



THE POWER OF DISCOVERY AND CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

**ADAPTED FROM "THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED
EMPLOYMENT
FOR UNIVERSAL APPLICATION," WORKFORCE INNOVATION TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE CENTER (WINTAC), JUNE 2017



WHY MAY WE NEED DISCOVERY AND CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT/WHO WILL DO IT?

- Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) new requirements and Center for Medicaid Services (CMS) final rule integration requirements .
- Pennsylvania is an 'Employment First' state.
- A 'foundation' for Person-Centered Planning
 - To guide teams to what works and what can lead to successful employment
 - To guide teams to community integrated opportunities – Discovery is 'no-fail' – in that it presumes competence and the outcome of employment
- Discovery and Customized Employment can be delivered by providers qualified to provide these services.

WHAT IS CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT?

- Expects the outcome of competitive, community integrated employment for individuals with significant impact of disability
- Identifies on and individualized determination of the strengths, needs and interests of job seeker
- Seeks to align the potential contributions of the job seeker with identified, unmet needs of a business/employer creating a mutually beneficial employment arrangement

WHAT IS CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT?

- Comprises a combination of flexible strategies – negotiating a customized job description; individualizing job duties, schedule, location and supervision strategies, representation by a professional chosen by the job seeker during customization; onsite supports, services, and strategies to facilitate successful employment outcomes

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT?

- Development of negotiated job duties/job description
- Individualization, involving a job for one person
- Negotiated pay of at least minimum wage
- Located in businesses in the community, or in business owned by the individual
- Facilitated mutually beneficial, voluntary employment relationships

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT?

- Developed by job development professionals acting on behalf of the job seeker
- Based on a qualitative, 'no-fail' process that presumes the competence of all job seekers to become employed (i.e. Discovery)
- Results in a customized employment position or customized self-employment
- Focused to support individuals with disabilities who would not be successful with 'traditional' employment services/support

THE CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT PROCESS



WHAT IS DISCOVERY

- Discovery is an alternative, qualitative vocational assessment.
- It provides the information needed to determine the strengths, conditions for success, and interests of any person.
- The outcome of Discovery is a customized profile of a person that represents the best qualities and qualifications of the person to help in the job seeking process.
- It differs from “traditional” vocational assessments in that:
 - It uses positive, descriptive language
 - Shows relevant skills, conditions for success, and interests that you would find on any resume
 - Is straightforward and easy to understand for employers and support agencies

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DISCOVERY?

- Qualitative identification of an individual's strengths, interests and needs (conditions for success)
- Uses the strategies of qualitative research: interview, observation, participation with the job-seeker, and records review.
 - Interviews should include job seeker, family, natural supports, and friends. Facilitator should be prepared to interview in a manner that is conversational
 - Observations and participation should occur with the job seeker in activities in which they are at their best
 - Records review should be 'optimistically focused' and is best if done at the end of the Discovery process

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DISCOVERY?

- Uses the strategies of qualitative research: interview, observation, participation with the job-seeker, and records review.
- Views the job seeker descriptively, rather than evaluatively
- Time is an essential element – there must be adequate time to complete the process with fidelity and allow for interviews, observation, participation

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DISCOVERY DOCUMENTS

- The Discovery document should be *owned* and approved by the job seeker – it should be written in a respectful manner that describes needs and strengths that can be shared without potential embarrassment to the job seeker



THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DISCOVERY DOCUMENTS

- The facilitator should maintain the descriptive notes taken during the Discovery process as evidence that Discovery occurred – this should be done with approval of the job seeker and is recommended that these notes may be submitted to a funder as proof of service delivered



THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DISCOVERY DOCUMENTS

- Discovery findings should be compiled in a comprehensive, **non-evaluative**, narrative document
- The document should describe the job seeker and her/his living situation, family, friends, and current life status

MG&A
Plan Preparation Summary
Part III

Participant's Name: _____ Facilitator: _____
Date: _____

1. Conditions for Success
 - a. General conditions for participant:
 - b. General conditions for family (or staff, as appropriate):
 - c. Conditions for task performance:
 - d. Instructional strategies:
 - e. Environmental conditions:
 - f. Supervisory strategies:
 - g. Supports needed for successful task performance:
 - h. Conditions to be avoided:
2. Interests toward an aspect of the job market
 - a. General personal interests:
 - b. General family interests (or staff, as appropriate):
 - c. Activities participant engages in without being expected to do so:
 - d. General areas of current work interest:

1

Marc Gold & Associates©2015

1147 Robinson Street, Ocean Springs, MS 39564
228-205-4586 Fax 228-205-4597
www.marcgold.com

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DISCOVERY DOCUMENTS

- The document should describe the job seeker's life experiences – education, past employment, life activities, skills, responsibilities (at home and in community). It should provide in-depth description of all facets of daily life that may impact or affect employment

MG&A
Plan Preparation Summary
Part III

Participant's Name: _____ Facilitator: _____
Date: _____

1. Conditions for Success

- a. General conditions for participant:
- b. General conditions for family (or staff, as appropriate):
- c. Conditions for task performance:
- d. Instructional strategies:
- e. Environmental conditions:
- f. Supervisory strategies:
- g. Supports needed for successful task performance:
- h. Conditions to be avoided:

2. Interests toward an aspect of the job market

- a. General personal interests:
- b. General family interests (or staff, as appropriate):
- c. Activities participant engages in without being expected to do so:
- d. General areas of current work interest:

1

Marc Gold & Associates©2015

1147 Robinson Street, Ocean Springs, MS 39564
228-205-4586 Fax 228-205-4597
www.marcgold.com

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DISCOVERY DOCUMENTS

- The Discovery document should provide preparation for development of the employment plan – identifying strengths, interests, needs (as conditions for success)

MG&A
Plan Preparation Summary
Part III

Participant's Name: _____ Facilitator: _____
Date: _____

1. Conditions for Success
 - a. General conditions for participant:
 - b. General conditions for family (or staff, as appropriate):
 - c. Conditions for task performance:
 - d. Instructional strategies:
 - e. Environmental conditions:
 - f. Supervisory strategies:
 - g. Supports needed for successful task performance:
 - h. Conditions to be avoided:
2. Interests toward an aspect of the job market
 - a. General personal interests:
 - b. General family interests (or staff, as appropriate):
 - c. Activities participant engages in without being expected to do so:
 - d. General areas of current work interest:

1

Marc Gold & Associates©2015

1147 Robinson Street, Ocean Springs, MS 39564
228-205-4586 Fax 228-205-4597
www.marcgold.com

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR CUSTOMIZING EMPLOYMENT

- All employment services require a plan for employment that guides the job development service(s) provided and outlines the development of a employment for a job seeker



A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR CUSTOMIZING EMPLOYMENT

- The employment sought, and plan guiding the job development is not based upon traditional job openings or existing relationships held by the job developer/employment specialist
- A comprehensive Discovery document is the foundation of planning for customized employment



THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CUSTOMIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (CPE)

The Discovery provider should develop the outline for customized employment job development. A plan for employment should:

- A planning meeting to develop the CPE should be held within 2-4 weeks after the completion of Discovery and the comprehensive Discovery document
- The job seeker, with necessary supports, should approve all aspects of the planning meeting and the CPE that is developed

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CUSTOMIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (CPE)

The Discovery provider should develop the outline for customized employment job development. A plan for employment should:

- The planning meeting should be facilitated by the individual who conducted Discovery/developed the Discovery document
- Invitees/attendees to the planning meeting should be individuals who know the job seeker well and are 'champions' of the job seeker

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CUSTOMIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (CPE)

- All those attending the meeting should receive a copy of the Discovery document (minus the 'sensitive information' section) with the permission of the job seeker
- The job developer who will be completing the customized employment process for the job seeker should be in attendance at the meeting

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CUSTOMIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (CPE)

- The goal for attendees at the meeting is to, as close as possible, have an equal mix of attendees who are not paid (family, friends, etc.) and paid professionals supporting the job seeker
- The planning meeting should review the job seeker's strengths, interests, and conditions for success (needs) as described in the Discovery document

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CUSTOMIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (CPE)

- A result of the planning meeting should be the generation of a list of tasks that fit the job seeker and can be offered to a potential employer
- A result of the planning meeting should include the development of a list of employers consistent with the job seeker's specifics that will be used as the blueprint for job development
- A copy of the plan developed should be provided to the job seeker, the job developer, and the 'funder' (i.e. OVR)

VISUAL RESUME

- Developed from the Discovery document and the plan for employment.
- Provides an alternative format for job seekers to present themselves to a prospective employer.
- Includes high quality photographs of the job seeker engaged in activities that demonstrate skills .
- Format may be visual (in a binder) or electronic – “swivel cards”.
- Use PowerPoint formats that are not distracting and present the individual as a professional, just as a traditional resume would be created.

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- An individualized process using information from the Discovery process.
- A business-focused model which considers both employer and job seeker needs. Most models look at adapting jobs to fit job seeker needs, or carving out parts of a job for a job seeker.
- Employers are provided with a needs/benefit analysis to identify potential tasks and negotiate a customized job description.



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- Customized Employment (CE) is defined in WIOA. It includes the requirement of an employment specialist or job developer (representative) who is chosen by the job seeker to assist with employer contacts and negotiating the customized job position



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- These functions are different than traditional job developers. In CE, the role of the job developer is multi-layered and requires the job developer to have significant knowledge about the job seeker to negotiate customized employment
- Job developers must be able to clearly communicate the concept of customized employment to potential employers and how the employer/business may benefit from the contributions of the job seeker. This includes conducting a benefit/needs analysis at the workplace.



ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- The primary customer of the job developer is the job seeker
- The job developer should work with the job seeker to identify the essential and ideal features of employment, anything that is non-negotiable regarding a job, and what areas can be negotiated with potential employers

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- Job developers should have a prepared and practiced presentation to explain the concept of customized employment to potential employers. The concept of customized employment is new to employers/businesses and different than traditional hiring practices – job developers must be prepared to present the concept.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- Job developers should access all connections associated with the job seeker, the agency, and with the job seeker's personal/professional relationships to schedule appointments with potential employers.
- Job developers should **avoid** job openings and the typical personnel/HR process when approaching employers
- The job developer should work with the job seeker to identify the essential and ideal features of employment, anything that is non-negotiable regarding a job, and what areas can be negotiated with potential employers

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- Job developers should have developed processes to provide potential employers with a benefits analysis – including identification of/how to fill unmet needs – in relation to the tasks that the job seeker can contribute to the workplace
- Job developers should emphasize an informational approach and relationship with potential employers, rather than using the traditional persuasion approach
- Job developers will be developing a customized job description with each employer that outline the tasks and responsibilities of the job seeker. These tasks and responsibilities – and other work related expectations – should be negotiated with the employer during development of the position

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- The job developer must seek permission from the job seeker to share/disclose information that may require flexibility, accommodation, or consideration by an employer – this information will NOT be shared with every employer – only after the discussions have moved along in the process.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT JOB DEVELOPMENT

- Job developers should negotiate a support plan with the employer that will provide the job seeker – new employee – all the naturally existing supports/features of the workplace as well as the assistance of supported employment (job coaching) as is needed to transition the job seeker into the new employment position. These supports should be based on the needs of the individual job seeker and not based on ‘traditional’ outlines of how service is provided.

WRAPPING IT UP

QUESTIONS?

For more information contact
Program Manager/Program Specialist: Nicole
Turman at

nturman@includemepa.org

or

Assistant Program Manager/Program Specialist:
Anthony Chan at achan@includemepa.org

