

Supported Employment In College:

Increasing Paid Employment for
College Students with Intellectual
and Developmental Disabilities

Facilitator's Guide



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For more information on the grant and the Transition RRTC, visit: transition.vcurrtec.org

Introduction

An important component of post-school career success is accessing paid employment opportunities while in school. Postsecondary education (IPSE) program staff play an integral role in supporting students in obtaining and succeeding in paid employment opportunities while enrolled. Using principles of supported employment can assist program staff in helping students identify employment that matches their skills, interests, and strengths. Implementing supported employment strategies is pivotal while working with the campus and local business community to develop employment that aligns with those skills, interests, and strengths.

The *Supported Employment in College Facilitator's Guide* and *Supported Employment in College* online course are tools that postsecondary education program staff and collaborators can use to develop the knowledge and skills to secure and support interest-driven paid employment opportunities for students enrolled in their programs.

Purpose of the Guide

The *Supported Employment in College Facilitator's Guide* is a resource for postsecondary education program staff and partners supporting college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in obtaining paid employment. This guide is a companion resource for the free, online course [Supported Employment in College](#), developed by the VCU [RRTC on Employment of Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities](#). It guides the use of course information in small-group or large-group collaborative settings.

Facilitator's Role & Responsibilities

Those enrolled in the course can engage in Supported Employment in College in a variety of ways. Participants can complete the lessons independently or in a facilitated group setting. This guide provides guidance and ideas for the facilitated group approach. Facilitators may include program directors or staff, state or regional alliances, career service providers, or affinity groups. The role of a facilitator is to assist a group of professionals in increasing their knowledge of specific content objectives, promote robust discussions, and move the participants through the course on an established timeline. A good facilitator manages the learning process and creates an active environment within a group dynamic.

Facilitator Responsibilities ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

- Clarify content information
- Facilitate group discussions
- Develop collaborative learning opportunities
- Establishes a timeline for progress

Course Overview

[Supported Employment in College](#) is a free series of online lessons, each designed to provide higher education professionals with tools and knowledge on evidence-based employment practices to increase paid employment opportunities for college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This course includes video lectures, readings, and resources that build skills in developing and supporting paid employment opportunities for college students. Topics include getting to know your student, job development, customized employment, jobsite training, and transitioning students from college into careers.

Audience

Whether you're a postsecondary education program director or staff member, state or regional alliance member, career service provider, or vocational rehabilitation counselor who wants to learn more about supporting paid campus employment, ***Supported Employment in College*** will provide you with the knowledge and tools necessary to move through the supported employment process.

Course Outcomes

The goal of this course is to provide program professionals with the information and resources to plan and secure interest-driven paid employment campus opportunities.

Course Objectives

1. Discuss the quality standards and indicators for career-related activities in postsecondary education programs and supported employment.
2. Describe the importance of getting to know the student seeking employment.
3. Identify the process for getting to know the student using a person-centered planning approach to develop an employment profile.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the need for a marketing plan, the role of networking, and the strategies for conducting job development.
5. Describe customized employment and how it can be utilized on a college campus for paid employment.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the process of customizing paid campus employment.
7. Discuss the various jobsite training strategies (e.g., natural cues, workplace supports, instructional strategies, assistive technology) and their applications.
8. Describe strategies and processes to help students transition from college to their careers.
9. Discuss the importance of collecting follow-up information to inform practices.

Course Components

Supported Employment in College is self-paced and divided into six lessons. Each lesson consists of several activities to complete, including viewing video lectures, reviewing resources, and taking a quiz. All activities, except the Expanding Your Knowledge activities, must be completed in order to receive your certificate of completion and/or CRCs.

Video Lectures

Each lesson contains several video lectures. If you prefer, you can watch the video or review the transcript. We have found that some participants like to print out the transcript and watch the video in order to help facilitate note-taking.

Resources

Next in the lesson, you'll find the required materials to read. You are required to read or view all of the items in this section. These selected materials are intended to complement the lectures and provide you with "takeaways" to utilize within your educational practice and share with colleagues.

Expanding Your Knowledge

Each lesson will have an activity that will allow for real-world practice of the content covered for that lesson. These activities are optional. We recommend that each group member complete the activities on their own and have facilitated discussions on their experience and results.

Quizzes

After reviewing all the video lectures and the resources, you will have a quiz to complete. Each quiz will have 10 questions. The questions on the quizzes will ask you to apply what you have learned. This may include true and false questions or multiple choices that ask you to demonstrate that you have reviewed the audio lectures and readings. You must answer all questions correctly on each lesson's quiz to receive CRCs. You have unlimited attempts at each quiz. If you do not wish to obtain CRCs, quizzes are optional.

Lesson Listing

Lesson 1: Quality Indicators and Values

Lesson 2: Getting to Know Your Student

Lesson 3: Campus Job Development

Lesson 4: Customized Employment

Lesson 5: Jobsite Training

Lesson 6: Preparing for Post-Graduation Success and Follow-Up

Course at a Glance

The Course at a Glance provides an overview of the course components. For each lesson, you will find a lesson title, objectives, videos with their length, potential discussion questions, and a brief description of each expanding knowledge activity. Total video time for the course is 2 hours and 26 minutes. Use this information when planning how to pace the course for the group.

Lesson One:

Quality Indicators and Values

Objectives

- Increase awareness of the career development standards for higher education programs.
- Identify the quality indicators that make a high-quality, supported employment program.
- Increase awareness of ACE-IT in College.

Videos

- Welcome (2:33)
- Program Standards for Higher Education (5:54)
- Quality Indicators for Supported Employment (4:46)
- ACE-IT in College Overview (5:14)

Total: 18:18 min

Potential Discussion Questions

Describe your current position in reference to postsecondary education for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and any experiences you have with providing employment support and services to people with disabilities.

Select one of the quality indicators for either higher education programs or supported employment that needs priority attention for improvement within your program. Describe why this is an area of concern.

Documents

Expanding Knowledge 1: Self-Assessment

Assess your Higher Education program and develop steps to improve it if necessary.

Lesson Two:

Getting to Know Your Student

Objectives

- Describe the importance of getting to know your students in order to create and update a career plan.
- Explain the process of how to get to know your students.
- Provide an overview of using person-centered planning in higher education.

Videos

- Getting to Know Your Student (7:48)
- Person-Centered Planning (3:57)
- Updating the Career Plan (5:46)
- ACE-IT Case Study: The PCP Meeting in Action (8:10)

Total: 25:41 min

Potential Discussion Questions

Describe the process you currently use for assessing your students' abilities, interests, preferences, conditions for success, and support needs.

Describe what you will implement or change in your practices as a result of the information presented.

Documents

Expanding Knowledge 2: Situational Assessment Tool

Discover career-related skills and support needs for students in your college program.

Lesson Three:

Campus Job Development

Objectives

- Explore networking and the essentials of building relationships.
- Identify marketing materials and develop a marketing pitch.
- Increase understanding of job development.

Videos

- Getting To Know Your Campus (6:42)
- Marketing Your Program (9:35)
- Getting Your Foot in the Door (6:42)
- ACE-IT Case Study: Networking in Action (6:07)

Total: 29:06 min

Lesson Three:

Campus Job Development

(continued)

Potential Discussion Questions

Share your elevator pitch for your program. Make sure your elevator pitch has the following 4 elements (provide 1-2 sentences for each of the 4 elements):

- State what your program is about.
- Highlight the students that are in your program.
- Point out the key parts of your program.
- Emphasize why people want to hire your students.

Other than the elevator pitch, what other elements of job development does your program use/will it use from the information?

Documents

Expanding Knowledge 3: Networking and Marketing Worksheet

Building strong relationships to help you expand opportunities for paid employment. Use this activity to help you initiate networking and marketing at an event on campus.

Lesson Four:

Customized Employment

Objectives

- Increase understanding of customizing employment.
- Identify ways to customize a job on a college campus by job restructuring and job carving.
- Gain knowledge in the jobsite recycling process and how to customize different jobs at one jobsite.

Videos

- Introduction into Customized Employment (5:03)
- Customized Employment on a College Campus (6:29)
- Recycling Businesses To Meet Students' Needs (7:15)
- ACE-IT Case Study: Customized Employment in Action (9:21)

Total: 28:08 min

Potential Discussion Questions

What has your experience been with customized employment? If you have customized a position for students, share your experiences with this process. If you have not used customized employment before, why not?

Share how you will implement one or more of the concepts of customized employment in your program. Do you foresee any

Lesson Four:

Customized
Employment

(continued)

obstacles or challenges to implementing customized employment practices? If so, how might you overcome those obstacles or challenges?

Documents

Expanding Knowledge 4: Informal Interview

Conduct an informational interview and create a job description.

Lesson Five:

Jobsite Training

Objectives

- Provide an introduction to jobsite training and the critical roles employment support plays.
- Describe best practices for providing instruction during jobsite training.
- Explain the components of fading from a jobsite and how to write a fading plan.

Videos

- Introduction to Jobsite Training (5:35)
- Instructional Strategies and Tools (7:26)
- Fading off a Jobsite (8:28)
- ACE-IT Case Study: Jobsite Training in Action (6:34)

Total: 28:03 min

Potential Discussion Questions

Discuss the level of jobsite training your program currently provides. What is one way your program can improve its practices?

Share an experience when you faded supports for a student in employment or academic situations. Explain how fading enhanced the student's independence and autonomy.

Documents

Expanding Knowledge 5: Create a Task Analysis

Create a task analysis which is the first step in jobsite training.

Lesson Six:

Preparing for
Post-Graduation
Success and
Follow-Up

Objectives

- Increase awareness of the transition needs of students graduating from college.
- Conceptualize a transition checklist to prepare students for employment

Videos

- Transition Checklist (5:55)
- Program Follow-Up (4:21)
- ACE-IT in College: Getting the Job (4:36)
- Next Steps (1:52)

Total: 16:44 min

Potential Discussion Questions

Discuss ways in which your program currently helps students transition from college to career. What do you plan to implement into your own practice or program from the videos and readings?

How does your program currently follow-up with previous students and graduates? What benefits and challenges do you see in following up with students post-graduation?

Documents

Expanding Knowledge 6: Transition Checklist Self-Assessment
Assess your higher education program.

Conclusion

Documents

Web Board

Course Evaluation & Certificate

Course Implementation

This section provides specific guidance to facilitators for incorporating *Supported Employment in College* into a group training model. These guidelines will assist with planning by identifying information, activities, and decisions that should occur before, during, and after the course to ensure that all course objectives are met. Decisions about how to administer the course content should be based on the needs of the enrolled participants and the desire to implement sustainable employment practices into each unique program.

Before Course Implementation

Planning and preparation are key to successfully implementing the *Supported Employment in College* course in a group setting. Before the course begins, there are several factors to consider. Facilitators are strongly encouraged to complete the following steps before the course's start date.

Become Familiar with the Course

Thoroughly review the course content. Take the course from an enrolled participant's perspective by viewing the videos, reviewing the resources, and completing the supplemental activities. Determine if any extra resources are needed for each lesson module based on the needs of the identified group members.

Review How to Receive Certificate of Completion

Upon course completion, all participants are eligible for a Certificate of Completion. This course takes program staff and other stakeholders approximately 10 hours to complete the videos and review the resources. Any potential educators who want to use these hours as a professional development activity for recertification will need prior approval from their school division. Each division is responsible for designating the actual number of points that an educator can earn for participation. Program staff and vocational rehabilitation counselors may earn 10 Continuing Education Credits (CRCs) after completing all course requirements and passing all lesson quizzes.

Determine Delivery Format

Facilitators can implement this course in small or large groups in a variety of ways, including the following examples:

Direct instruction: Facilitator explicitly presents course content and facilitates discussions.

Engagement facilitator: Facilitator brings the group together to facilitate discussion on each lesson's content, but enrolled participants complete course content independently.

Peer-to-peer: Facilitator provides reinforcement and support as enrolled participants complete the course with each other but does not directly provide instruction or facilitate discussion.

Student-directed: Facilitator provides support as enrolled participants work at their own pace.

Modality Options

In-person: All course instruction/content review and facilitation happen in person

Hybrid: Facilitator develops interactions between online and face-to-face learning

Online Asynchronous: All facilitation happens online without a dedicated meeting time

Online Synchronous: All facilitation happens online at a dedicated time

Determine Facilitator

The decision on which format and modality to use for *Supported Employment in College* will greatly depend on the personnel assigned to implement the course as well as the dynamic of the identified group members. Consider facilitators' prior knowledge of implementing supported employment for students with disabilities and the ability to commit time for planning and instruction when choosing a facilitator. The role of facilitator could be assigned to one or several persons over the length of the course, as staffing allows.

Determine Schedule and Location

In addition to identifying appropriate staff to serve as the course facilitator, when and where the course may be offered will be critical to successful implementation. Suggestions for location include online, a college campus, a program's office, a VR office, or other centrally located meeting space. The time of day will depend on the facilitators' and group members' schedules. The facilitator may want to develop a meeting poll to determine the best day and time to meet.

Determine Pacing

This online course contains six lessons with multiple video lectures, resources, optional activities, and quizzes. Facilitators are encouraged to pace this course appropriately depending on the group's needs. It is recommended that 60-90 minutes be allotted for each weekly lesson to allow enrolled participants time to master lesson objectives and engage in fruitful discussion. The length of time for each lesson will depend on how quickly you want to complete the course and whether or not all lesson content will be completed as a group or independently.

Direct Instruction or Hybrid Formats

If using direct instruction or hybrid formats, it may be wise to divide lessons with several videos to allow time for group discussion. Other options are to chunk the course by offering the first half of the lessons during one long day session and the second three lessons at a different time.

Peer-to-Peer or Student-Directed Format

If the decision is made to use the peer-to-peer or student-directed format, a start and end date should still be established. The facilitator will need to schedule times for consultation and periodic monitoring to answer questions, check for understanding, and ensure enrolled participants are on track for completion. These check-in sessions should also be an opportunity to determine if support is needed for the Extending Your Knowledge assignments.

Develop Assessments

Facilitators may choose to develop a pre- and post-assessment for each lesson or the entire course to gauge the group's overall progress. Pre-assessments can be based on quizzes that can be used as post-assessments or the facilitator can choose to create alternate assessments.

Develop Lessons

Begin by determining the purpose, intent, and expectations for course completion. In addition to a pre-assessment, facilitators are encouraged to have a “warm-up” activity related to the lesson to prepare enrolled participants for instruction. These could include one of the discussion questions, poll questions, or other interactive strategies for engagement.

Check Technology

Check to make sure the technology, materials, and resources to view videos and complete the activities are available in the location where the course will be offered. The course facilitator and/or participants will need a computer with (preferably high-speed) internet access and a soundcard with speakers to listen to the video lectures. It is wise to have paper copies of transcripts and activities as a backup in the event of any issues accessing digital formats. Be sure that all participants have registered for the course on the [RRTC Transition website](#).

During Course Implementation

As with any instruction, it is important to set the tone for success by building on prior knowledge, interests, and strengths. Begin by reviewing the syllabus for ***Supported Employment in College*** and share the purpose and expectations for completing the course. Have the participants watch the welcome video located in lesson one.

Proceed through the remaining lessons based on the established format and pacing. Do a technology check at the beginning of each session to ensure participants can view videos. If the decision is made to develop pre- and post-assessments for each lesson, administer the pre-test at the beginning of each session, then use a warm-up activity and/or brief review of previous lessons, as time permits, to prepare participants for new content.

Facilitators are encouraged to use other strategies such as role play, games, and other activities to enhance course content and accommodate different learning styles. The activities listed under ***Expanding Your Knowledge*** are great options for this purpose. Consider inviting guest speakers such as other IPSE programs, local businesses, Community Rehabilitation Providers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, or other employment professionals to further engage participant learning during group discussions. Conclude each lesson by reviewing the Expanding Your Knowledge optional activity and administer the post-assessment or quiz.

Discussions

After completing the video lectures within each lesson or session, engage in whole-group or small-group discussions. Group discussions are a beneficial component of any course in that they allow for further dialogue, sharing of resources, gathering new knowledge, and assessing knowledge of a topic. A list of potential discussion questions can be found in the *Course at a Glance*.

Provide Accommodations and Modifications

Provide academic accommodations and modifications to course instruction, as necessary, to meet the diverse needs of all participants. Although the course was built with accessibility in mind, participants may need accommodations to ensure equal access to content or modifications to adapt the content or assignments.

After Course Implementation

Evaluation

Provide participants the opportunity to share verbally and/or in writing what they gained from *Supported Employment in College*. Preserve these testimonials to facilitate future course group recruitment and assess the facilitated course's effectiveness.

Be sure that participants and facilitators complete the course evaluation. Facilitators should make sure that all participants receive a certificate of completion. Follow-up with participants who completed the course 6-12 months afterward to document further the impact the *Supported Employment in College* course had on their implementation of paid employment experiences and services.

Moving Forward

By following the recommendations in this guide, facilitators will provide participants with the knowledge needed to embed principles of supported employment into their postsecondary education programs. The tools in this guide will prepare program staff to help students obtain and succeed in paid campus employment that aligns with their individual strengths and interests.

Additional Suggestions

Below are additional suggestions to help guide facilitators in increasing effective paid employment programming and support.

Share course information.

Share the information and resources from the course with others in their program, state, or region to increase their knowledge, skills, and ability to use effective employment practices.

Help participants learn about local and state resources and agencies that promote competitive integrated employment.

Share information on the variety of training and professional development resources beyond the course to promote continued learning on this topic. Share resources on local and state agencies and organizations that promote employment for people with disabilities.

Learn more about Postsecondary Education and transition resources.

Visit [Think College](#) and [Think Higher. Think College.](#) for relevant resources on a variety of postsecondary education topics.

Visit the [RRTC on Employment of Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities](#) to learn more about the research and training resources available at VCU.

Visit the [Center on Transition Innovations](#) to learn about the most up-to-date resources and information on Career Planning for students with disabilities.

RRTC

Transition.VCURRTC.org

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