to changing your approach or language. Don't take it personally or be defensive.
5. It is important to recognize intersectionality and be mindful of how it can influence all aspects of this process. Recognize there are multiple forms of systemic discrimination/ barriers to employment and how that can impact the employment process.
   a. Intersectionality can be defined as the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, [ablism] sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.[15]
   b. Understand that these forms of systemic discrimination/ barriers to employment intersect and pose unique challenges.
   c. Respect the voices of those affected and what that means for their goals and employment path.
   d. Continually educate yourself on how to support people facing multiple forms of discrimination.
6. Talk about the employment support process and be flexible in your approach when necessary to accommodate the job seeker.
   a. If there are conditions that are not flexible because of funding contracts let the participant know.
   b. Allow the job seeker to engage in the process and have input into their placement strategy. Encourage an open discussion about what process is best for everyone involved.
7. Facilitate an open discussion by developing a trusting and non-judgmental relationship with them.
   a. Ensure you are open to their feedback.
   b. Be open and non-judgemental if there is a setback.
   c. Be respectful and non-condescending to the job seekers.
      i. Be aware of unconscious bias and body language.
8. Engage in active listening to best understand their needs and barriers.
9. Use a person-centered approach.
   a. There are many different approaches to take, one example is social role valorization.

Employment Readiness

As Job Developers, sometimes the people we support need extra resources to become ready for employment. It's important to understand where accommodations may be needed in the process to become ready.

We can assist them by helping with the following pre-employment and job search-related activities:

1. Encourage them to stay motivated in their job search with frequent communication.
2. Empower the person and ensure you emphasize their skills abilities and capacity.
3. If your organization receives medical or psychological reports for the people you are supporting, do not rely on this information solely to learn about them.
4. Assist them with defining realistic and attainable career goals by exploring the labour market, job postings, and available resources.
5. Connecting them with other supports and services that they made need to become ready to enter the workforce.

Being ready for employment will vary depending on each person. Some considerations are:

1. Assist them with their resumes and cover letters, providing examples and feedback.
2. An understanding of the labour market they are interested in.
3. Conversations on realistic expectations and career goals based off labour market analysis.
4. A stabilized medical regime, stable housing, transportation, mental health supports, sobriety, etc.
    a. Support them to accesses resources for these if needed.
5. Have the skills required for their desired job.
    a. Support them to attain them if necessary.
6. Has a stable support network.

Being motivated is something that relies heavily on the job seeker. You can help to motivate and support them with strategies, but ultimately, it's in their hands.

1. Dedicate time and effort to their job search.
    a. Support them with strategies for time management if necessary.
2. Willing to accept a job offer that aligns with their goals.
3. Open to attend training to upgrade skill set when needed.
4. Expresses a commitment to their job search by engaging in the process and being punctual.

Learning About the Person

It is important to get to know the people you work with as a Job Developer to better support the employment process, especially if something unexpected arises. This will also enable you to be more knowledgeable about them when speaking with an employer.

Always make sure you approach everyone you are working with in a respectful, non-judgmental manner and take a strengths-based approach.

A few things to consider are as follows:

1. Create a safe space for honest conversations.
2. Try to ask open-ended questions when possible.
3. Meet the person to gain information about their skills, attributes, and personality.
4. Learn about the person get to know about their likes and dislikes, passions, and desires.
5. You may need to ask someone a question in a few different ways based on how they receive information.
6. How do they spend their time outside of work?
7. Explore what kind of environment is best for them.
8. Do they have allergies and or sensitivities? Do loud sounds or lights affect them?
9. In a supportive and respectful manner discuss what barriers they may need workplace accommodations for if they are comfortable disclosing it.
   a. May need to come back to this question if it impacts the type of work they are looking for.
   b. Are there any mental health concerns to accommodate?
10. What is motivating them to seek employment?
11. What is most important to them when deciding where to work. Is it the type of work, the environment, etc.?
12. Learn and understand why they may accept or quit a job.
13. Learn if there are any personal concerns might interfere with the employment process. Provide them with resources if necessary. Some considerations are:
    a. What is their support network like?
    b. Do they have good self-care?
    c. Are their basic needs being met?
14. What kind of Job would bring personal satisfaction to them?
15. Include other people who are meaningful to them in the process to get more insights and understanding. Speak to family and friends when possible.
16. If you are meeting someone after they have gone through a career investigation at your organization learn about the person from the information provided and follow up with an in-person meeting.
17. Ask specific questions about job history.
18. Try to find out the situation around a job resignation or termination.
19. Learn about the person's activities outside work.
20. Meet them in an environment that they feel comfortable in, whenever possible, to learn more about them.
21. Talk about any financial supports they are receiving and what their goals are in relation to it.
    a. Keep an open mind during this discussion. Everyone has different priorities and what makes them feel secure.

22. Do they want to be working in an industry that needs background checks?
23. Think ahead to how they might be best supported to apply for jobs.
24. Check work references.
25. Is there anyone within their network that might be a good connection for work?
26. Look at things that are not explicitly said and if you need to investigate it further, such as comments suggesting they are struggling financially. Are there basic needs being met then?
27. Are there other steps they need to take before employment such as more education, certifications, or volunteering?
    a. Networking can be an important component of volunteering.
28. Discuss with the job seeker about when and how in the job search process they want to disclose their disability to a potential employer, and discuss the benefits of disclosing.

Job Matching

Job matching is critical to successfully retaining employment. By properly matching a job with a person, one can expect greater productivity and higher morale, and more engagement in the workplace culture. There are many factors within job matching. The main factors are physical and geographical fit, social environment, and finding a job within the person's interests.

The right physical and geographical fit

1. Based on getting to know the person does the physical needs and capabilities of the person match the physical work-environment fit.
    a. Factors such as physical duties required, air quality, noise, and temperature.
2. If it does not, can accommodations be made?
3. Is the workplace accessible?
4. Is there transportation available? Is it accessible?
    a. If someone lives in a rural area discuss transportation options available in their community.
5. Will the commute be so long that it's not sustainable?

A supportive social environment

1. Age of other employees. For example, a young person just starting to work may find more in common with their coworkers if they are in the same age range.
2. Accessibility or supportiveness of manager(s).
3. Does the business have a positive, neutral, or negative workplace culture?
4. Will they feel psychologically safe in that type of social environment, consider previous experiences.
    a. Will people feel safe and supportive regarding their disability and the disclosure of it.
5. If they feel supported and as a part of the team, they will be more engaged and want to stay in their position for longer.

The most important factor is finding a job within the person's interests and a company culture that will support it. This is critical for success.

1. Is this an area of employment they are interested in?
    a. If a job is not, there is a greater chance of the person having attendance or performance issues. No one wants to work somewhere they strongly dislike.
2. They will be more engaged if they are doing tasks that they want to do, in a place that they want to be.
3. Being engaged will lead to stronger performance and more success at the position.
4. Consider if they will feel valued in this position.

Job Carving

When you discover what the person is truly passionate about you can begin to carve a job. Within Job Development this is an important step, where applicable, to ensuring success. Some job seekers may not require this; however, some may need jobs carved. Many times, accommodations shape how a job is carved.

Discuss with the employer some of the following to help highlight why job carving is important and identify business areas to carve:

1. First, is job carving a viable option with that employer.
2. Emphasize why job carving would be beneficial to their organization. Ex: freeing up other employee's time to work on other duties.
3. Send the employer resources and stories about job carving and how it has made the employer's and other employee's jobs easier while creating a position that speaks to the persons strengths.
4. Connect them to other employers that have had success in creating roles at their organizations.
5. Emphasize the person's strengths and how they can be best utilized in a carved role.
6. Are there tasks that the employees are not able to complete? Those tasks can be put together to build a new position. This can help all employees focus on being more productive.

While exploring job carving a position, keep in mind that it needs to suit the person needs by looking at:

1. Hours per week and the type of schedule.
    a. Do they only want part-time?
    b. Is a set schedule better for them, or only afternoons?
2. Is this role accessible, physically, or technically?

As a Job Developer, you will want to always emphasize the person's abilities before accommodations.

Example: in a busy office the administrative person is constantly answering the phone or supporting managers and is not able to get data entry and filing done. Those two tasks can be combined into a part-time role for someone. This may suit someone who is looking to work in a nonpublic facing role and only part-time hours.

Job Searching

There are many aspects to consider when supporting someone during the job search process. In your role as a Job developer, it's important to consider and keep the following in mind:

1. Ensure you know the person, their skills, passions, location, job preferences, and accommodations, etc. before searching.
   a. Find a system/tool that work for you to help keep this in mind.
2. Research employment opportunities based on the person's interests.
3. Search based on their merits and credentials.
   a. For example, someone with a university degree may be looking for a mid-level job opportunity.
4. Job security is a concern for everyone. Look and research for jobs that are valued and can withstand layoffs where possible.
5. Discuss with the job seeker how and when during the job search you will disclose to the employer about their disability.
   a. Respect their choices regarding disclosure.
6. Industry exploration.
   a. Job Developers could meet the employers to learn more about them, and the organizations and industries that they represent.
7. Consistent communication or feedback with the job seeker about where they are applying.
8. Online job boards and online networking.
9. Building relationships with employers.
   a. Tapping into a previous relationship when applicable.
10. Support job seekers to interpret job postings.
11. Job developers need to be aware of the language used within a job posting (plain language).
12. Try to tap into networks for job opportunities.
13. How to identify scam postings.
14. Consistent communication with the job seeker to update them with what you're doing and ensure they are aware of potential jobs you are investigating.
15. Participate in job fairs and online job fairs.
16. Support the job seeker to use online and video conferencing tech.
17. Update cover letters for each job posting.
18. Update resumes when applying for job postings.
    a. Support people on best practices for resumes.
19. Understand the education and certifications required for the job posting and support them to obtain it.
    a. Example First aid or updating data entry, WHIMS.
20. Use goal setting or other organizational techniques to build your tool kit to ensure job searching/ employer connections happen (time management).
    a. Helps you to be accountable to the people you are supporting by ensuring you are following up with employers promptly.
21. Find a system/tools for keeping track of what employers you are contacting and any pertinent information.
22. Understand how recruiting and candidate tracking software works and the implications for the job searching process. Such as:
    a. Resume and cover letter information extraction into the recruitment system.

b. Behavioural questionnaires.
23. Discuss with the job seeker if they are open to working from home, as it can expand job searching opportunities.
24. Ensure you are following up with employers and getting their feedback as well.
25. Work to build relationships with employers to nurture leads.
    a. Through testimonials, meetings, etc. Job carving can also be started at this step.
26. Support job seekers to continue to apply for jobs and understand the realistic expectations when applying
    a. For example, if an industry is saturated then it might be more difficult to get a position in that industry. Discuss the realities of the job market, re-evalate strategy and remain open minded.
27. Discuss pay and benefits for different types of positions. As a Job Developer you should be able to convey the following.
    a. The legal requirements under the labour code.
    b. The different types of work such as salaried, contractual, etc.
    c. How employment income can effect finicial supports.

Building and Maintaining Relationships with Employers

*Language note – when speaking with businesses, use business-oriented language such as candidate and/or applicant instead of job seeker.

As a Job Developer, it is integral to the role that you build meaningful relationships with employers. Your network can become one of your biggest strengths.

1. Networking is extremely important to build your contacts and solidify existing relationships.
    a. Utilize a targeted approach, keeping in mind the job seekers' interests.
    b. Get to know the company well. Instead of asking for a job right away, learn about the employer. Things to find out may include; diversity and inclusion policies, values, and workplace culture.
    c. Spend time in the environment as a different method to connect with an employer. For example, bringing your business to store's you are hoping to make a connection with.
    d. Exploring the job seekers' network can be a good starting point.
2. Identify inclusive hiring champions within your networks, and utilize their knowledge and passions to help promote the value of hiring inclusively.
3. Understand that rejection from businesses is not personal, and learn from it to continuously improve your approach.
4. Understand and learn about unions; if relevant to the business you want to engage with.
    a. Many times there will be implications for the hiring process if there is a union.
5. Maintaining relationships is very important. Ways to continually engage employers may be to check in with them monthly or promote them through marketing materials.

a. Be strategic in your approach, keeping in mind all the other demands on you. Some Job Developers have found connecting with 5-10 employers with who you have that established relationships per month to be beneficial.

6. Following up after a not optimal outcome to build a relationship back up is just as important as following up after a successful outcome.

7. How are you giving back to the employer so that you continue engaging with them in a meaningful way.
   a. This may be through utilizing your knowledge or volunteerism, etc.

8. Shadow other Job Developers and get introductions to employers from colleagues.
   a. Connect with networks like PDC or the Job Developer Committee. Please note these are Edmonton-based examples.

Securing the Job

The person(s) seeking employment are the ones who secure the job, however as Job Developers we can create an easier path to employment:

1. Job Developers can advocate and educate employers about who we serve and how our organizations will provide them with the tools needed for success.
   a. Advocate and educate regarding disabilities to bust myths and stereotypes where necessary.

2. Once a relationship has been established, ask for an interview, or the steps needed to obtain the interview. If steps are needed, follow those with the individual being served.

3. Job Developers may work with an individual on preparation for their upcoming interview.
   a. A job developer could also work to organize any accommodations that will be necessary for an interview such as ASL translation.
   b. Support the candidate in getting to and from the interview and understand what tools and clothing they may need for the job.
   c. Consider mock interviews and other strategies to prepare.

4. If allowed, attend the interview with the person you are serving. Do not over-speak during the interview, interject only when necessary. Appropriate times to speak would be when questions need to be reworded, reminders need to be made, etc.

5. Direct questions from the employer to the job seeker whenever possible. Encourage the employer to directly interact with the job seeker.
   a. Be mindful to not sideline the job seeker in the conversation.

6. Ask the person who was interviewed to follow up and thank the employer for the interview. Also, ensure that any follow-up that is requested by the employer is completed by the individual and/or yourself, if you have buld a rapport with the employer.
   a. Support the candidate to answer any questions from the employer after an interview, such as when could you start, what would be your salary expectations, etc.

7. Follow up with your contact at organizations where they interviewed to ask for feedback, or if they have any concerns. From here, address the concerns as needed.

8. If the individual receives an offer of employment, the Job Developer or a colleague could assist the individual with any needed paperwork or preparation that they will have before their first day.
    a. Support the candidate in organizing transportation to work and understanding what tools and clothing they may need for their first day.
9. If appropriate, you or a colleague may be permitted to attend the first day/orientation session to ensure a smooth start to the individual's new position.
    a. Have a conversation with the employer so that you are both aware of what the expectations are of you in supporting the candidate on the first day, and what that looks like.
10. This may include training during onboarding.
11. Support the candidate through modeling or their own self advocacy for accommodations.
12. If the candidate lives in a rural area and needs support with transportation explore with the employer transportation options.

Accommodations

Accommodations can happen at any point during this process. As a Job Developer you may want to make adjustment to how you go through the process to better work with someone. There may also be accommodations needed in the job. These can be impactful for the process and some things to consider are as follows:

1. Have a conversation with the job seeker to discuss what they feel would be helpful accommodations for them before an interview or start date.
2. If requested by the candidate; discuss with an employer for you or another Job Developer to attend the interview with the candidate.
3. Setting up the interview there may need to be accommodations considered such as communication or physical accessibility and sensory considerations.
4. Speak to the employer about the reasonable accommodations necessary to ensure success. Knowing the person can help support you in understanding accommodation considerations.
    a. Some common examples are adjusted work hours, tailored training strategies, medical related, physical accessibility, sensory and temperature considerations.
    b. Many accommodations are not expensive, typically it is no more than a one-time cost of $500.
5. If an employer is facing barriers to accommodation for financial reasons, you can research some options to work through this. Such as grants and provincial resources offered.
    a. This can become an asset to a business.
    b. Some examples are, funding for installing buttons, ramps, elevators etc.
6. For people using public and/ or accessible transportation, work with the employer to understand the issues that can arise with arrival and departure times.
7. If your organization supports people on the job for an extended period of time, have a conversation with the employer about this as an accommodation when needed.
8. Utilize technology, when possible, to assist people throughout the supported employment process or use it as accommodations. Such as:
    a. Working from home as an accommodation.

b.   Using training/ coaching software.
9.   Note: you may need to have a conversation with the job seeker about the concept of reasonable accommodations to establish realistic expectations.

Maintaining the Job

*Language note – when speaking about someone who has found a job try to use language such as employee instead of job seeker.

While all organizations will differ in their processes, the person you are working with is the one with the job, and your role as a Job Developer is to support them to be successful. The knowledge you bring for disability accommodations and your relationship with both the employee and employer are important to the main goal of helping to build the relationship between the employee and employer.

1.   This stage may be an opportunity to re-discuss the contract obligations your organization has to funders so that everyone is on the same page.
2.   Support the employee by providing guidelines and have a discussion around workplace expectations– E.g. If a problem arises what to do, not to walk off the job site, call in ahead of time if you know you won't be coming into work, etc.
      a.   Talk about triggers and strategies, who to talk to on the first day, and accommodations.
3.   Work to help to build a relationship between the employee and employer.
      a.   This is important for ensuring success and longevity in the job.
      b.   As well as the employer getting to know the employee for their skills and abilities this builds natural supports within the job.
4.   To support their independence in the job it's important to help build their capacity as an employee.
      a.   Support all parties to understand the complaint process at the beginning, so should a concern arise they know the process.
      b.   Support the employee to feel comfortable and build their capacity to advocate for themselves in the workplace.
5.   Be available for both parties if questions arise or if strategizing/brainstorming is required.
6.   Maintain regular contact with employers and/or employees. (Remember role is to facilitate the relationship)
      a.   Make sure that any conversations that take place with all parties present include everyone, and actively include all parties within the conversation.
      b.   Direct an employer to speak with the employee whenever possible.
7.   If guidance is required by either party, then do your best to work with the party to find a solution that benefits everyone.
      a.   Provide resources, brainstorm ideas, meet via phone or via face-to-face, etc.
8.   Check-in with the employer to see if a new manager or supervisor is in place, and work to establish a new relationship with the new manager or supervisor.
9.   As a Job Developer, maintain a proactive approach to solving potential problems by maintaining contact with both the employee and their employer.

a. Keep consistent communication with the employer to strengthen the relationship that has been built and look for additional opportunities as they arise. If the Job Developer can establish a strong relationship, there may be opportunities for others who are interested in working there.

b. Have a balanced approach to ensure you are not impeding the business's operations.

Growth in the Job

An aspect of employment that can sometimes be overlooked is growth within a current role. This may come down to an organization's ability to support people over longer periods while employed. But whenever possible, it is important to look at ways for job seekers, now employees to move up within their organization.

1. If your organization is not able to provide ongoing support due to organizational constraints, then you may want to consider creating a plan that the person can refer back to for growth in their job.
2. Advocate for yearly performance evaluations when appropriate.
3. Support the employee in increasing responsibilities or updating duties within the job.
4. You may have to support the employee to access training that all staff is obligated to participate in, ensuring that accommodations are in place when necessary.
    a. Keep in mind alternatives if barriers restrict the employee from being able to participate in training.
5. Support the employer to recognize the employee's skills, abilities, and capacity.
6. Help the employer expand duties based on new skills.
7. Ensure that the employee has the proper accommodations to perform duties well.
    a. Carving and customization. See the job carving section for detailed information.
    b. Empower the employer with the proper tools and resources.
8. Support both parties to recognize when there is a personality conflict and not a deficit in skills.
9. Support the employee to advocate for pay raise when applicable.
10. Support the employee to advocate for increased hours when applicable.
11. Support the employee to access and utilize professional development dollars when applicable and/ or team training opportunities.
12. Support the employee to transition to other jobs when applicable.
13. Support the employee and all stakeholders to understand if the job is no longer a fit.

Summary of Key Components

Job development can be a very tough role, but it is impactful work. There will be many things that you have to keep in mind and many strategies that you will have to use. But there are some key components to Job Development that we hope will help guide you overall throughout the process.

- You need to learn about the person you are supporting- no matter what stage.
- As a Job Developer, you need to be flexible and understand that this process is on a continuum/ overlap and is not a linear model for employment.

- It's okay to go back and forth through the stages.
- Self-care is important.
    - Set boundaries for yourself to have a good work-life balance.
    - You can't do it all.
- Language is extremely important- keep in mind who your audience is and have your language reflect that.
- It is important to recognize intersectionality in the work we do and be deliberate in your actions to support those you work with.
- Be aware of questions and language might trigger someone such as gendered language, past agencies experiences or a bad work experience.
    - Be flexible and open to changing your approach or language. Don't take it personally or be defensive.
- Always be open to feedback about the process and don't dismiss someone's concerns.
- Make sure that any conversations that take place with all parties (agency, employer and employee) present include everyone, and that the employee isn't sidelined.
- You need to be resilient.
    - Keep pushing forward if you hear a no- when reasonable.
        - Do not pester the employer.
    - Understand that highs and lows are normal.
    - Try to not take things personally.
    - Learn from your mistakes.
- Constantly build your network.
    - Every person is an opportunity to connect.
- Always be on top of the job market, the economy, and job forecasting.
- Time management is crucial.
    - Try to balance your time with other work demands such as administrative tasks.
- Try to be innovative and creative.

Job Developer Self Care

This is an extremely important yet overlooked component to Job Development. If you are not in a good place, then it is difficult to put your energy into supporting others. Burnout can also be very high in this field because you are impacting such a significant aspect of someone's life. It is important to prioritize your mental health and wellbeing.

Here are some things that we have found helpful while working in this field.

At work:

- Keep in mind that some things are not in your control.
- Positive self-reflection- think about the things you can change and what you can't.
    - Make notes or create a plan for things you want to do differently.

- - Understand that no matter what you do, things may not have gone differently and that's okay.
- Know where your role starts and begins. Understand when to help someone find more suitable supports if it's out of your expertise.
- Practice positive self-talk.
- Debrief with colleagues or network.
  - Talk about your feelings, it can help to not feel alone.
  - If you're stuck reach out to others to help brainstorm ideas.
- Remembering that when you hear "no" is not a personal response.
- Keep yourself organized.
  - Have a routine.
  - Create a task list to help show what you have completed.
  - Break down larger tasks into smaller more manageable ones.
  - Set attainable and realistic goals.
  - Organize your desk space.
  - Set defined work hours.
- Balance aspects of your job.
  - Take time to do other things rather than just job searching and phone calls.

Outside of work:

- Practice self-care.
  - Eat healthy meals.
  - Do exercise, yoga, and/or meditation.
  - Practice self-gratitude.
  - Do something you love.
  - Practice mindfulness.
  - Spend time with family and friends.
  - Spend time out in nature.

Additional Resources

Return on Disability: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gOu5tTePCU

Canadian Business SenseAbiity: https://senseability.ca/

"How Many Homeless People Live with Disabilities?": https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/how-many-homeless-people-live-disabilities

Job Accommodation Network: https://askjan.org/

Hire For Talent: https://hirefortalent.ca/

Self-Advocacy Federation: http://www.selfadvocacyfederation.ca/

Pan Disability Connection: https://pdconnection.org/

Gateway to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (GEDI) Hub: https://gatewaytodiversity.ca/

Committee Member Organizations

Thank you to all organizations and committee members, past and present, who helped to create this document.

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