

Reframing the Disability Lens to Increase Economic Stability for Youth and Families

Customized Employment: An Effective Job Development Strategy for Anyone with Barriers to Employment

Andrew J. Karhan M.P.A, M.A., Program Director, Workforce Development
Jade Gingerich, Maryland Department of Disability/MD PROMISE

The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Cooperative Agreement H418P130007. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.



Webinar Series



5 webinars: Topics include:

- Overview
- Work Incentives/Benefits Counseling
- Education/Family Engagement
- Disclosure/Non-obvious Disabilities

- Key elements: Webinars, Tools, Templates, Resources, Q/A for Guiding Discussion
- Recommended Approach: State or local teams comprised of representatives of human services agencies and disability agencies such as vocational rehabilitation, and workforce development such as Labor. Opportunity to integrated into other efforts such as 2 GEN, TANF State Plans and others
- Link to supporting materials: www.mdtransitions.org link to APHSA

Introduction

- PROMISE: Large scale national research grant with over 13,000 youth on SSI and their families recruited to improve educational and employment outcomes. Research required engagement rate of 80%
- California, Maryland, Arkansas, Wisconsin, ASPIRE (CO,AZ,SD, ND, MT, UT),
- and New York..
- Core Interventions including Assertive Case Management, Benefits counseling, Parent Education and training, Paid and Unpaid work experiences for youth.
- Work Based Learning now available under Pre Employment Transition Services through WIOA to youth with disabilities.



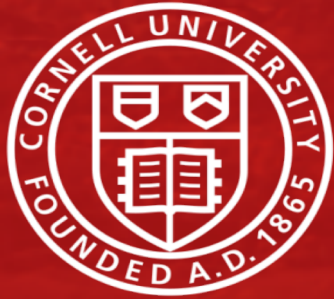
Pre ETS and Youth on SSI

Expands access to employment preparation and placement services for students at age 16 (14 in some states). Services include:

1. Job Exploration Counseling
2. Work Based Learning (WBL)
3. Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Post-Secondary Education Programs at institutions of higher education
4. Workplace Readiness Training to Develop Social Skills and Independent Living
5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy

What You Should Consider:

1. How to ensure youth on SSI/disabilities whose families are engaged with SNAP, TANF, Child Welfare and/or in Foster care are aware of and accessing Pre ETS.
2. How customized employment (CE) as a model can be implemented for other populations



K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan
Institute on Employment and Disability

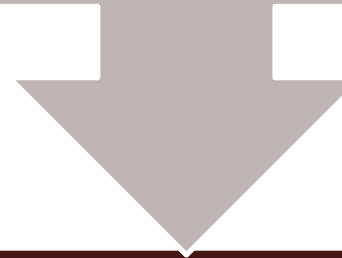


Customized Employment

Presented by
Andrew J. Karhan M.P.A, M.A.
Program Director, Workforce Development

CE in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Era

Section §361.5(c)(15) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) specifically identifies customized employment (CE) as an employment outcome under the public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program.



CE is defined as: **competitive integrated** employment, for an individual with a significant disability, that is based on an **individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests** of the individual with a **significant** disability, designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the **business needs** of the employer, and carried out through flexible strategies. (Civic Impulse, 2015, p. 573)

Model of Employment Services – Grounded in socio-ecological theory that looks at the interrelationships of an individual and his/her environment.

It is NOT a “program type” but rather a “set of universal principles” (ODEP, 2019).

It IS a methodology that looks at both “supply” and “demand” (2019).

It works, and has been tested with people of ALL abilities, talents, and skills (2019)

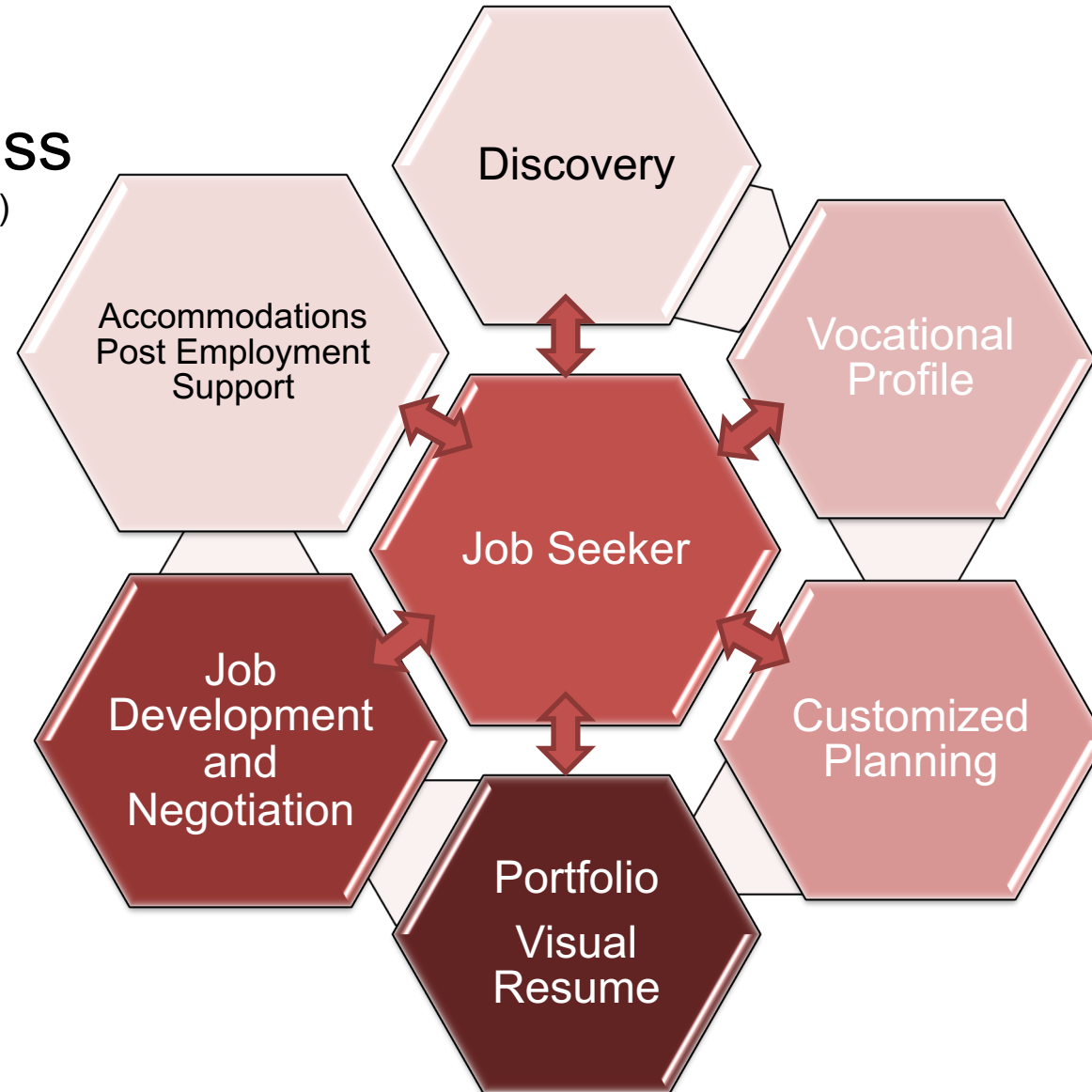
Some refer to it as Employment Services on Steroids!

How is the individual viewed?

- Customized Employment incorporates a Holistic View of the Person (Smith, et al, 2017)
 - Age
 - Functional Capacities and Skills
 - Type of Disability
 - Support Systems
 - Living Arrangements
 - Connections
 - Interests and Talents

Customized Employment Process

(Smith et al, 2017, adapted by Karhan)



Implementing CE in Practice

What do State's need to consider?

How do the principles of CE fit into VR model of funding and service delivery?

Do other systems that fund employment also embrace Customized?

What are the CE competencies that needed to be successful?

Business First in a Person First World

Challenges with CE in VR



Systemic Soup – What Goes Into the Pot?

1

Mental Health

2

Developmental
Disabilities

3

Substance
Abuse

4

Labor

5

Social Security

Cross-systems challenges

- Do training curriculums across state agencies have the same focus on Customized?
 - Does the DD system embrace the model? Payment?
 - Does the MH system integrate the model? Individual Placement and Support (IPS) (IPS Employment Center, 2019).
 - Open to anyone who wants to work
 - Focus on competitive employment
 - Rapid job search
 - Targeted job development
 - Client preferences guide decisions
 - Individualized long-term supports
 - Integrated with treatment
 - Benefits counseling included
- Train and place focus in Labor

Cross-systems challenges

- Social Security – Ticket to Work
 - Partnership Plus
 - Braiding with Medicaid Funding
- Negative long-term systemic cultural beliefs in the DD and MH systems about peoples “ability” and/or “need” to work?
Residential, Day, and other program staff?
- Do agencies silo their employment staff by “funding” source, thereby codifying a manner of doing business?



Business First

Negotiating in a Business First World?

What is the benefit to the employer?

What we hear from business:

- Don't send me 20 job developers all looking to place 1 person.
- The staff of agencies often cause more work for me, and take my managers away from other duties.
- I need to fill 30 jobs, and you are providing me with one applicant.

Contrast this for a moment with the principles of CE:

- I don't have time vs. please take extra time to meet with me.
- Meetings are brief, but there are multiple meetings.

Negotiating in a Business First World?

What will
change the
conversation?

- Typically, an employer will be willing to consider customizing job tasks for a prospective employee if this act (ODEP, 2006):
 - Saves money
 - Helps make money
 - Helps the operation run more efficiently
 - Improves customer relations
 - Increases safety

Negotiating in a Business First World?

What will change the
conversation?

Employment First Commission

DisabilityIN

YTI – Benchmarkability

Engagement with Workforce
Development

What are the competencies
needed by
professionals/practitioners to
be successful?

Staff Competencies (Szoc, R. & Harvey, J., 2019).



Customized Employment and Other Populations



- Ex-offenders, disconnected youth, homeless, substance abuse, Veterans, English language learners, others
- Partners to include in discussions include VR, DD, Labor, MH
 - --how to ensure youth on SSI are accessing
 - --how to replicate CE model in other work programs
- Holistic approach to serving families and youth with positive messaging regarding work as a means to increase economic stability/self sufficiency
- Everyone can work with the rights supports and services

Unpacking the Toolkit

- Asset Based Inventory Tool/Templates
 - Individualized Job Employment Tool/Template
 - Customized Employment Employer Views Fact Sheet
 - Customized Employment Tips for Parents Fact Sheet
 - Resources including where to get more information and training
 - Questions to Stimulate State and Local Discussions
-
- www.mdtransitions.org



Appreciation and Contact Information

- Special thanks to: APHSA and Conference Edge staff
- Jade Gingerich, MD PROMISE Project Director/Director of Employment Policy, Maryland Department of Disabilities
Jade.Gingerich@Maryland.gov
- Andrew J. Karhan M.P.A, M.A., Program Director, Workforce Development