



TRAINER'S MANUAL



EQUALvet Development of a vocational training program for people with intellectual disabilities in three professions: cook assistant, gardener assistant and cleaner

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EQUALvet

The **“Trainer’s Manual”** is a result of the cooperation between the partners of the consortium of EQUALvet Erasmus+ Project.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
CV	Curriculum Vitae
e.g.	exempli gratia, for example
ID	Intellectual Disability
i.e.	id est, that is
UN	United Nations

CONSORTIUM

The consortium consists of the following partners:

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	Margarita VTC (Greece)	www.eeamargarita.gr research.development@eeamargarita.gr
	Fundació Ramon Noguera	https://grupfrn.cat/en comunicacio@grupfrn.cat
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	Group of Research on Diversity – University of Girona	www.udg.edu/en/grupsrecerca/diversitat/qui-som judit.fullana@udg.edu
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INTRODUCTION

Scope of EQUALvet

EQUALvet is an Erasmus+ project funded by the European Union, aiming at the development of a vocational training program for persons with intellectual disability, in three professions: Cook assistant, gardener assistant and cleaner. The training program will follow all the requirements needed by the accreditation agencies, to lead to the certification of the professional skills of the participants.

EQUALvet will bring innovation in the field of vocational training for people with intellectual disability, through the collaboration of partners with expertise in vocational training, special education, certification, and policy recommendation.

Vocational Training: Development of the training tools, implementation of the vocational training and certification program and support for the learners finding and completing their internships in relevant job positions.

Special Education: A methodology has been developed by experts in Special Education and Lifelong Learning, after analyzing the results of a research conducted by organizations delivering services for persons with intellectual disability. This methodology, further elaborated in the current manual after bibliographic research, will be used by the trainers, to increase the efficiency of the training program. People with intellectual disability who will participate in EQUALvet as learners will have access to a vocational training and certification program that matches with their needs, skills and wishes.

Certification: TÜV Hellas is studying and acknowledging the three professions and will develop the schemes required to lead to the recognition and certification of the participant's skills, based on which they will be evaluated to have their competences documented.

Policy recommendation: EASPD will promote the respect, inclusion, and rights, based on effective participation and full citizenship of persons with intellectual disability, following the principles enshrined in the UN (United Nations) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

What follows is a self-study tool for the trainer. After the description of the consortium that follows, we begin with a few data that define the population we are targeting. Next, we proceed with the cooperation with the interested parts, meaning trainees with intellectual disability, then with the employer who will provide placements for internships, and of course with the coworkers of the trainees (who represent a particularly important element of natural supports in the workplace) and

can be valuable contributors. Also, a few data about the cooperation with the family of the person with ID have also been interlaced. Cooperation with the family is important, to the extent and in the way that this is possible in every training organization. The most extended section is the one discussing the training of the trainees.

WHAT INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IS

Definitions of Intellectual Disability

Intellectual Disability (ID) is defined as “a condition of arrested or incomplete development of the mind, which is especially characterized by impairment of skills manifested during the developmental period, which contribute to the overall level of intelligence, i.e., cognitive, language, motor, and social abilities”.

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) complemented the above mentioned definition and incorporated the concept of disability and functional adaptation to disability.

According to the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Intellectual disability is a disability characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18.

- Intellectual functioning—also called intelligence—refers to general mental capacity, such as learning, reasoning, problem solving, and so on. One way to measure intellectual functioning is an IQ (Intelligence Quotient) test. Generally, an IQ test score of around 70 or as high as 75 indicates a limitation in intellectual functioning.
- Other tests determine limitations in adaptive behavior, which covers three types of skills: Adaptive behavior is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives.
 - Conceptual skills—language and literacy, money, time, and number concepts, self-direction.
 - Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized.
 - Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, flexible scheduling/ typical day routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone.
- Standardized tests can also determine limitations in adaptive behavior.

Additional Considerations about Intellectual Disability

It is important to note that the 1992 definition was the first to view Intellectual disability as a condition that could be enhanced by provision of supports, rather than as a static, lifelong disability.

But in defining and assessing Intellectual disability, the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) stresses that additional factors must be considered, such as the community environment typical of the individual's peers and culture. Professionals should also consider linguistic diversity and cultural differences in the way people communicate, move, and behave.

Finally, assessments must also assume that limitations in individuals often coexist with strengths, and that a person's level of life functioning will improve if appropriate personalized supports are provided over a sustained period.

Only based on such many-sided evaluations can professionals determine whether an individual has Intellectual disability and tailor individualized support plans.

Harris (2006) reported the prevalence of Intellectual disability to vary between 1% and 3%, globally. Among those with Intellectual disability, mild, moderate, severe, and profound mental retardation affects about 85%, 10%, 4%, and 2% of the population, respectively.

Intellectual disability affects many individuals. It affects the individual, his/her immediate family, and the community where they live. Several mental and physical disorders are often associated with Intellectual disability, and they add their own complexities to management of people with Intellectual disability. In addition, it is associated with a stigma and discrimination.

ID can be envisioned as an early cognitive "meta-syndrome" analogous to the syndrome of dementia in later life in that a variety of conditions lead to these two meta-syndromes, they involve extensive impairment of core cognitive functions required for daily living and the evaluation process involves a broad consideration of biological, personal, and environmental factors.

There is still no conceptual map or hierarchy of the cognitive functions and domains important in Intellectual disability. Different terms are often used for the same functions, and vice versa. However, a series of cognitive domains are significantly impaired in persons with Intellectual disability. These core cognitive domains mainly include perceptual reasoning, working memory, processing speed, and verbal comprehension, and these domains are significantly impaired in persons with Intellectual disability.

The impairment of the cognitive functions in Intellectual disability is generally assessed using the IQ, a score derived from an intelligence test which should be used for diagnosis only with consideration of locally standardized norms. Usually, an IQ score 70 or below is indicative but not sufficient to diagnose Intellectual disability. Other alternative clinical and cognitive assessments could be used including locally standardized developmental tests. Cognitive assessment should not be limited to standardized IQ but also include neuropsychological testing, for example executive functioning testing to determine an individual profile. Moreover, retesting during critical life periods is recommended, as distinct cognitive developmental trajectories have been identified in different conditions of Intellectual disability and because there may be cognitive losses related to ageing.

Persons with Intellectual disability often have difficulties in managing their behaviour, emotions, and interpersonal relationships, and maintaining motivation in the learning process. Cognitive impairment and adaptive behaviour limitations in Intellectual disability:

- Intellectual disability is characterized by a marked impairment of core cognitive functions necessary for the development of knowledge, reasoning, and symbolic representation of the level expected of one's age peers, as well as cultural and community environment. Nevertheless, quite different patterns of cognitive impairments appear for particular conditions of Intellectual disability.
- In general, persons with intellectual disability have difficulties with verbal comprehension, perceptual reasoning, working memory and processing speed.
- The cognitive impairment in persons with Intellectual disability is associated with difficulties in different domains of learning, including academic and practical knowledge.
- Persons with intellectual disability manifest significant limitations in adaptive behavior; that is, meeting the demands of daily life expected for one's age peers, cultural, and community environment. These difficulties include limitations in relevant conceptual, social, and practical skills.
- Persons with intellectual disability often have difficulties in managing their behaviour, emotions, and interpersonal relationships, and maintaining motivation in the learning process.
- It is a life-span condition requiring consideration of developmental phases and life transitions.

Levels of Intellectual Disability

According to Schalock et al (2010), a multidimensional system for classification is proposed and IQ ranges is considered insufficient to be the sole determinant of cognitive functioning or clinical severity level. Differences in adaptive behavior are also important. Nevertheless, a basic categorization is presented in Table 1.

Our target group consists mainly of persons with mild and moderate intellectual disability, meaning that they are persons who don't need excessive support for daily life activities.

Table 1. Classifications of Intellectual Disability Severity (adapted from Clinical Characteristics of Intellectual Disabilities, 2015).

Target group severity category has been grayed – out.

Severity Category	Approximate Percent Distribution of Cases by Severity	DSM-IV Criteria (severity levels were based only on IQ categories)	DSM-5 Criteria (severity classified based on daily skills)	AAIDD Criteria (severity classified based on intensity of support needed)
Mild	85%	Approximate IQ range 50–69	Can live independently with minimum levels of support	Intermittent support needed during transitions or periods of uncertainty
Moderate	10%	Approximate IQ range 36–49	Independent living may be achieved with moderate levels of support, such as those available in group homes	Limited support needed in daily situations
Severe	3.5%	Approximate IQ range 20–35	Requires daily assistance with self-care activities and safety supervision	Extensive support needed for daily activities
Profound	1.5%	IQ <20	Requires 24-hour care	Pervasive support needed for every aspect of daily routines

TYPES OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING - EMPLOYMENT

Sheltered Employment

Sheltered employment programs are designed to assist individuals (e.g., with ID) who – generally – for whatever reason are viewed as not capable of working in a competitive employment setting in their local community. The term “sheltered employment” is often used to refer to a wide range of segregated vocational and non-vocational programs for individuals with disabilities, such as sheltered workshops, adult activity centers, work activity centers and day treatment centers.

Types of work has been used in this type of programs are piece work, make work and simulated work.

These programs differ extensively in terms of their mission, services provided and funding sources. Virtually all forms of sheltered employment can generally be classified into two types.

- Transitional employment programmes are intended to provide training and experience to persons in segregated settings so that they will be able to acquire the skills necessary to succeed in subsequent competitive employment. Earnings in this case are low "steppingstone" towards employment in the open market. This is the type of training provided for the participants in the EQUALvet programme, who will have the opportunity to experience an internship, besides the training program in their organization. Thus, we consider their participation in the “transitional” program as an interim step in the vocational rehabilitation process since the scope of EQUALvet is preparation for competitive employment.
- Extended employment programmes are designed to be long-term or permanent placements for individuals that will allow them to use their existing abilities to earn wages in the segregated workshop setting. The ambition of and for the participants of EQUALvet is higher than that and the methodology employed for that scope will make a difference.

Supported Employment

The definition of Supported Employment in Europe, according to the European Union on Supported Employment, is recognized as:

“Providing support to people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups to secure and maintain paid employment in the open labour market”.

Whilst there are slight variations of the definition across the world, there remain three consistent elements that are fundamental to the European Supported Employment model:

1. Paid work
2. Inclusion in the open labour market
3. On-going support

Job placement will be used for the internships in clusters, meaning that more than one person with ID will be trained in the same companies.

Important note

It is important to underpin that the issue of lining up a person with ID for vocational “training”, should not be framed with an argument in an “either” or “or” manner, as to whether to choose “transitional sheltered” or “supported” employment. The methodology described aspires to offer vocational rehabilitation to persons with ID that have various skills.

Useful information derived from the Toolkit.

Supported Employment is completely consistent with the concepts of empowerment, social inclusion, dignity, and respect for individuals. Within Europe, agreement has been reached on the values and principles that should be present at all Supported Employment stages and activities and adhere to full citizenship rights of individuals:

Individuality – Supported Employment regards everyone as unique, with his / her own interests, preferences, conditions, and life history.

Respect – Supported Employment activities are always age appropriate, dignifying and enhancing.

Self-determination – Supported Employment assists individuals to improve their interests and preferences, express their choices and define their employment / life plan according to personal and contextual conditions. It promotes the principles of self-advocacy by service users.

Informed Choice – Supported Employment assists individuals to understand their opportunities fully so they can choose consistently within their preferences and with an understanding of the consequences of their choices.

Empowerment – Supported Employment assists individuals to make decisions on their lifestyle and participation in society. Individuals are centrally involved in the planning, evaluation, and development of services.

Confidentiality – The Supported Employment service provider considers information given by individuals to them as confidential. The service user has access to his/her personal information gathered by the provider and any disclosure is at the discretion of and with the agreement of the individual.

Flexibility – Staff and organizational structures are able to change according to the needs of service users. Services are flexible and responsive to the needs of individuals and can be adapted to meet specific requirements.

Accessibility – Supported Employment services, facilities and information are fully accessible to all people with disabilities.

The values and principles of Supported Employment are supported by a 5-stage process/ methodology that has been identified and acknowledged as a European model of good practice which can be used as the framework within Supported Employment.

Engagement – Underpinned by the core values of accessibility to ensure informed choices are made.

Vocational Profiling – Ensuring empowerment to the individual throughout the process.

Job Finding – Self-determination and informed choice are key values in Supported Employment.

Employer Engagement – Accessibility, flexibility and confidentiality are key values to be nurtured throughout this process.

On/Off Job Support – Flexibility, confidentiality and respect are the key components to successful support measures. Support measures particularly refer to when the individual is in paid employment and are delivered through the provision of an Employment Support Worker/Job Coach.

TRAINING – APPROACHING

In the context of EQUALvet, when we are talking about training or approaching the interested parts, we are referring to:

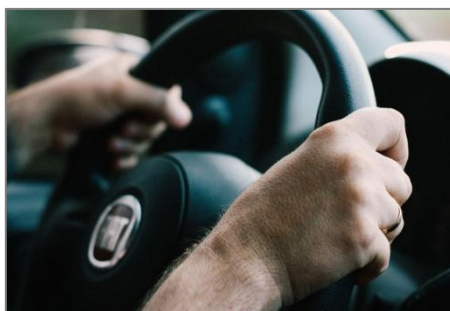
- The person with ID or trainee
- The employer (internship)
- The coworkers of the trainee
- Members of the family of the person with ID

The trainer, along with the sides other than the trainee, constitutes the “circle of support” for the person with ID. The employer, the coworkers and of course the family of the trainee, constitute the “natural supports” system. The trainer should be able to manage the cooperation between these people, along with other professionals they might need to cooperate with. Most of all, the trainer should be engaged with specific values that concern the person with ID.

Training – Approaching the Trainee

Values and principles that the trainer must be engaged with

- The basic aim of the process is that the experience is intended to be successful for the trainee.
- The cognitive elements of the process are usually obvious. Nevertheless, the affective nature of the process should not be underestimated.
- The person needs to have the chance to set and understand job expectations and be an active member of the equation. As a matter of fact, they should be able to feel that they are “sitting in the driver’s seat”.



- Persons with ID excel when they are part of the decision-making process to choose work tasks. DOTS model (decision learning; opportunity awareness; transition learning; self-awareness), might be used as the framework to unpack workplace interventions designed for the person with ID.
- Self-sufficiency, self-efficacy, and self-determination development in the work role is the ultimate scope.
- The person with ID has the right to develop their latent competencies.
- The person with ID has a right to earn wage, participate in a work setting and contribute to the community.
- The person with ID has a right to feel that they belong to a community, that there is social recognition for their job and that they deserve to feel satisfied.
- The tasks of the job should be satisfactory.
- The person with ID has the right to claim for a promotion. That means they should become knowledgeable about possibilities of increased wages and different career.
- Although most of the persons with ID do not emphasize on the size of their salary and if it increases and they also don't pay attention to social recognition (that is because not all persons with ID are able to make social comparisons), there are some of them that do.
- The person with ID deserves to be able to work and keep their benefits (according to the laws of every state country).
- The person with ID informally represents other future employees and is paving the path for their employment by creative favorable perceptions.
- People should not have low expectations from persons with ID.
- Compliance with these rules increases the workplace participation of the person with ID, as well as subsequent feelings of inclusion and wellbeing. It also leads to reduced intention to leave the job and higher levels of performance.

If the trainer follows these values, they can start organizing the intervention for the training of the person with ID.

Types of intervention

The intervention should be performance focus, collaborative in nature and implement several approaches (also in conjunction, if needed). Two different types of functional intervention used in vocational rehabilitation of persons with ID are the following:

- *Compensatory*: It forms the basis of the rehabilitative frame of reference in which the aim is to modify the demand a task places on the person. This may be achieved by teaching different techniques and strategies or may include the provision of assistive equipment and aids.
- *Restorative*: It is part of the biomechanical frame of reference, which places emphasis on restoring previous function via participation in activity. The grading of activities is often used within this approach and by gradually increasing the task demand.

The first part of any intervention is the assessment, which doesn't always take place using the same strategy.

Assessment of the Trainee

TRADITIONAL APPROACH

The starting point of virtually all traditional approaches to assessing persons with ID (and persons with other types of disability) has been to assess their skills and interests. In the case of vocational training and rehabilitation, these assessments, most often, have taken the form of comparisons between the individual of concern and general factors felt to be representative of the specific demands of employers in the competitive job market. Relying on protocol-based procedures, established norms and predictive validity, professional evaluators have tested individuals using an array of instruments and assessment criteria.

Although comparative assessments have traditionally been a useful starting point for the journey to employment for many individuals, this approach has been problematic for job seekers with more significant impact of disability. When compared to normative performance, many individuals with significant disabilities simply do not compare well. The result of this has too often been exclusion from employment services and from being considered appropriate for work. When a person performs poorly on a vocational

assessment it is likely that sheltered employment will be recommended rather than employment in the community.

FUNCTIONAL APPROACH

An alternative to these strategies is to make assessments more functional. That is to say that evaluators strive to increase the similarity between the factors being selected for comparison and the actual demands of community workplaces. E.g., instead of having an individual place pegs in a peg board to assess fine motor skills, evaluators might provide real work tasks found in local workplaces to test performance. Real tasks have been brought into evaluation centers to replace the array of general performance activities that were traditionally used. This move undoubtedly made assessments more reflective of actual demand, but the demand comparison remains. Persons with ID often perform no better on functional tasks than on the traditional ones.

SITUATIONAL APPROACH

This approach involves taking the individual to an actual job site and using real job tasks and demands as the comparison criteria. This is a criterion that internships can provide. The use of this concept minimizes the artificiality of assessments. However, as with all strategies that rely primarily on comparative procedures, many job seekers with ID have performed unsuccessfully on situational assessments.

This is the reason why the role of the evaluator – trainer is crucial.

“DISCOVERY” APPROACH

“Discovery” approach in general

The insurmountable problem that is often faced in the more traditional types of assessment is not the skill or attitude of evaluators or even the type of instruments or procedures used. The problem lies in comparison itself. When the impact of significant disability is in the area of human performance, it is inevitable that comparative assessments will verify that impact. And the result will be negative in almost every case.

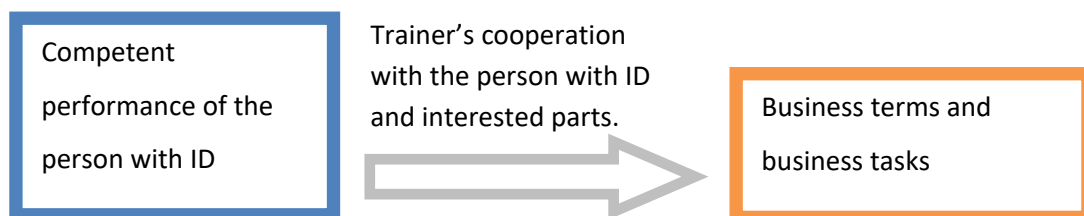
To apply this different approach at least two important changes are required on the part of employment professionals. First, it is necessary to use a non-comparative strategy that is based on qualitative findings rather than on quantitative measures found in virtually all comparative assessments. Second, it is also necessary to shift the focus regarding the

outcome of employment from competitive demand to the negotiation of a customized, contribution-based relationship with an employer.

The trainer needs to understand who the specific person with ID is, as the primary source of information for employment, rather than how the specific person compares with established norms, with general demands or with others.

“Discovery” seeks to find the *best dimensions of performance* for each person with ID, in the most ideal circumstances that enhance that performance and are connected to the strongest interests of the individual. The trainer uses that information as a foundation for the relationship with the employer.

Of course, many aspects of daily life performance might not relate to the needs of employers, so it is also necessary to translate the competent performance that is discovered into business terms and business tasks. Thus, “job readiness” is not a prerequisite, to the extent that it used to be.



It is recommended that the initial activities, interactions, and observations of discovery occur over a period of a month to a month and a half. This timeframe not only allows for trust to develop, but it also provides a much richer array of activities from which to uncover competence and other information about the individual.

Characteristics of “Discovery” approach

Characteristics of this process are the following:

- *Optimistic*, looking for the best that people have to offer
- *Descriptive*, focusing on who the person is rather than on others’ opinions.

- *Respectful*, always proceeding with the permission and direction of the person.
- *Accepting*, not requiring comparison with other
- *Humble*, appreciating the intimate access given into a person's life
- *Comprehensive*, examining all areas of life performance.
- *Robust*, looking deeply into the most meaningful aspects of the person's life.
- *Relevant*, making sure the process makes sense to the person.
- *Connected*, taking advantage of relationships and associations.
- *Bold*, translating life skills to employment possibilities.

Strategies of “Discovery” Approach

The strategies that are usually used are:

1. Conditions for success
2. Interests toward certain aspects of the job market (meaning specific professions in EQUALvet)
3. Potential contributions to employer

Conditions for success

These refer to characteristics deemed to be necessary for the success of any job developed for the person. Conditions refer to issues such as days of work, pay, benefits, location of the job, inside/outside work, time of day, hours per week, etc. They also refer to factors such as the best environment for working, the most effective supervisory style, the proven solutions to challenges and other such features of success. While it is possible to have too many conditions, these are extremely important considerations in customizing (developing) a job.

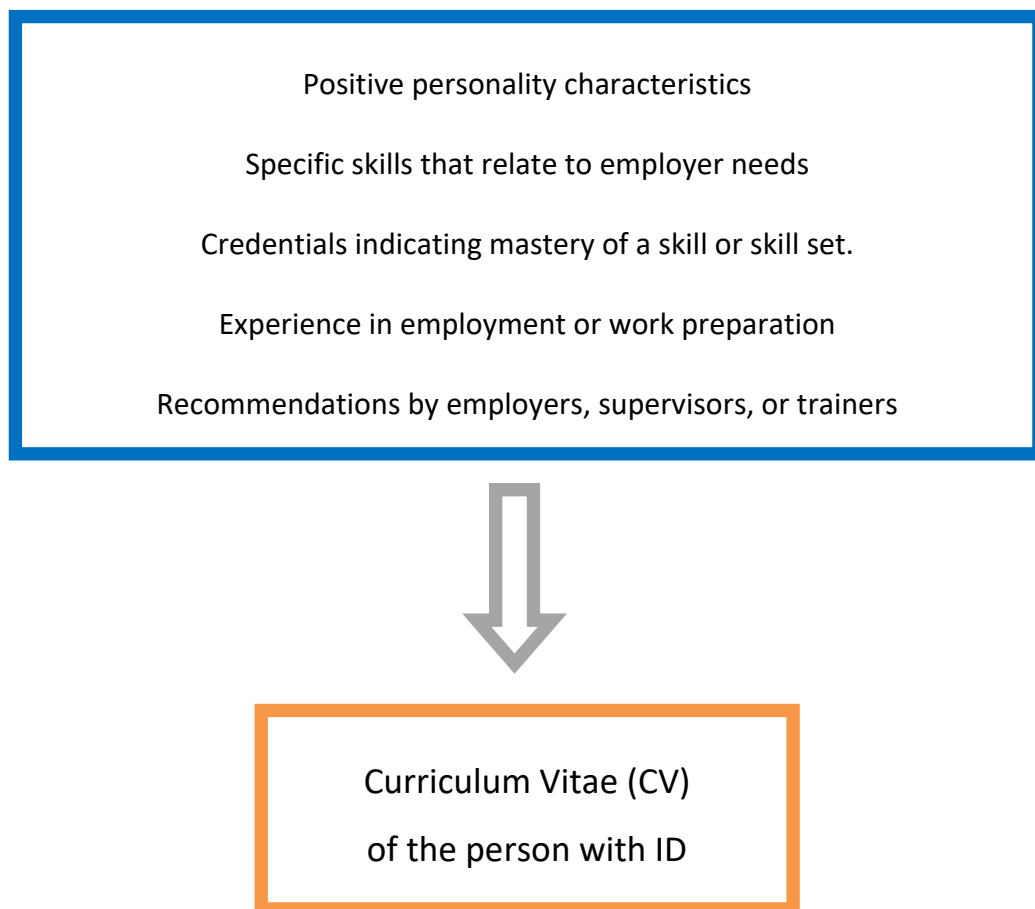
Interests toward an aspect of the job market

These give direction toward certain general areas of work for which there is likely to be intrinsic motivation for the individual. Work interests are well beyond verbally stated job preferences. The trainer should seek to identify those performance activities that reflect a much deeper connection with the job seeker. If the trainer is truly accurate in discovering interests, the person might say: “You mean they will pay me for doing this job?” Work

interests should be stated in the broadest possible manner and making sure to avoid using job titles.

Potential contributions to employer

These are uniquely considered about specific needs and benefits relating to any potential workplace that matches the job seeker's interests. When considering an individual's potential contributions for a customized job, employers focus on characteristics that can be depicted in the people with ID curriculum vitae:



Tools of “Discovery” approach

The trainer discovers the person's life and translates current skills to potential benefit to employers. The distinction is huge when working with persons with ID, for whom prediction has routinely been negative or uncertain.

These tools are:

Conversational interview

Conversation entails an informal, non-directed exchange between two individuals. For many people conversations feel comfortable, even enjoyable, but the strategy may result in unintended consequences. However, a clear benefit of a conversation is the development of the trust that is so necessary for sharing one's life with another.

An *interview* (should be one-on-one, so that the person with ID is feeling comfortable enough and e.g., family members assist only if the person accepts that) is a structured, focused strategy that involves asking the individual, family or other questions that have been developed prior to the interaction. However, just as with conversation, interviews can have various, unexpected consequences. Almost all people respond differently to interview exchanges than they do to conversational exchanges by being more cautious.

A *conversational interview* involves using a verbal exchange that has a conversation tone and informality, along with a subtle interview structure. When mastered by the trainer, the use of conversational interview (with open-ended questions) can generate access to positive and useful information and the development of trust, balance, and informality.

If the training entails groups, then, focus groups are a useful choice.

When verbal communication is an issue for a person, other tools must be used as the primary strategy to learn about the person.

Observation

Observation involves watching the performance of life activities by the person of concern and it allows targeting intervention. This strategy may be performed in two ways:

1. Observing from a position outside the activity
2. Observing as a participant of the activity

Each of the two aspects of observation requires different considerations by the trainer. When observing outside of the activity being performed, the trainer must do the following to insure both effectiveness and sensitivity to the person is being observed:

- Always ask for permission of the individual and others in the setting
- Introduce and explain themselves.
- Focus on an array of actions:

- Task performance
- Social interactions
- Subtleties
- Best dimensions
- Stay focused throughout
- Use short, discrete observations rather than lengthy, general observations.

Participation

When using this method, the trainer is blending two tools simultaneously: Observation and participation. This strategy is feared to be the likely cause of negative influence on the performance and the trainer's understanding of what is occurring. In order to avoid that, the trainer should:

- Allow the person to take the “lead” on all decision points.
- Assume the role of a colleague or friend, not a trainer.
- Engage in conversation relevant to the activity.
- Stay focused and try to remember important aspects of performance.
- Take notes immediately afterward or during natural breaks of the activity.
- Look for indicators of interests, discrete skills, challenges and conditions, the implementation of which are critical to the work experience of the person with ID.

Participation in activities of life is a tool that blends with the observational strategy. When participating with the person with ID in an activity, the trainer can get a feel of the task and to experience issues such as fatigue, complexity, subtleties, and other features that observation alone might not indicate.

The trainer should be able to multi-task. It is important to be “present” as a participant in the activity itself and, at the same time, to note the various aspects of the person's performance. In addition to the suggestions listed above for observation within an activity, a trainer should:

- Consider the typical way an activity is performed prior to joining the individual.

- Target the embedded tasks that occur within the activity
- Look for tangential aspects of the task such as unexpected issues.
- Note whether the tasks are routinely or episodically performed
- Consider whether the activity represents a “best dimension” of performance for the individual.

Review of existing information

The last tool of “Discovery” is a review of existing documents that have been developed on the individual. These documents include permanent records held by schools and service agencies, evaluation results, scrapbooks, and other official and unofficial files. The reason to wait until the end of discovery is that most documentation of an official nature on individuals with disabilities is inherently negative, too often focusing on problems, deficits, and incidents.

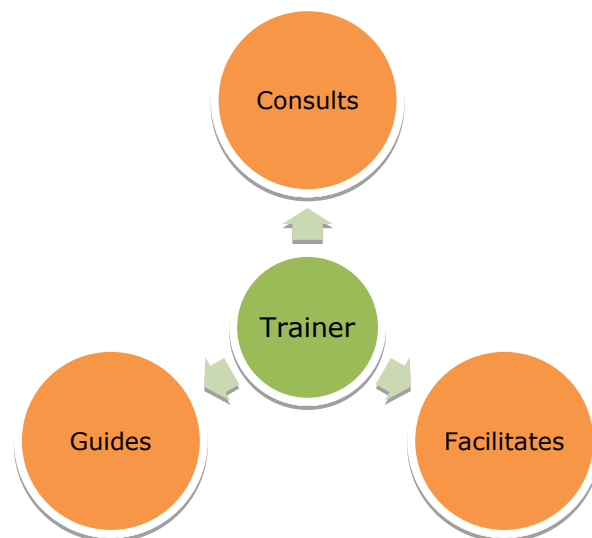
While it may seem unproductive to review this type of information at all when performing an optimistically focused service, it is important for the trainer to know about possible challenges to success. When reviewing files and records the trainer should:

- Look for the positive aspects of records.
- Be skeptical of the record rather than the individual.
- Look for possible solutions to complexities.
- Follow up with interview of individuals who seem hopeful in their writing.

Starting with the end in mind

In implementing any process, it is advisable to start with the end in mind. To the degree that the trainer has a clear outcome identified, such as the development of a customized job for the individual, they will focus and improve the process. It is not advisable to begin this procedure as an end. While it is true that most persons might find the procedure to be an enlightening and enjoyable activity, it is not enough to learn about a person and then stop. The process must serve a higher goal, to be effective.

In a few words, the role of the trainer can be summarized in three verbs that describe their actions:



SYSTEMATIC INSTRUCTION PROCEDURE: STRATEGIES FOR ORGANIZING INFORMATION.

The role of systematic instruction

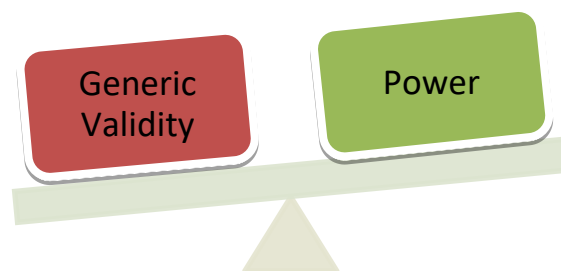
Any instructional approach to be used in the facilitation of community based and inclusive vocational opportunities for persons with ID is that the approach must be effective for the person with ID and at the same time, it must be compatible with the setting in which it is being used. Additionally, the intervention strategies must be governed by a set of Values which guide the trainer.

Another important factor, is *Generic Validity* (or "naturalness") refers to the degree to which a training approach can utilize, approximate, or accommodate the teaching strategies used in any given community setting.

Power refers to the amount of intervention, assistance, effort, and creativity needed to teach the skills necessary for persons with ID to successfully participate in community-based, inclusive settings.

The trainer should initiate with a type of training which is as Generically Valid as possible but backed up with sufficient Power to successfully teach the task. Generally, and throughout the procedure, Power should not be arbitrarily used.

Relationship between Generic Validity and power in the beginning of the intervention (logical starting point)



Structure of a systematic training procedure

Such a procedure consists of the elements below:

1. Values and Philosophy (an understanding of the rights, humanity and dignity of the person being trained)
2. A System for organizing the information to be used in training (detailed description follows)
3. Strategies for Training the Organized Information (detailed description follows)

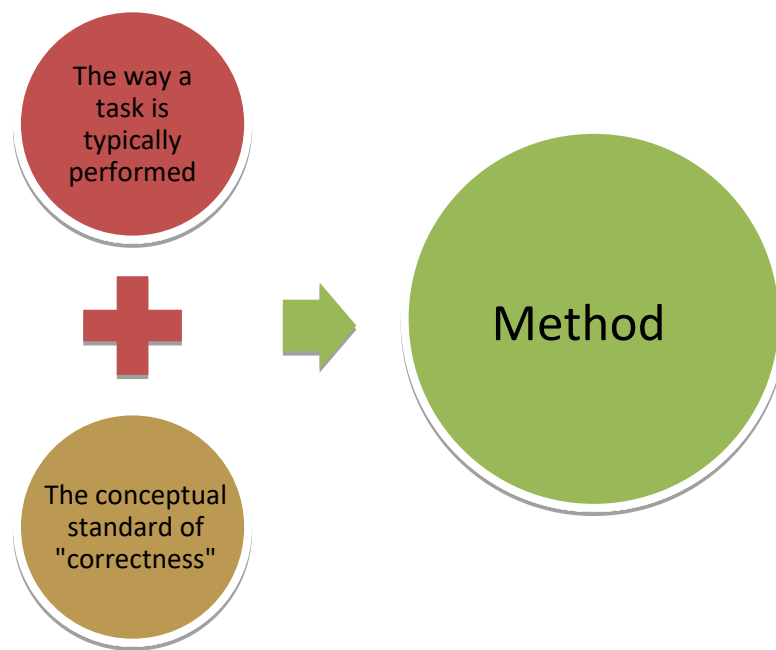
A system for organizing the information to be used in training

Method

All workplaces are comprised of a multitude of job tasks, which (taken as a whole), describe the type of business activity performed in that company. These job tasks also describe and distinguish the roles of the various employees of the setting. Because the survival of a business organization often depends upon the way job tasks are performed, companies

typically prefer or even mandate, that job tasks be carried out in a consistent, prescribed manner.

From a systematic training perspective, *method* is the concept which addresses issues relating to the way tasks are to be performed. Method involves two issues critical to effective training:



1. Method is the way in which a task/ routine is typically performed in a natural setting.
2. It is also the trainer's conceptual standard of "correctness" or the mental picture a trainer carries of the task to which the performance of the learner is compared.

The dangers when a method is not employed are:

- It takes the person with ID longer to learn the tasks.
- It takes the person with ID longer to perform the tasks.
- The tasks might be differently performed by the person with ID, in a way that is not desirable by the employer.
- It is more difficult for the trainer to solve problems of performance that might arise.

Task analysis

The following questions are essential in completing the task analysis:

- What are the steps of the task?
- What is the sequence of the steps?
- What is the content of the task in the work process?
- Where are contact points with other co-workers?
- What is the usual time frame for the task?
- What material is needed for the task?
- Is there a perfect (or personalized) way of doing the task in the company?
- What are the potential problems?
- How do I know that the task is finished successfully?

It is essential to construct the answers in the questions above with the information that follow.

Content task analysis: A concept for managing method.

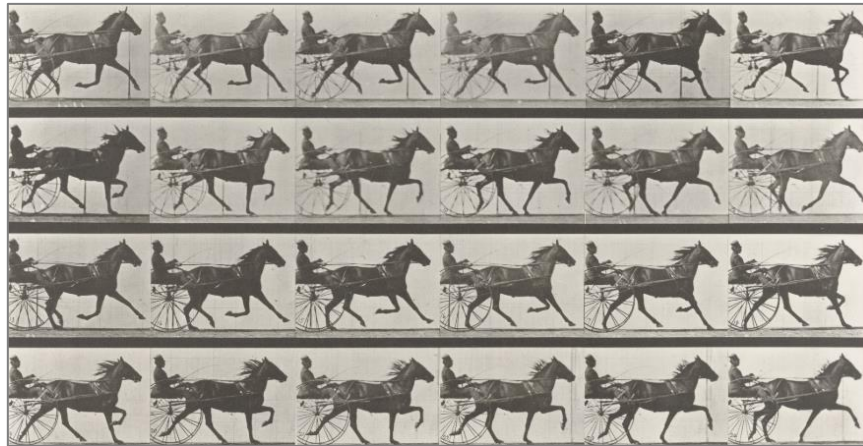
The content is simply the arbitrary number of steps into which a method is divided. It serves to “stop and capture” the method and make the procedure a less elusive construct.

Analyzing the steps of a task and its’ relationship with other parameters is essential for the appropriate implementation of the task by the person with ID. It is only by analyzing the steps that the trainer (job coach) can detect specific difficulties, identify matches and mismatches, train excessively in the specific steps (if needed), modify the procedure, implement compensatory strategies (if necessary), or even negotiate for different task(s), if the current cannot be performed by the person with ID.

An example that might help in understanding this need for analysis is the following historical fact:

Eadweard Muybridge was an English photographer, important for his pioneering work in photographic studies of motion and in motion-picture projection. In 1872, hired by the railroad magnate Leland Stanford, he began experimenting to find out whether there is a particular moment during a trotting horse’s gait, in which all four legs are off the ground simultaneously. After several experiments (and an array of events irrelevant to these experiments), in 1877, he was able to prove that such a moment does exist (to the great

astonishment of many). Had he not been able to analyze a horse's gait the way he managed to do; he wouldn't have been able to permeate this controversial "step".



(https://www.moma.org/collection/works/48054?artist_id=4192&locale=en&page=1&source=artist#)

and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-sWjIKf2cA>

We can consider that several frames constitute a "step". The procedure is useful, since it helps the trainer "realize" what they are doing. It also makes the conception of completely different ways (but still acceptable by the employer) for the trainee to perform the task (this is applicable especially to routine tasks) feasible. This should be done with close cooperation with the employer, as much as possible from the perspective of a typical employer of the setting, so that the person with ID does not become dependent on the trainer and the reference point remains "natural".

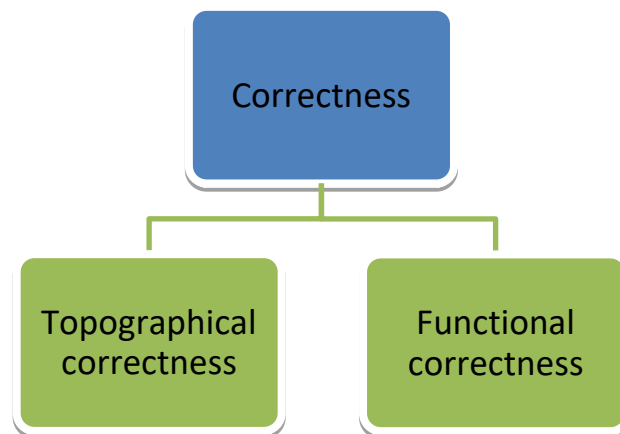
The breaking of the tasks can be endless and frustrating. The trainer should break extensively only those that are causing problem and generally should start by breaking into only as many steps as needed by an average employer. Also, writing down this procedure, is useful for the trainer to exhibit accountability and responsibility, and to be able to share their knowledge, by giving discrete information for breaking the task, achieving accurate performance, and collecting data.

Other method and content considerations

Correctness

Correctness is thought to be the “flip side of error”. Correctness occurs when an employee performs the steps of the method in a manner that the completed task is acceptable by the employer. Nevertheless, this definition does not address how the task is performed, only that the result is acceptable.

There are two types of correctness: Topographical and functional.



Topographical correctness occurs when the steps of the method are performed in the way they are typically performed in the natural setting, as taught by the trainer, so that the task is completed with acceptable quality.

Functional correctness occurs when a task is completed with acceptable quality, but in a manner different from the method typically performed in the setting. The degree to which an employee must adhere to topographical correctness or be allowed to use functional correctness is dependent on a few factors. Functional correctness, though, is not a starting point for training.

Topographical correctness is important when:

- Safety issues are a concern (such as in hand placement on a press machine). In such a case, functional correctness may inadvertently lead to an accident as the employees’ hands are placed in various locations on the machine.
- The productivity of the task is critically important (often the topographically correct method is also the most efficient method).

- The trainer teaching the task (coworker) also performs the task using the same method. This will increase the comfortableness of “natural” people to teach supported employees.
- Teaching the task(s) which will be performed most frequently during the workday. It makes good sense not to encourage flexibility on the tasks which are performed the most often, since any problem related to functional correctness will be multiplied.

Functional correctness can be encouraged when:

- Tasks are inherently performed based on individual choice (such as the way one hangs coats and other personal items in a company locker).
- Tasks which are performed only occasionally during the workday or week.
- The way a task is performed is usually less important as the number of times it is performed decreases, *unless there are safety or quality concerns*.
- Tasks at which an aspect of the employee’s disability hinders the performance of topographical correctness. Significant modifications to topographical correctness may be needed to the method to accommodate the employee’s disability. Persons with ID often have co-morbidities which may complicate the types of workplace adjustments (and human resource management support).

Error

Error is what occurs when the person doesn’t perform the steps of the method topographically or functionally correct and assistance is needed for corrections. To detect that, the mental image gained in job analysis is necessary.

It should be clarified that error is not a negative concept. All employees will make errors during the acquisition of a task and even later, during performance. The important distinction that this approach to training makes is that trainer is encouraged to focus on the correction of errors made during the performance of the method, rather than simply on the outcome or product of the job task. In this way, the person with ID can learn to perform their job tasks, in ways that are as similar as possible to the natural methods used in the setting. This is expected to enhance acceptance and comfortableness on the part of supervisors and co-workers of the trainee.

Criterion

Criterion is another important concept that defines the point when the acquisition of the job task has taken place. It is crucial for trainer to identify the point at which criterion performance is assumed. If there is not likely a natural standard for criterion, the trainer will usually need to set criterion in a way that makes sense in relation to the demands of the job tasks and the work setting. It must be noticed that no task will be performed correctly 100% of the time, day after day. *The trainer must therefore set criterion as a reasonable percentage of perfect performance.* The better a trainer knows the work setting, the easier it will be to set a fair and effective criterion for job tasks.

Cycle constancy

Cycle constancy is the topographically correct performance of all the steps of the task, cycle after cycle. It is a concept closely related to criterion and addresses a characteristic of tasks that have naturally repeating cycles. When a task is performed in a consistent manner, each time it naturally occurs, the time necessary for criterion performance is lessened. Thus, the basic job responsibilities are seldom problematic for employees with ID. It is most often episodic tasks and duties that create problems on the job.

Setting high the point for criterion acquisition and paying attention to topographical correctness and cycle constancy is important in the cases below:

- Safety issues
- Quality of work outcome is an important issue.
- Productivity demands are high.
- The task is a part of core work routines.
- The cycle of repetition is short.
- There is high cost for materials being used and errors occurring.

On the contrary, the above considerations are less important, when safety is not an issue, when a variety of acceptable methods exist, or when the task is an episodic one.

Content steps

The content steps of job tasks vary in several important aspects. The following descriptions relate to various types of content steps. It should be noted that a given step might share a number of these characteristics.

Specificity of information

- Discrete steps are steps of a task which involve distinct or absolute action. Correct action can be specified and easily evaluated. All other action is incorrect. These steps are usually more easily taught than steps requiring judgment.
- Judgment steps are steps which involve a range of correctness, which implies soft boundaries. The evaluation of correctness, therefore, is often subjective. Judgment steps require consistent practice to be learned.

Amount of information that has impact on learning.

- Natural steps that contain the amount of information typically needed by an average employee of a work setting to learn the task. The trainer often must guess or estimate the amount of information in natural steps if no such determination has been made in the setting.
- Teachable steps that contain an amount of information suitably matched to the needs of the learner. Natural steps may or may not be teachable in their initially written form, depending upon the needs of the employee.

Type of action required of the employee.

- Order steps occur at the beginning of each new action change in the task and relate to the sequence of the method.
- Discrimination steps require the employee to distinguish the proper feature or cue of the task for correct performance.
- Manipulation steps involve physical interaction by the employee with a component of the task to achieve correctness.

Natural cues

Natural cues are the existing features of any setting, task or item that assist people to correctly perform the tasks or jobs of the setting. In work settings, natural cues are important to trainers because they can be utilized to enhance the acquisition and maintenance of difficult to teach episodic and job-related routines. All job tasks, even core routines, contain natural cues, but their use is much more critical on tasks with significant time delay between cycles of performance. Virtually every component of a natural routine has several natural cues which can be referenced by the trainer to help teach and maintain

the skill. It is critical that the trainer identify the most relevant or salient natural cues and observe how the employee attends to those cues.

Natural consequences

When a person performing a particular task fails to observe a natural cue, one of several things might occur:

- The routine may be interrupted, or perhaps terminated. This can be referred to as a *neutral natural consequence*. It is the responsibility of the trainer to ensure that the likelihood of this consequence occurrence is only seldom.
- The person may become injured, embarrassed, or frightened. This can be considered a *negative natural consequence*. It is the responsibility of the trainer to ensure that the likelihood of this consequence occurrence is zero.
- The person may receive assistance or additional information. This natural consequence can be thought of as *assisting*. It is the responsibility of the trainer to ensure that the likelihood of this consequence is used in teaching the targeted task.

Backward chaining

When teaching a new task, the trainer often starts from the first step (forward chaining). This can be challenging for persons with ID who are struggling to master this task. One way of learning a new task while giving the person with ID a sense of achievement, is to use the backward chaining technique.

- To use backward chaining, the trainer needs to have already broken the task down into smaller steps (neither too many nor too few).
- The last step is being taught first, working backwards from the goal. The trainer completes all the steps except the last one and has the trainee practice the final step (which is feasible).
- The trainee will enjoy the success that comes from completing a task. The trainer delivers reinforcement at the completion of the last step. Thus, regardless of the stage of training, reinforcement is delivered at the “natural” location (i.e., at the end of the task).

- Once the trainee has mastered the last step, the trainer completes all the steps except for the last two. The trainer teaches the person the second from last step and then the person completes the last step themselves.
- The trainer continues like this until they are teaching the first step and the trainee is completing all the other steps.

Neither forward nor backward chaining has been consistently more efficacious in promoting response acquisition. It may be that different learners do better with different procedures, and when different tasks are used, different results are obtainable.

Types of job tasks

There are some training issues associated with three types of job tasks that address the culture of the workplace.

Core routines

These are job tasks which have cycles which are repeating, without significant interruption between cycles. These tasks are typically those most frequently performed by the employee. The cycle of a task begins with the first step of a job sequence and ends with the step which precedes the initial step of the next sequence.

Episodic work routines

These are assigned job tasks which have cycles that occur infrequently, once, or twice a shift, or possibly even once a week, and are required by the employer as part of the job description. These routines are often more difficult to train because of the time lapse between the cycles.

Since episodic work routines lack the natural training power available from core routines (that imply repeating cycles), trainers need to find other sources for additional instructional power as training problems arise. There are several strategies a facilitator can use to regain the difficulty created due to the time delay between job cycles:

1. Reference natural cues and use assisting natural consequences.
2. Pull the problem step out of the natural cycle, or the task out of the natural flow of performance, and practice using repeating cycles until criterion is reached.

3. Negotiate assistance from others in the work setting for difficult components of the task.

By referencing and utilizing natural cues and assisting natural consequences, the trainer can gain instructional power not available due to the time delay between cycles of performance of job tasks. However, this focus alone may not be sufficient to teach tasks with significant time delay. If these approaches do not prove sufficient to teach the task, facilitators may need to negotiate for partial assistance from coworkers or supervisors to complete the problematic step(s) of a task.

Job-related routines

These are not part of the job, but they are vital to successful performance. These routines are too often ignored by trainers. They share many characteristics of episodic work routines in that significant time delay often occurs between cycles of performance. Examples of job-related routines might be getting to work, going to the bathroom, taking a break, knowing when to stop work or other, unwritten rules.

Job related routines involve skill and routines that are not explicitly required by the employer for the job, but they are vital for successful performance of the job. These routines may occur either on-site or off-the-job. Additionally, poor performance of these routines is more likely to occur than on core work routines. Many workers with disabilities lose their jobs when assistance is not offered to facilitate acceptable performance.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL MEANS THAT CAN BE USED

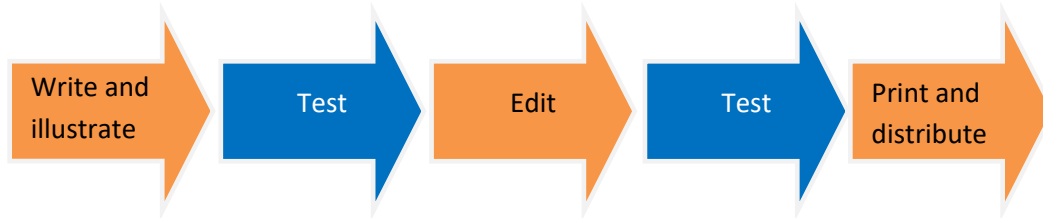
Easy-to-read material

Generally, about easy-to-read

Accessibility is a fundamental right for persons with ID. Article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2009) states that “States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems”.

Persons with ID who use any kinds of services have a range of communication abilities. The way in which the trainer communicates with these persons specific information needs to take account of that. Preparing easy-to-read documents brings the trainer into direct contact

with the person with ID through testing the material and providing them with a way of proving whether they are producing documents that communicate or not. Rules for the workplace and instructions for the tasks that need to be acquired should be created in easy-to-read format.



The trainer should decide whether it would be more appropriate to create content e.g., in leaflet or video form.

As it concerns the analysis of the tasks, the trainer could create two types of “manuals” for each set of tasks:

1. A short one, to assist the person with ID acquire a mental synopsis of their tasks.
2. A comprehensive one, that will assist the person with ID master the tasks. The person should have two copies of each, one for their work, and one for the home to study (if they have one, they might forget bringing it with them).

In the current manual, we will focus on the creation of printed easy-to-read material. A trainer can also create videos or other types of digital material.

Next sections focus on what the trainer should pay attention to when creating this kind of material.

Font considerations

- Use of one type of font
- Use of fonts without serifs is acceptable but don't use fonts that look like handwriting or calligraphic fonts must not be used

f	f	<i>f</i>
	X	X

- Numbers 3, 5 and 8 should also be clear
- Size 14 is most used for persons with ID (if they don't have serious sight problems)

- Capitals should be used only in the beginning of the sentence
- Abbreviations shouldn't be used
- There can only be cautious use of bold and underlined font

Spacing considerations

- 150% spacing is preferred

This	is	Verdana	14
50%	condensed	in	scale.
This is not easy to read because it is too close			

This	is	Verdana	14
0%	condensed	or extended	in scale.
This is not very much easy to read because it is still too close together.			

This	is	Verdana	14
150%	extended	in	scale.
This is easier to read.			

- Avoid splitting words at the end of a sentence
- Avoid running sentences over two pages
- Use one-and-a-half spacing between lines
- Use a space between every paragraph
- Align text to the left, not justified, as it makes it harder to read

Colour considerations

- Use of black/ dark font on white background is preferable

This is
easy to read
as it concerns
use of colours

This is not
easy to read
as it concerns
use of colours

- Pale or pastel colours should be avoided
- Colour can be used to direct people to information (colour-coding) if a few primary colours are kept, that are easily identified
- It should be kept in mind that certain eye conditions can lead to colour blindness, so the trainer should not rely on colour alone

Construct considerations

- A clear structure is needed that will get the messages across as quickly and clearly as possible, starting with the most important information
- The length of the document is important (it shouldn't be longer than necessary)
- At the typesetting stage, the trainer needs to make sure that the sentence, if it must be broken up, it keeps phrases together

The way this sentence is cut
is easy to read

The way this sentence is
cut is not as easy to read

Words and sentences considerations

- Language for children shouldn't be used for adults with ID
- Nevertheless, difficult words should never be used
- Use of examples from everyday life is useful
- Use of metaphors or figures of speech makes things more difficult

- Use of the same word to describe the same thing throughout the document is necessary
- Use of percentages or high numbers is not useful – words like “many” or “few” should be used instead
- Sentences should be kept short
- Use of clear headings is necessary
- The trainer should speak directly to the person with ID, e.g. “You...”
- Use active language rather than passive language is necessary
- Expressing things positively rather than negatively is desired
- All special characters like & should be avoided
- Only the important information must be given
- Important information should be placed in a box
- Use of bullets is extremely helpful but not with too many layers of them
- Graphs and tables can be hard to understand
- Use of numerals instead of words is important, e.g., 7 instead of seven
- Numbering the pages like “5 out of 14” is helpful

Organizing information

- All information about the same topic should be grouped together
- It is OK to repeat important or difficult information

Images (if used)

- An image can be used on the left and the text on the right
- Use of photos or illustrations that are easy to grasp (e.g., not with details that aren’t necessary or not too abstract) is necessary



- Use of the same image is necessary to explain the same thing throughout the document
- The trainer should always make sure they have permission to use photographs or illustrations
- The trainer should make sure that images are of a reasonable size so that the trainees can easily see and recognize them

Looking at the pictures and symbols below, one can see how ambiguous sets and systems can be for someone with no literacy and no experience of a particular set or system. Answers are below (try not to use them at once).



The answers to these questions are, row by row:

meet – write - holiday

happy – beside – pray

happy – cinema – peaceful

boyfriend – choose – shop

Virtual Reality use

Virtual reality (VR) possesses many qualities that give it rehabilitative potential for persons with ID, both as an intervention and an assessment.

- It can provide a safe setting in which to practice skills that might carry too many risks in the real world.
- Unlike human tutors, computers are infinitely patient and consistent.
- Virtual worlds can be manipulated in ways the real world cannot be and can convey concepts without the use of language or other symbol systems.
- VR assists promoting skills for independent living, enhancing cognitive performance, improving social skills and vocational rehabilitation.

More data concerning VR is not in the scope of this manual. Nevertheless, the trainers can seek for more information on this method and make good use in their practice, since it constitutes a promising field.

Approaching the Employer

General Information on Approaching the Employer

According to the EUSE (2010), an employer is:

“A person, business or public body that employs workers. In the context of Supported Employment this term is used for a person, business or public body that is actively involved in the Supported Employment process in order to employ a person with a disability or disadvantage or to maintain the work for this person”.

Thus, an employer is a part of the equation when we are talking about community work. For the scope of EQUALvet, the employers will provide job placements for internships (work sampling experience). The trainer might not be the person who will trace the interested employers, but they will probably (and surely will need to) cooperate with them and influence the result of the cooperation.

The *presumption of employability* is the fact that all people can work if provided with appropriate supports. Resources like time and money should be invested to determine how, not if, a person can be successful in community employment. This is important for both the person with ID and the employer to know.

Also, the *social altruism* of the employer is not something that we discourage, especially when initially approaching an employer. Nevertheless, the trainer should only take this as a starting point, to build on it and create a whole new structure of cooperation.

Moreover, the employer should not be interested in hiring “categories”, but instead to meet specific workforce needs. The person who will support the person with ID on the job during the internship, will need to make sure that they adopt a *“dual customer approach”*, meaning that the employer’s needs must be covered, by taking into consideration the inherent demands and perspectives of the company and implementing a “demand-side” consultation. Then, and only then, there can be mutually satisfactory outcomes and in this case an internship might turn into a job development, even if that was not part of the initial plan.

Stances of Employers Concerning Persons with ID

Studies of employer views on people with intellectual disability reveal three distinct tendencies:

1. Negative or inadvertent stereotyping (being naive about or unfamiliar with persons with ID)
2. Disengagement from any process that might put them in contact with job seekers who have intellectual disability
3. Favorable hiring disposition based on a specific experience

It seems that the most efficient way to mitigate these prejudiced or misinformed views and craft the right message, so that the employer does not discriminate against qualified applicants, is *connecting employers to actual applicants*, in presence of the job coach (which is not deemed as intrusive or disruptive and helps identify operational improvements).

What the Trainer Needs to Pursue Concerning the Employer

The job coach should also be able to:

- Prove that they put value on what they are doing
- Stress the fact that persons with ID have been found to be high performers with low absenteeism and turnover
- Show and enhance active corporate diversity benefits
- Do not use terms that the employer is not familiar with
- Show that they acknowledge the social protocol and culture of the workplace, meaning that they respect the way the employees operate and talk
- “Learn the ropes” of the company as soon as possible
- Incorporate some atypical approaches
- Identify operational “bottlenecks” and find solutions for them
- Suggest (if possible) the elimination of steps that add no value to the ultimate customer

- Improve (if possible) the processes in the company (so that – during the advancement of the cooperation – the employer will be able to report that the workplace has improved due to implemented strategies around job indicators)
- Never forget that their success metrics should (to a great extent) resonate with those that the employer has
- Implement the appropriate problem-solving philosophy (job development)
- Allow for natural supports as much as possible and be as little intrusive as possible
- Accommodate the disability of the person only when necessary, always with cooperation with the employer
- Negotiate (since the trainees might not be able to perform some tasks)
- Have a systematic approach for decreasing their presence (to the extent that this is possible, considering the duration of the programme)
- By no means “place and dump” the trainee, implying that they only want to reap the momentary benefits of the programme
- Not forget that positive views do not necessarily translate into hiring behavior
- When the employer is (or becomes) amenable to change, that leads to positive hiring experience
- When the employer has direct contact with employees, they should also have direct contact with the person(s) with ID and if possible, give feedback

Most of all, the job coach should remember that the employer will not really change their views about persons with ID, unless and until exposed to persons with ID, supported by a competent job coach (trainer). When individual employers are introduced to specific individuals, this leads to job retention.

By no means should the trainer omit informing the employer about the particularities of the person with ID and they should present everything as possible (if the person with ID has agreed). These particularities might be:

Expectations around timing

Flexible scheduling and fewer rotating time shifts

Need for problem solving

Supervision

Positive reinforcement

Allowing more breaks

What the Employer Needs from an Employee and the Training Service

The trainer should remember that the employer is interested in seeing an employee who is:

- Motivated
- Self-determined
- Competent in specific tasks
- Having a work behaviour that is adequate for the specific job setting

Also, the employer asks for:

- Compliance with safety precautions
- Productivity
- Punctuality
- Attendance
- Dependability
- Good work habits
- Teamwork

The trainer should support the person with ID in exhibiting the above. Of course, the employer will also need:

- *Responsive supportive services*, meaning (amongst others) the attendance of the job coach (Ellen Camp et al, 2015) and that the job coach should be competent to keep in mind and pursue all parameters.
- All these will result in “getting work done” for the employer and once the person performs to the employer expectations, the employer will pay no attention to the disability of the person.

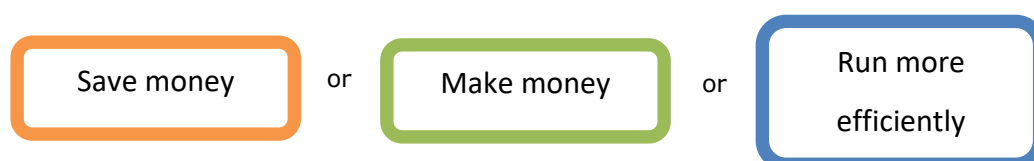
If time constraints are not a problem, engagement (and not simply awareness) activities should take place, in which the employer, the manager and coworkers might participate (see also page [...] about coworkers’ approach). Either way, successful VET programs rely on the knowledge and skills of managers to support the person with ID.

Employers need training in job indicators such as:

- Communication (most of all)
- Supervision
- On-the-job training
- Positive reinforcement

To some extent, the trainer will need to work on all the above parameters prior to potential employee entering the workplace.

They should also remember that the cooperation with the new employee will need to lead to one of these 3 results for the company:



The trainer should underpin the benefits in employer training as it helps to develop more positive attitudes towards individuals with disabilities and promotes higher levels of social involvement for all employees working with the person with ID.

Approaching the Coworker

General Information on Approaching the Coworker

According to the EUSE (2010), a coworker is:

“Colleague[s] at the workplace who can be involved in Supported Employment at different stages of the process. Supporting the individual to achieve integration at the workplace may include supporting interaction with work colleagues.”

Thus, the coworkers are also a part of the equation when we are talking about community work. For the scope of EQUALvet (as it has already been mentioned) the employers will provide job placements for internships (work sampling experience, that might lead to job development), and employees working at the company will need to interact with the person with ID.

This interaction may occur spontaneously, but it should be also facilitated, through human service or consultations. Locating natural supports is something that the trainer will need to seek for. Also, the perfect coworker – mentor will probably be one of the employers the work behaviour of which the employer will want to replicate and who can lead by example. The coworker will be a mentor and will assist to the procedure being not simply a “job placement” but a “job development” that is equivalent to the needs of the person and the company. Working at the same shifts with the person with ID will be a prerequisite.

Stances of Coworkers Concerning Persons with ID

Some coworkers might attribute specific characteristics to persons with ID and thus not be willing to cooperate with them. Also, they might be intimidated by challenging behaviors.

On the other hand, a problem might arise with coworkers if the employer and the general working environment treats the employee with disability with positive discrimination and show particular care or tolerance in contrast to other employees.

Work colleagues who have had in family or previous work contact and experience with a type of disability may be better able to support these workers.

Cooperation with Coworkers

Questions that the job coach should be able to answer concerning this cooperation, are:

Who is considered to be a coworker?

- It is not a bad idea to provide information to workers throughout the company and to human resources personnel (if this is available).
- It will be important to know who to call on and for what reason.
- It will be useful to know who to avoid.

How should information be delivered - exchanged?

- It is most effective to provide information individually or in small groups than in larger formal training sessions.
- It is more effective to create opportunities and solve problems on an ongoing basis rather than waiting for a crisis to arise and then providing information and support to the coworkers.
- Methods that can be used include lectures (taking however into consideration the above), are: Video, group activities, role playing with feedback, written exercises with feedback, brainstorming, written manual.

When should information be delivered – exchanged?

- The beginning of the cooperation is one of the most crucial points to provide all the necessary support for the inclusion of the employee with disability in the working environment.
- Coworkers should participate and contribute during the task analysis.
- The job coach should keep in mind that they will need to (if the person with ID is hired) hand over ongoing support to the coworkers.

What information should be delivered - exchanged?

- Information delivered should be based on the person with ID and the company, rather than a prepackage about coworker involvement.
- The job coach should become aware of any strategies the company already has, concerning the inclusion of persons with disability in their workforce.
- The job coach should not use terms that the coworker is not familiar with.

- Use of a visual aid with photos of employees and their names (under their permission) is a good choice.

The basic benefits of involving the coworkers, are depicted in the following shape:



What the Trainer Needs to Pursue Concerning the Coworker

There are 9 parameters that should be continually used and assessed, concerning the interaction between the coworker and the person with ID:

1. Intervention should take place on time and leading to the implementation of replicable procedures.
2. Physical proximity might be necessary, depending on the tasks.
3. Social interaction is a need for the tasks to be implemented, but also something that is desired.
4. Training of the tasks is a central part of the relationship between the two sides.
5. The association between the two sides is important, concerning the frequency and the appropriateness at which this is exhibited.

6. Befriending among the person with ID and coworkers can be a result of the cooperation. Nevertheless, what is difficult to change is the limited nonwork social interaction with counterparts without disability that can be observed (even when the cooperation is taking place for some time already). On the other hand, friendships with non-disabled doesn't need to be the "gold standard". On the other hand, befriending e.g., during lunch time is desirable.
7. Advocating in issues that might emerge is also a possible task for the coworker.
8. Giving information that is important or useful.

Strategies that the Coworker Might Need to Use

These will be used under the supervision of the job coach

- Cueing (giving signals to start doing something)
- Correcting (this is necessary, to help the person with ID perform to a criterion – of course on tasks that have been mutually chosen)
- Reinforcing (meaning providing proof of support) leads to satisfaction
- Modifying (the methods might need to be modified, to make the implementation of tasks easier or faster)
- Monitoring (which is easier when working in physical proximity in a small workplace)
- Crisis intervention
- Fading support (support is fading as the trainee is learning the implementation of the tasks)
- Evaluating the process (of course – as everything – under the supervision of the job coach)
- "Do – explain – watch" strategy

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