LEAD CENTER

GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY -- Veterans Edition

FACILITATOR GUIDE

A journey in self-exploration for Veterans who are ready to take control of their employment search

NDI National DISABILITY INSTITUTE

ODEP Office of Disability Employment Policy

Overview

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and the LEAD Center are pleased to release this Guided Group Discovery Facilitator Guide - Veterans Edition. The purpose of Guided Group Discovery is to lay the foundation for competitive integrated employment as a Universal Design that can benefit all job seekers. For some people, Guided Group Discovery leads to Customized Employment. For everyone, the process assists job seekers in identifying employment that would be a good fit both for them and an employer. The process of Guided Group Discovery results in a positive written description of each job seeker that provides insight into the settings and circumstances in which he or she is most likely to be successful. The information in their Blueprint for Employment, described herein, is used to facilitate an employment planning process that matches Veterans with businesses to meet the needs of both.

This Guided Group Discovery - Veterans Edition Facilitator Guide is designed to train people to facilitate Guided Group Discovery sessions with Veterans, people with disabilities, and/or others who experience barriers to employment. LEAD Center has supported pilot projects implementing Guided Group Discovery in American Job Centers (also known as One-Stop Career Centers) in collaboration with a variety of partners, including Veterans services, vocational rehabilitation, developmental disabilities, behavioral health, Centers for Independent Living, homeless services providers, and others. By facilitating groups with partners, job seekers can get support from multiple systems and the agencies can leverage each other's resources.

Guided Group Discovery materials include a Facilitator Manual, an accompanying PowerPoint slide deck and a Participant Manual, all of which can be downloaded from LEAD Center's website at www.leadcenter.org.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

What is Guided Group Discovery?

Guided Group Discovery (GGD) is a strategy that assembles small groups of up to 10 job seekers committed to an employment search. Led by one or more trained facilitators, job seekers are guided through a process of self-exploration and offered an opportunity for peer support that is often very beneficial to job seekers, especially people who may be struggling to find employment and may otherwise lose motivation to stick with the job search over time. As with a more traditional job club model, Guided Group Discovery provides the added benefit of networking and feeling less alone in the job search process.

Guided Group Discovery is the first step in a process known as Customized Employment. Customized Employment is a strategy for helping people who haven't been successful with a more traditional job search approach (e.g., identifying open positions, filling out applications and interviewing). While a more traditional approach works well for some (i.e., people skills most closely match the job description), often people experiencing barriers to employment don't compete well and become frustrated.

Customized Employment seeks to create a "win/win" employment opportunity by matching the contributions of a job seeker with the unmet needs of an employer. Customized Employment circumvents the competitive nature of more traditional employment strategies by proactively proposing employment to employers, using one's social network to assist in identifying job leads.

What is the Role of American Job Centers in Guided Group Discovery?

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 requires that American Job Centers (AJCs) be both physically and programmatically accessible to everyone. AJCs typically provide physical access (ramps, accessible computer stations, etc.) but, all too often, simply refer job seekers to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs or other programs if they have service-related or other disabilities. While VR is a wonderful resource and a likely partner, AJC's also provide valuable services that can be tapped by anyone seeking employment assistance.

Guided Group Discovery is one service that AJC's can provide as a means of assessing individual interests, skills, and conditions of employment. That information can inform a good job match for the job seeker and can help AJC staff identify needed services. It allows case managers and workforce staff for adults and youth to understand the needs of the individual and understand when and if a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation or other agencies is needed. It can also help AJC Business Services Representatives to actively identify employer needs that might be met by a particular job seeker.

For example, Henry, an Adult Program staff member at the local AJC, meets with a new client named Cindy. Cindy is young, hasn't had much work experience, and is not clear about the type of work she would like to do. Because Cindy uses a wheelchair, Henry's initial inclination is to refer her to Vocational Rehabilitation. But after attending training on Customized Employment and Discovery, Henry instead invites Cindy to participate in Guided Group Discovery. This will allow Cindy to explore her interests and skills, as well as identifying potential barriers and support needs. In Cindy's community, Guided Group Discovery is co-facilitated by a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, creating a natural opportunity for AJC and VR staff to work together with Cindy to find meaningful employment.

Although Guided Group Discovery was originally developed for people with disabilities, it is universally applicable to any person or group (e.g., a Universal Design), which can help anyone who is trying to identify the next step in their career. Most Veterans are well-qualified to fill a multitude of civilian job openings. However, they may need guidance in how their military training, discipline and mission focus can benefit an employer. GGD can be a useful tool for those Veterans whose military experience and training does not easily translate to civilian employment. For example, Veterans many be good at logistics, transportation manfgement, strategic plnanning, contingnecy planning, and meeting tight deadlines.

Participant Profile for Guided Group Discovery

Guided Group Discovery provides a small group of job seekers with a peer-to-peer opportunity for job seekers to accurately identify their interests, skills and contributions, and their essential/preferred conditions for employment. Whereas almost any job seeker could benefit from a discovery-type model, not all job seekers need or want to work in structured groups or spend the time Guided Group Discovery takes before beginning a job search. Many job seekers, including Veterans, can make use of other more self-directed forms of discovery, and some may need an individual facilitated process.

Guided Group Discovery would be most beneficial for job seekers who are committed to multiple sessions, interested in becoming an active participant in their job search, and meet one or more of the following characteristics:

➔ Enjoys working with others;
➔ Has a difficult time identifying their abilities and skills;
➔ Has the ability to stay focused on one topic for at least 20 minutes at a time;
➔ Has little or no employment history;
➔ Attains employment but has difficulty retaining employment;
➔ Has specific conditions of employment that will need to be considered and addressed if employment is to be successful;
➔ Has had unsuccessful experience(s) with the more conventional, demand-driven labor market approach; and/or
➔ Has one or more barriers to employment that has impeded a successful job search.

Additional Considerations

Working with Partners

Guided Group Discovery is most effective when co-facilitated between AJC staff and partner agencies, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Behavioral/Mental Health, Department of Veterans Affairs/Venteran Health Administration, Centers for Independent Living, or Community Rehabilitation Programs. Partnering offers many benefits, including the sharing of resources, information on additional funding, and backup in the event the facilitator is out.

If participants are involved with Guided Group Discovery based on a referral from an outside agency, include the referrer in the first and last session. This will ensure there is a clear understanding of what the individual is to gain from participating in Guided Group Discovery, as well as expectations at its completion. This will also increase the chance of course completion and follow-up on next steps.

If and when possible, facilitators are encouraged to invite outside speakers and resources to the sessions. Sample speakers might include certified benefits planners, employers (to conduct mock interviews), community-based providers, Veterans already working in the community, etc.

Support Personnel: Some Veterans may require assistance to meaningfully participate in Guided Group Discovery. Support personnel, such as a case manager, Employment Specialist, personal care assistant, or family member might participate in order to help the job seeker with reading or recording information, or assistance with processing and follow-up. In these cases, facilitators are encouraged to treat the support person as an active member of the group. This would include introducing themselves and asking them to participate in group activities. Support personnel can assist the job seeker they support but may not be an active member of the group. Facilitators will need to review the role of each support person with them prior to Guided Group Discovery.

Note: The level of interaction provided by the support staff should always be dictated by the individual going through the Discovery process.

Facilitator Guide (Set-Up)

This guide provides facilitators with additional information and sample discussions for use with a small group of job seekers. It is intended as a supplement to the Group Discovery PowerPoint file.

PowerPoint Slide ●	← Any slide with a number in the right hand corner indicates that a participant handout is associated with this information. The Guided Group Discovery Participant Guide is included at the end of the Facilitator Guide.

This section offers suggested discussion points to use when presenting the material, as well as a general strategy for how to present the information.

Recurring Points to Make to Job Seekers Throughout the Course

1. This group is really about what job seekers need for a job to fit who they are and their lifestyle. Many people think they have to make themselves fit a job rather than thinking about what type of tasks and environment will bring out the best they have to offer an employer. Employers are interested because they want employees who are productive.

2. Pay particular attention to group interaction and comments made. Build on participants' discussions.

3. Stress the point that only by fully participating in each session and completing the assignments, each participant will be able to get the most out of the course. This may mean identifying someone to assist with the assignments, if/when necessary.

The Checklist for Facilitators is designed to help facilitators think through planning for and setting up Guided Group Discovery, including division of tasks between co-facilitators, room set-up, materials preparation, and support throughout and in between sessions.

Blueprint for Employment

The outcome for Guided Group Discovery is for participants to create an individual "blueprint" to guide them as they begin or continue their search for employment. The blueprint is meant to be a fluid document. Therefore, it may be helpful to have enlarged or even poster-sized blueprints available for each individual in the course. Each enlarged blueprint could serve as a "work in progress" with notes (written on the blueprint or on post-its) added as the course continues. The posters can be collected by the facilitator at the end of each session and then distributed or displayed at the beginning of the next session.

Assignments

Each session ends with an assignment for each participant to complete and discuss at the beginning of the next session. Often, the assignments are started in class. It is expected that participants will review their thoughts with support team members to get their input. Facilitators will need to make sure participants have the support needed to complete the assignments to the best of their ability. Facilitators might also engage members of the person's Job Search Team to assist in completing assignments.

Addendum Information

A series of optional inspirational quotes are included on the last page of the participant workbook. You may choose to begin or end each session with a quote and ask participants to reflect on the meaning of the quote –or add a quote to an assignment to encourage individuals to discuss the quote with someone on their Job Search Team. This may help the jobseeker become more comfortable interacting with others and talking about his/her search for employment. Of course, you may choose not to use these quotes, eliminating them from the information presented to participants.

Included in the Addendum are the following items:

→ Inspirational Quotes
→ TED Talks
→ Optional Activities
→ Blueprint for Employment
→ Sample Ads
→ Checklist for Facilitators
→ Sample Authorization Form
→ Facilitator Feedback Form
→ Certificate of Completion

Session One: Introduction to Guided Group

SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION TO GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

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Welcome participants to the course by letting them know that by signing up and showing up, they have made an important commitment to themselves. They have decided to take control of their own job search. This course is intended to be the first step in designing a personal strategy that includes learning a little bit more about themselves and reaching out to others for assistance and support.

SESSION ONE OBJECTIVES

1

- Get to know each other
- Discuss the different ways in which people tend to approach their search for employment
- Introduce the concept of Discovery
- Present the Blueprint for Employment
- Think about your personal employment network
- Review assignment

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4

DISCUSSION

1. Review course expectations.

2. Discuss the importance of coming to all sessions and completing the assignments (i.e., you'll get out of it what you put into it).

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Take a few minutes to think about your expectations for this course.

1. What do you hope to learn?
2. What would help you feel comfortable participating in the group?

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5

DISCUSSION

Group Discovery only works if the individuals in the group respect each other and feel comfortable sharing. Take a few minutes to think about what you hope to learn from this course.

Ask participants what will help them feel comfortable participating in the group? Give some examples: Confidentiality, no side chats, cell phones off, being respectful and supportive, etc.

Use this discussion to help the group discuss some ground rules. This is a good exercise to build ownership for the group.

Have chart paper available and write down the suggestions for the group to see. Have the group decide which suggestions they want for ground rules.

Session 1: Introduction to Guided Group Discovery

1 **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Get to know each other
2. Discuss the different ways in which people tend to approach their search for employment
3. Introduce the concept of *Discovery*
4. Present the Blueprint for Employment
5. Think about your personal employment network
6. Review assignment

2 **TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO THINK ABOUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS COURSE.**

1. What do you hope to learn?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What would make you feel comfortable participating in the group?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2017 EDITION | 2

Getting to Know Each Other

In preparation for this activity, identify pairs or small teams. If possible, pair people together who may be able to assist one another (e.g., a talkative person with one who is quieter).

THINK OF 3 SKILLS OR TALENTS

Introduce yourself to someone in the group by starting with your skills (or what you like and can do well)

Skill or Talent #1

Skill or Talent #2

Skill or Talent #3

Be prepared to introduce your partner to the group.

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8

DISCUSSION: Ask participants to pair up with a partners to discuss three skills or talents they have (POSITIVE INFORMATION). What do you enjoy doing? What do you do well? What do others tell you that you do well? This information doesn't need to be limited to work. For Veterans, it can be skillsets learned in the military. It's just a way for the group to get to know everyone and have an opportunity to focus on positive contributions the person brings. Ensure that they acknowledge their many transferrable skills attained from their military experience -- organizational, task/mission focus, discipline, etc.

Provide some examples:

➔ I am focused on completing the task I am working on.

➔ I am highly organized.

➔ I play the guitar.

➔ I speak two languages.

➔ I pay specific attention to timeliness and timelines

Be prepared to introduce your partner.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Record on chart paper three positive qualities from each person's introduction. As people introduce their partners, comment on what is being said by each party, talk about how that item could be related to a work skill. Explain how, as the weeks pass, we will build on the positive because it allows us to see possibilities. Note: Frequently, people forget all that is positive. Being positive is difficult. Ask people how difficult it was for them to come up with three items and share them. Once everyone has been introduced, spend some time talking about the importance of looking at things from a positive perspective and how, when you are looking for employment, it is so easy to just see what you don't have as opposed to everything you do.

Comment on the amazing talent in the room!

3 **THINK OF 3 SKILLS OR TALENTS YOU HAVE. FOR EXAMPLE:**

– What do you do well?
– What have people complimented you on in the past?
– What types of activities did you do well on a previous job?
– What tasks at home do you do well?

Make a list of your skills and/or talents in the spaces provided below.

Skill or Talent #1

Skill or Talent #2

Skill or Talent #3

Now, turn to the person next to you and introduce yourself. Be sure to tell the person about your skills and/or talents (or what you like and can do well).

Then be sure to listen carefully when your partner tells you about him/herself. Ask more questions – because in a few minutes you will be introducing your partner to the rest of the group.

About your partner: _____
_____
_____
_____

4 **THINK ABOUT AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

Have you ever helped a friend or family member in need?	
What did you do?	
How do you think it made them feel to know they could depend on you?	
How did it make you feel to help someone else?	

How People Approach the Job Search

DISCUSSION

Most people tend to use a "traditional" job search approach. This is sometimes referred to as a "Labor Market Approach."

Labor market information is a collection of employment statistics, job forecasts, wages, demographics, and other information to help public and private organizations better understand today's workforce needs. The information can be used to see trends in employment, which help both employers and job seekers who are making choices about careers.

The labor market approach to employment looks something like this:

➔ Employers write and post job descriptions.

➔ Jobseekers send resumes and fill out applications based on the jobs employers post. They try to revise a resume to meet the needs of the job description.

A traditional job search approach starts with the employer's needs. It responds to the needs of employers who are searching for applicants who are "qualified" to meet those general needs, which are typically found in a job description.

Think of a time when you sent out your resume or filled out an application that showed how you would meet an employer's needs. This is the labor market approach. The basic rule of this approach is that applying for more jobs increases your chances of obtaining employment.

This approach tends to work for people who have exactly what the employer is looking for (and whose resume matches a job description), those who can interview well, etc.

There is certainly nothing wrong with this approach to finding a job, but it doesn't work well for everybody –and it's not the only approach.

What are some of the pros and cons of using a traditional approach to employment?

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DISCUSSION

Discuss with the group some of the pros and cons of using a traditional approach to employment. Use flipchart paper to list the group's brainstorming session ideas.

Provide examples as necessary.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Typical "pros" –

➔ You know exactly what the employer is looking for.

➔ You know there is a position available (a current employer need).

➔ You can tailor your resume to the job description.

Typical "cons" –

➔ You might be able to do only parts of the job.

➔ There might be many people applying for the same job.

DISCUSSION

A customized job search begins with YOU. A customized job search requires that you understand your strengths, needs, and interests first –and determine what you need to be successful BEFORE you go out and meet with an employer.

This approach requires you to consider the following questions:

➔ What **CONDITIONS** do you need to be in place to be successful?

➔ What do you have to offer or **CONTRIBUTE** to an employer? Contributions are your skills, abilities, talents, personality traits, unique knowledge, or education. They are the qualities you bring to the table that a business will value.

➔ What are your **INTERESTS**? Let's face it, everyone does better when they do something that interests them.

➔ What do you want to do? What specific skills and tasks do you perform well?

➔ How can these skills and tasks meet the needs of an employer?

These are the things we'll be focusing on during the next several sessions of Guided Group Discovery.

CUSTOMIZED JOB SEARCH PROS & CONS

Think about some situations that might require someone to focus on a customized job search.

- What are some of the pros and cons to customizing your job search?

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15

DISCUSSION

Ask the group why someone might need to customize their job search? Some examples appear below:

➔ Complex life and home responsibilities

➔ Significant medical issues

➔ Family caregiver responsibilities

➔ Homelessness

➔ Limited or no transportation

➔ Significant disability that impacts their ability to work full-time or compete for a "traditional" job

➔ Lack of work experience or skills

➔ Difficulty coming across positively in a job interview

➔ Anxiety and fear about returning to work

Brainstorm some of the pros and cons of using a customized job search approach. Use flipchart paper to list ideas so everyone can see them.

Facilitate a short discussion about the difficulties people face in obtaining or retaining employment. Also, the longer you look for work, what happens to your confidence?

DISCUSSION

Ask the following question:

True or False? No matter how someone finds a job, just about everyone customizes their job after they have worked for a while.

This statement is TRUE! Ask the group to think about how people might customize their job after they get one. Can anyone from the group offer an example based on personal experience? The facilitator should be prepared to provide some examples of what he/she has done to customize his/her job (either a current job or a previous job).

Some examples include hours or days worked, modification of duties, how tasks are performed, supervision, etc.

➜ Janet has physical therapy appointments on Wednesday afternoons, so she comes in a half-hour early and leaves a half-hour early.

➜ Mario does not do well when people approach him from behind. He was able to reposition his workspace so he faces out while sitting at his desk.

➜ Joe is amazing with computer graphics. All of his co-workers ask for his help, so the supervisor took away some of his other duties so he can do more computer graphics.

The Discovery Process and Blueprint for Employment

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

- Someone asks what kind of job you want and you reply, "I'll do anything!"
- You keep going back to the same type of job you have had in the past – even though it hasn't worked out for you.
- You take a job you know you won't like because you need to survive.
- You've never taken the time to really DISCOVER who you are and the best job for you.

LEAD CENTER   18

DISCUSSION

Ask the group if any of the statements sound familiar.

1. "I'll do anything!" may mean that the person isn't sure about their interests or what they have to offer. It may also mean that they need a job right now (which is understandable).

2. You keep going back to the same type of job you have had in the past –even though it hasn't worked out for you. Example: Sarah had five office jobs in the past two years. It doesn't seem to be working out for her, but when you ask her what type of job she would like in the future, she always goes back to office work. Sometimes people go with what they are familiar with rather than thinking about why it's not working for them and figuring out what might be a better match.

3. You take a job you know you won't like because you need to survive –we all can understand that people may need money immediately and might take a job that pays the bills, even if it's not a good fit. Just know that you can continue learning about yourself and working toward a job that will be more meaningful and will likely last longer.

4. You've never taken the time to really DISCOVER who you are and what the best job is for you. And that's why we're here today –to help you learn about yourself!

DISCOVERY IS...

- A process a job seeker goes through to figure out and identify his/her own needs and interests as well as what an employer might need.
- Focused on strengths and can include reflection, interviews with family and friends, and even informational interviews with employers.

LEADCENTER   19

DISCUSSION

The Discovery process is basically a process where you are learning things about yourself, asking others (who you know and trust) what they admire about you or think you do well, and practicing how to talk about your strengths and what you have to contribute to an employer.

DISCOVERY REQUIRES YOU TO...

- Be open and honest with yourself and others
- Focus on what you do well, the environment where you feel most successful and the tasks you enjoy
- Take personal responsibility for your job search and build a personal job search network

LEAD CENTER

20

DISCUSSION

The discovery process also includes thinking about the employers you might like to work for or the places where you might like to work. It could even include owning your own business.

GETTING TO KNOW YOURSELF

- Think about a time when you were at your best.
- What were you doing?
- What was the environment like?
- What tasks were you performing?
- Were you working alone? With others?

LEAD CENTER

21

FACILITATOR NOTES

Have people close their eyes and reflect for a couple of minutes. Then ask people to share their thoughts.

DISCUSSION

A blueprint is typically used as a plan or design for a project. If you think about your job search as a project, a blueprint is the design that will help you meet your goals.

Discovery is a process that leads a jobseeker to develop a profile of their interests, their contributions (skills, talents, personal attributes) and their expectations for employment. In short, you'll basically be creating a blueprint for employment...one that is purposeful and proactive.

The Blueprint for Employment will include areas such as:

➔ Interests

➔ Contributions

➔ Conditions

➔ Tasks

➔ Areas of negotiations

➔ Disclosure

➔ Potential businesses and connections

Ask participants to locate the Blueprint for Employment, Activity 5 in their Participant Workbook. An additional copy can be found in the back of this manual. Be certain they

understand that, over the course of the Guided Group Discovery sessions, they will be completing activities and independent assignments in order to update their own personal Blueprint.

FACILITATOR NOTES

This is meant to be an introduction to the Blueprint, so remind people that you will be walking through each section in the upcoming sessions.

DISCUSSION

Each of the following five slides break up the Blueprint for Employment into sections that correspond to the sessions of the Guided Group Discovery curriculum.

Facilitators should briefly describe and discuss what each section is about and how the things participants learn during the course will help them to build their individual blueprint.

FACILITATOR NOTES

This is an overview of the Blueprint, so people do not need to fill this out now. We'll talk more about your Job Search Team and who can help the job seeker toward the end of this session.

SECTION 2
A BLUEPRINT FOR DISCOVERY

Contributions: What you have to offer

ALL ABOUT YOU	
Interests	Skills
Tasks	Positive Personality Traits

LEAD CENTER   24

DISCUSSION

This section of the Blueprint identifies your contributions, or what you have to offer an employer. In session 2, we will focus on Contributions, such as your interests, skills, tasks you can do, and your positive personality traits.

SECTION 3
VOCATIONAL THEMES™

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
Emerging Vocational Themes:	Where would People with Similar Themes Work?

SECTION 3

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25

DISCUSSION

Vocational themes are not job descriptions, but rather broad areas that match who you are and the skills and contributions you bring to a job. For example, if someone likes tinkering with cars and is good with their hands, that might indicate a "mechanical" theme. Some may be strong in communications. Someone who is good at logistics might indicate an inventory control, management or transportation theme.

We'll discuss Vocational Themes™ more in Session 2, but the idea is that themes can help us think of more possibilities than focusing on job descriptions.

SECTION 4
A BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

Consider issues around disability and other complex life circumstances

CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT	ACCOMMODATIONS, DISCLOSURE & FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

LEAD CENTER   26

DISCUSSION

In session 3, we will focus on your **Conditions for Employment.** Conditions are things that you need to have in place, or need to be addressed for a job to work for you. Some examples might be as follows:

→ Getting off work by 3:00 p.m. because you need to pick up kids and don't have other arrangements for child care.

→ Working on a public bus line, if you depend on public transportation.

→ A job that doesn't require lifting over 20 lbs. as per a doctor's orders, due to a back injury.

Sometimes people may also need to consider the following:

Accommodations they may need due to a disability to be able to work efficiently. Asking for an accommodation often involves **disclosing** disability or other sensitive information. In session 3, we will help you think through to determine if you need accommodations and how and when you might disclose information about disability or other sensitive information.

SECTION 5
A BLUEPRINT FOR DISCOVERY

Taking action

ACTION ITEMS			
Task	I will ask for support from...	By when?	Complete
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

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27

DISCUSSION

The last section of the Blueprint helps you identify steps you will take in your job search. This includes identifying specific tasks or steps you will take, as well as identifying who might help you, and a timeline for completing each step. You can use the right hand column to check off completed steps, and add more action items as you complete some.

The Blueprint is a place that you can gather this information in one place. If you are working with Workforce Center staff, a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, or other supporters, you can share your Blueprint with them so they can help support you in your job search.

FACILITATOR NOTES

You might adapt the discussion based on the group you are working with. For example, you might discuss here how the Veteran might share their Blueprint with other who might be able to assist with the connection to a potential employer or who can brainstorm possible employers.

DISCUSSION

Ask participants if they have ever thought of using a team of people they know and trust to provide assistance with the job search. Why or why not? Tease out the importance of the "it takes a village" approach.

THINK ABOUT AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING: **4**

1. Have you ever helped a friend or family member in need?
2. What did you do?
3. How do you think it made them feel to know they could depend on you?
4. How did it make you feel to help someone else?

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29

DISCUSSION

We all need help and guidance at one time or another in our lives. Most people enjoy helping others – yet most of us have trouble asking for help.

No matter where you are in your career or job search, and whether you decide to use traditional methods or something new (like Customized Employment), you may find you hit a few speed bumps along the way. Guess what? That's expected. So that you can better prepare yourself for the road ahead, part of this process requires you to identify at least three people in your life you can count on or call for help and encouragement.

FACILITATOR NOTES

People may have difficulty asking someone for help, so remind them that helping often makes people feel good. People want to help, but they often are not sure *how* to help. We will be talking about ways that people can ask for assistance from others with their job search.

3   THINK OF 3 SKILLS OR TALENTS YOU HAVE. FOR EXAMPLE:

- What do you do well?
- What have people complimented you on in the past?
- What types of activities did you do well on a previous job?
- What tasks at home do you do well?

Make a list of your skills and/or talents in the spaces provided below.

Skill or Talent #1   Skill or Talent #2   Skill or Talent #3

Now, turn to the person next to you and introduce yourself. Be sure to tell the person about your skills and/or talents (or what you like and can do well).

Then be sure to listen carefully when your partner tells you about him/herself. Ask more questions – because in a few minutes you will be introducing your partner to the rest of the group.

About your partner: _____

_____

_____

_____

4   THINK ABOUT AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Have you ever helped a friend or family member in need?	
What did you do?	
How do you think it made them feel to know they could depend on you?	
How did it make you feel to help someone else?	

IDENTIFY YOUR TEAM (5)

JOB SEARCH NETWORK OF SUPPORT		
Person	Relationship	Contact Information

LEAD CENTER 31

DISCUSSION

For today, we want you to start your Blueprint for Employment by identifying people who can help support you in your job search. This might be family, friends, counselors, or case managers. List people who you think know you well and you would be comfortable going to for advice.

List the team members on your Blueprint in the back of your Participant Workbook or in the online version of the workbook. We'll be adding to the Blueprint during each session. You have an extra copy so that, at the last session, you can make a clean and complete copy. Some of the class activities will pull out information that you will need to transfer to your Blueprint as we go.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Have people use the actual Blueprint in the back of the Workbook. Save the second copy for the final session, or make additional copies of the Blueprint as needed.

Session One: Review and Assignment

SESSION ONE
REVIEW

Guided Group Discovery sessions will offer you the opportunity to:

- Conduct a structured series of steps to learn what you want and need from an employment relationship.
- Receive input and support from others.
- Provide support and ideas to others.
- Think about your employment options in a different way.

▲ LEAD CENTER

33

DISCUSSION

Stress the point that, by doing the homework assignments and attending these sessions, participants will obtain a clearer picture of the type of employment that might be best suited for their individual situations.

If someone needs assistance with the assignment, discuss how he/she might go about getting some help.

DISCUSSION

Review Assignment 6 in the Participant Workbook. The purpose of this assignment is for participants to think about people in their own personal network who they know and trust AND who can act as a support in the individual's search for employment. Also, be sure they understand that the three people they identify will be people they should be prepared to access during this course.

FACILITATOR NOTES

The purpose of this assignment is for participants to access people in their own personal network who they know and trust AND who can act as a support in the individual's search for employment. These are likely the same people they identified on their Blueprint as part of their Job Search Team, but if they choose different people for this particular assignment, that is fine. They might consider adding them as part of their Job Search Team. They can have as many people as they like!

If the group meets more than once a week, it may be difficult to complete this prior to the next session. Make allowances as needed – perhaps, try to complete one interview before the next session, and complete more over the course of the week.

Stress that Guided Group Discovery is about learning something new about yourself, so getting input from others is critical.

Sometimes talking about our strengths seems like boasting. It may be easier for people to talk about what others say about them than what they think of themselves. For example, it may be easier to say, "My former boss says I'm a hard worker" than to say "I'm a hard worker."

Participants should have identified some potential Job Search Team members during the session. Touch base with those who seem unsure about the activity and make sure they get the support they need to talk to at least one person on their team. You may need to suggest different ways to accomplish this, such as calling someone on the phone if they can't meet in person, starting with the person with whom they are most comfortable, etc.

6 ASSIGNMENT #1 – BUILDING YOUR TEAM OF SUPPORTERS

Identify 3 people you know and trust. On each page, list the person's name, why you have chosen the person to be part of your job support network, and be sure to include his/her contact information.

Interview each person using the interview questions provided. Be prepared to share your interviews in the next session

Support Person #1:

This person is part of
my network because:

Phone:

Email:

Interview Questions

What do you admire most about me?	
What do you think are my best skills?	
What do you think I have to offer an employer?	
In what type of environment do you think I would work best?	
What do you consider my most positive personality characteristics	

Session Two: Interests and Contributions

SESSION TWO
INTERESTS & CONTRIBUTIONS

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REVIEW PREVIOUS ASSIGNMENT

- Who did you choose to include in your Job Support Network?
- Why did you choose them?
- Share some things you learned about yourself

LEAD CENTER   37

DISCUSSION

Ask the group to think about and be prepared to answer the questions on the slide. Start with giving an example: George interviewed a close friend and his friend told him that he was a good listener. George had never thought about listening as being a strength, but once his friend mentioned it, he remembered that an old girlfriend had also mentioned it. Perhaps this is something he could use to promote himself.

Ask participants to share any new information they learned about themselves during the assignment. Did anything surprise them?

If you added anyone to your team, make sure to list them on your Blueprint form.

6 **ASSIGNMENT #1 – BUILDING YOUR TEAM OF SUPPORTERS**

Identify 3 people you know and trust. On each page, list the person's name, why you have chosen the person to be part of your job support network, and be sure to include his/her contact information.

Interview each person using the interview questions provided. Be prepared to share your interviews in the next session

Support Person #1:

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Interview Questions

What do you admire most about me?	
What do you think are my best skills?	
What do you think I have to offer an employer?	
In what type of environment do you think I would work best?	
What do you consider my most positive personality characteristics	

DISCUSSION: Review the objectives for this session, as presented on the slides.

INTERESTS

- Work is more enjoyable when you do something that interests you.
- An interest is something you care about and enjoy.
- Think about what you enjoy, such as:
  - Meeting new people
  - Learning about computers
  - Gardening or landscaping
  - Working on machines
  - Music

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40

DISCUSSION

Work is more enjoyable when you do something you care about, and an interest is something that is strong enough to make you want to go to work each day. Wouldn't it be great if you could work and get paid for something that interests you?

Talk about generic interests (e.g., food/culinary; entertainment such as movies, theater and media production). There may be things that you enjoy but don't necessarily want to do for work. Think about interests you have that would make you excited about going to work, such as meeting new people, learning about computers, etc.

FACILITATOR NOTES

In the large group, have a couple of people give examples of things they are interested in and relate those to jobs. Example: Fred says he likes motorcycles and also likes working with his hands. Might motorcycle repair be something that interests him as a job?

THINKING ABOUT INTERESTS ⑧

Think about your interests...

- What activities do you enjoy?
- What do you do in your free time?
- What hobbies do you have?
- What are things in my home/neighborhood that might say something about what I enjoy?
- Help your partner think about different types of work that might relate to his/her interests.

LEAD CENTER   41

DISCUSSION:

Ask the group to think about their own interests – and start to record them on the worksheet. Interests don't have to be specific to work. Think generally about your interests (e.g., I like being around people, I like being outside, etc.).

Ask about things that people keep in their home, or bedroom, that might say something about what they like (e.g., pictures, trophies, types of movies or books, such as Westerns or Sci Fi, crafts, reading materials, etc.).

Pair off and ask the teams to discuss their interests AND get some ideas about different jobs that might be related to the interests discussed. **Once they have identified their interests, they can list them on their Employment Blueprint on in the Participant Workbook**.

Be prepared to discuss this as a group and list on flipchart paper for the group to see.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Make sure that people identify at least three or more interests. This is sometimes harder to tease out than you think.

It is not uncommon for people to identify what they think they can do for work versus what they are really interested in. For example, someone may say "janitorial work," not because it interests them, but because that's what they believe they can do.

Session 2: Interests and Contributions

7 **OBJECTIVES**

1. Identify interests that could focus your job search
2. Generate a list of contributions (what you bring to the job)
3. Identify tasks you would like to do

8 **THINK ABOUT YOUR INTERESTS**

– What activities do you enjoy? – What do you do in your free time? – What hobbies do you have? – What are things in your home/bedroom that might relate to your interests?	

Listen to a partner's interests. Based on his/her interests, what types of work might he/she enjoy doing? Can you think of different places that might use his/her skills?

9 **CONTRIBUTIONS: SKILLS, TASKS AND POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Think about the work you would most like to do.
Don't think about job titles, think about the actual work you would do

What skills would you be using?	What tasks would you be performing?

SHARE YOUR INTERESTS EXAMPLES

INTERESTS	PLACES WHERE PEOPLE WITH THOSE INTERESTS WORK:
Bicycles	Bike retail shops, repair shops, YMCAs, Electric bike shop, Bike clubs
Cutting trees/firewood	Forestry department, campgrounds, parks – trail maintenance, Energy Assistance program, etc.
Being Outdoors	Landscaping or grounds keeping businesses, Parks department

LEAD CENTER
43

DISCUSSION

Review the examples and ask people to share interests they identified as well as places where people with similar interests might work.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Record interests that people identify. For each interest identified, ask the group where people with similar interests might work. Record ideas on flipchart. For example, someone says they enjoy working with children. Some places the group might identify are daycare centers, public or private schools, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, pediatric unit of the hospital, etc.

Get participants actively brainstorming around each person's interests.

Contributions: What I Bring to the Job

CONTRIBUTIONS

- In employment, contributions are what you bring to the job. For example:
  - Skills
  - Tasks
  - Positive personality traits
  - More

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45

DISCUSSION

For the employment search, a contribution is what you have to offer to an employer. Remember, employers don't hire people out of the kindness of their hearts; they hire people who have something to offer to the employer's business –or their bottom line.

When we talk to employers, we want to propose how we can help their business. In other words, how do my contributions help the employer's bottom line? Could I help the business make money? Save money? Do things more efficiently?

Let's take a moment to define and describe each of these contributions. We will start with skills and tasks.

DISCUSSION

Skills are generally things that require practice to learn (e.g., playing the piano, using the computer, driving, speaking a foreign language).

Tasks and skills are related, but they are also very different: You must know how to drive (skill) in order to park a car (task).

Ask the group to name a skill they have and a task that is related to that skill. Example: John might say he has computer skills. Tasks that employers might hire someone with computer skills to complete might include repairing computers, programming computers, entering data, maintaining a data base, tracking inventory, generating documents, etc.

DISCUSSION

Job descriptions focus on both *skills* and *tasks* –and employers often create job titles and job descriptions based on the skills and tasks they need.

Employers typically hire people for their skills, but they pay them for the tasks they complete.

Being able to list your skills and tasks will help you answer the question: "What do you want to do?"

Focusing on your skills and the tasks you can perform will help you to target your job search. Not only will you be able to describe what you can do, but it will help you and your Job Search Team to start thinking about different employers that might need what you can contribute!

WHAT IS A JOB TITLE?

- A job title is a term used by employers to define a position in a few words
- Titles may vary from employer to employer (e.g., administrative assistant)
- Job titles tend to assume specific skills and tasks

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48

DISCUSSION

Even though employers are looking for skills and tasks to be completed, they generally use job titles to advertise for people to fill jobs. A Job Title is a broad term used by employers to define a position in a few words.

DISCUSSION

After reviewing the examples on the slide, ask the group if they can think of any more examples.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Why do you think the Discovery Process avoids discussing and describing jobs by job title?

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DISCUSSION

Ask the group: "Why do you think the discovery process avoids discussing and describing jobs by job title?"

Discuss how job descriptions bundle tasks together. Maybe someone is very skilled at some of the tasks on the job description, but not skilled at other task. Could an employer still benefit from their contributions?

CONSIDER THIS...

John has started to lose his vision and can no longer drive. John loved his job driving a school bus but now thinks he won't be able to do anything else.

- What advice would you give to John as he begins his process of Discovery?
- What happens to John if he keeps focusing on being a bus driver?

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51

DISCUSSION:

How else might he use his skills (*follows precise schedule*) and tasks (*transporting*)?

If we only thought about job titles, would it limit our thinking about what John could do?

Lead the group in a discussion about the limitations of a job title. Job titles often force us into a "box." What if a person can do 80% of a job (as described in a job title) but not the other 20%? Do you think that person would be eager to apply for that job? Why or why not?

People who do well with the traditional job search process tend to be people who are skilled at all tasks on the job description. A customized approach focuses on the things that you do well and proposes to an employer how your contributions can benefit them.

For example, an employer might be willing to "carve out" a job where you only do some of the tasks listed in a typical job description. Joanne is interested in clothing and would love to work at a clothing retail store, but she is concerned about her ability to operate a cash register. An employer may see that she can still do many of the tasks needed, such as folding or hanging clothing, assisting customers in the dressing room, etc.

There may also be opportunities to "create" a job, based on an employer's need. For example, Dawn learned that her local YMCA was having trouble maintaining their database. She proposed that the YMCA hire her part-time to help with data entry.

THINK ABOUT THE WORK YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO DO

9

- What skills would you be using?
- What tasks would you be performing?
- How would these skills and tasks contribute to an employer's business and success?
- Don't think about job titles.
  Think about the actual work.

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52

DISCUSSION

Ask the group to think about performing work. What skills would they be using? What tasks would they be performing? Be sure to remind them to NOT think about job titles; instead, think about the actual job tasks and the skills they would need.

See Activity 9, next slide.

Session 2: Interests and Contributions

7 **OBJECTIVES**

1. Identify interests that could focus your job search
2. Generate a list of contributions (what you bring to the job)
3. Identify tasks you would like to do

8 **THINK ABOUT YOUR INTERESTS**

− What activities do you enjoy? − What do you do in your free time? − What hobbies do you have? − What are things in your home/bedroom that might relate to your interests?	

Listen to a partner's interests. Based on his/her interests, what types of work might he/she enjoy doing? Can you think of different places that might use his/her skills?

9 **CONTRIBUTIONS: SKILLS, TASKS AND POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Think about the work you would most like to do.
Don't think about job titles, think about the actual work you would do

What skills would you be using?	What tasks would you be performing?

DISCUSSION

What are the things about a person's character that are genuinely recognized and appreciated by others? Maybe the person has a beautiful smile? An ability to stay focused on a detailed task? Willingness to learn new things? Triumph over hardship? Honesty? Talent for listening to others? Sense of humor?

Of course, we all have certain personality traits that are less than ideal. Maybe we are hyper-critical of certain people, or we get tired and grumpy in the afternoon, or we talk too much. While these are all examples of normal human behavior, these traits are not necessarily the ones we want to promote to an employer.

DISCUSSION

The discovery process is all about figuring out who you are and what you have to contribute to an employer. An important part of this is being able to describe yourself in terms of your *positive* personality characteristics.

What are some positive aspects of your personality? Refer to the list on the slide and on Worksheet 10a. You may want to walk through the list and define terms that participants don't understand. Ask participants to check off which of these describe them, and then choose three of these traits that are the strongest – AND – be ready to give an example to explain.

See Activity 10a, next slide.

10a WHAT ARE SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS OF YOUR PERSONALITY? ARE YOU:

☐ Action oriented	☐ Patient
☐ Ambitious	☐ Positive / upbeat
☐ Approachable	☐ Punctual
☐ Confident	☐ Resourceful
☐ Cooperative	☐ Responsible
☐ Creative	☐ Self-motivated
☐ Dependable	☐ Team-oriented
☐ Effective communicators	☐ Works well under pressure
☐ Flexible	☐ Other: _____
☐ Hardworking	☐ Other: _____
☐ Meticulous	☐ Other: _____
☐ Organized	☐ Other: _____

DISCUSSION

Stress that Vocational Themes™ are NOT job descriptions, but rather broad areas that can provide guidance in job search. Generally, Vocational Themes™ are based on interests but can be informed by your other contributions as well.

Give some examples. If someone likes movies, entertainment might be the broader theme. Someone who enjoys and is skilled at cooking may likely do well in other areas related to "Food," such as a catering business, a pizzeria, or a school cafeteria. "Cooking " is too narrow. "Food" gives us more ideas to explore. Thinking about Vocational Themes™ helps us expand our thinking about job possibilities.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Provide some examples using interests that participants have previously identified.

SOME POTENTIAL VOCATIONAL THEMES™

- Organization
- Agriculture
- Construction
- Mechanical
- Transportation
- Cleanliness
- Children
- Advocacy
- Outdoors/Nature
- Athletics/Recreation
- Culinary
- Art

- Entertainment
- Fashion
- Customer Service
- History
- Politics
- Logistics
- Religion/Spirituality
- Medicine/Health Care
- Technology/Computers
- Communications....

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58

DISCUSSION

Based on what you've learned about yourself, do any of these themes seem to describe the type of work you would like to do? Which ones? Are there other themes that are not listed here that might better describe YOUR Vocational Themes™?

Vocational Themes are based on more than interests. The tasks you enjoy, your skills and other contributions, as well as personality traits may all help to identify Vocational Themes™.

YOUR VOCATIONAL THEMES™ EXAMPLE

Interests/Contributions
- Repairing bikes
- Clean – does not like to clean but likes being in a clean environment
- Enjoys crafts – knits and crochets

Emerging themes
- Mechanical
- Cleanliness
- Textiles

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DISCUSSION

Sometimes your conditions of employment also can inform your themes. Conditions are elements or circumstances you need to be successful. For example, if someone needs to work in a "clean" environment, that doesn't mean that they like doing janitorial work. "Cleanliness" can help us think of other possibilities.

Where are other work environments that stress "cleanliness?" (Ask participants to brainstorm: labs, dentist offices, food manufacturing plants, etc.)

Try to think of at least three Vocational Themes™. Only having one theme narrows your job search. Most of us have more than one interest, and choosing three can give you lots of ideas about possible work!

10b MATCHING INTERESTS TO POTENTIAL VOCATIONAL THEMES™

Draw a line between the interest and the corresponding Vocational Theme™

INTEREST	POTENTIAL VOCATIONAL THEME™
Using an IPad	Outdoors/Nature
Tattoos	Advocacy
Hiking	Art
Jewelry	Technology/Computers
Gardening	Agriculture
Helping People in Need	Fashion

Think about your own interests and Vocational Themes™:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Session Two: Review and Assignment

DISCUSSION

Stress the point that, by doing the homework and attending these sessions, participants will obtain a clear picture of the type of employment they need. If participants need help in doing the assignment, they should talk to the facilitators.

ASSIGNMENT #2

With at least one member of your job search team:

- Review the interests and contributions you identified on your Contribution Chart. Ask them for ideas on what you might add.
- List a few local businesses that match your Vocational Themes™ and that might need the tasks you identified.

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62

DISCUSSION

Review Assignment #2 and ask if the group has any questions.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Make sure to offer support for people who may have difficulty identifying or approaching someone from their team. Make suggestions or problem-solve individually with participants.

11 ASSIGNMENT #2: CONTRIBUTIONS CHART

Consider your contributions. Ask one of your job search support people to assist you – OR – share the information with someone you know and trust. Ask for their feedback.

Type of contribution	What does this mean?	What employer might be interested in this contribution
SKILLS	*I am able to…*	
TASKS	*I enjoy…*	
POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS	*I am…*	
OTHER types of contributions: For example: – Education – Certification – Equipment – Transportation	*I have…*	

Session Three: Conditions, Accommodations & Disclosures

SESSION THREE

CONDITIONS, ACCOMMODATIONS AND DISCLOSURE

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REVIEW OF ASSIGNMENT #2

- Review the Contributions Chart
- Given your Vocational Themes™ and tasks you would like to do, what employers did you/your team identify as possibilities?

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65

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to report on anything they added to their contributions chart. In talking with their Job Search Team member(s), were they able to identify at least three Vocational Themes™? Were they able to identify some places where people with similar themes might work? Or employers who could benefit from their contributions?

CONDITIONS, ACCOMMODATIONS & DISCLOSURE: OBJECTIVES

- Update Blueprint for Employment
- Define and discuss
  - Conditions of employment
  - Job accommodations
  - If, when and how to disclose sensitive information

LEAD CENTER   66

DISCUSSION

Review of session's objectives.

UPDATE YOUR BLUEPRINT

Take out your Blueprint

- Update Section 2
  - Contributions (interests, skills, tasks, positive personality traits)

Review Section 1

- Any updates or changes to make?

LEADCENTER   68

DISCUSSION

The worksheets are a place for you to gather your ideas, and the ideas of others. Once you have done this, you will want to transfer the information to the Employment Blueprint in the Participant Workbook, so all critical information is in one place.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Make sure participants are transferring the information to the Employment Blueprint as they go, rather than waiting until the final session.

13

CONTRIBUTIONS: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU	
INTERESTS	**SKILLS**
TASKS	**POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

GO TO BLUEPRINT ON PAGE 27

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
Emerging Vocational Themes:	Where would People with Similar Themes Work?

5 **BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT**

Update this Blueprint based on the outcomes from each session of Guided Group Discovery.

JOB SEARCH TEAM		
Person	Relationship	*Contact information*

SECTION 1

CONTRIBUTIONS: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU	
INTERESTS	**SKILLS**
TASKS	**POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

SECTION 2

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
Emerging Vocational Themes:	Where would People with Similar Themes Work?

SECTION 3

2017 EDITION | 4

Conditions

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- **Conditions** are elements or circumstances you need to be successful
- **Preferences** are elements that you want or think would be nice to have
- The more conditions for employment you have, the longer it will probably take to secure employment.

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DISCUSSION

Conditions of employment are those elements or circumstances you *need* for employment success. Conditions for employment might be related to health issues, family responsibilities, and so on. Don't confuse conditions with preferences. Preferences are the things you *want* or those that would be *nice to have.*

Examples of Conditions:

- *I need to finish work by 3:00 p.m. because I don't have childcare after school.*

- *I can't work around chemicals because I have a sensitivity.*

- *Florescent lighting triggers seizures.*

QUESTION:
What might be going on in someone's life that could impact his/her conditions for employment?

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DISCUSSION

Read the question on the slide aloud. Ask participants to give some examples of life circumstances that might impact the search for and acquisition of employment.

Examples: Childcare, parent care, medical appointments, criminal background, etc.

Remind the group that no matter the reason, the more **conditions** you have, the longer it will likely take to secure employment. The goal here is not to make a long list of conditions, but to identify which conditions are essential and which are really "preferences."

YOU DECIDE: CONDITION OR PREFERENCE

14

- Finding an employment location on a bus line (if you use public transportation)
- Having your own office
- Getting paid minimum wage or higher
- Reporting to a supervisor you like
- Other?

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73

DISCUSSION

Discuss the difference between a condition for employment and a preference and refer to the list on the slide.

Add to this list and/or ask participants to come up with other examples to "test" the group.

Most people would say that having your own office or reporting to a supervisor that you like are "preferences." Are there specific situations where you might say those are conditions? For example, if someone has a great deal of difficulty concentrating and is easily distracted, perhaps a quiet space is needed (although that may or may not mean their own office). If someone has lost their last five jobs due to conflicts with their supervisor, would reporting to a supervisor you like be a condition for them? Again, **conditions are things that will make you successful!** For Veterans, issues regarding concentration and a quiet workspace tend to be extremely important.

Note: An issue within the Veterans Community is that of service-connected or non-service-connected pensions. Many Veterans have received a disability rating (percentage rating for their disability) that dictates benefits. It is a common concern for many Veterans and might be either a condition or preference.

14 **CONDITIONS VS. PREFERENCES**

Decide whether the following examples describe a general condition for employment or a preference. Come up with your own situation and 'test' the group.

✔ C for CONDITION or P for PREFERENCE		Situation
C ☐	P ☐	Employment location on a bus line (if you use public transportation)
C ☐	P ☐	Having your own office
C ☐	P ☐	Getting paid minimum wage or higher
C ☐	P ☐	Reporting to a supervisor you like
C ☐	P ☐	Add your own to 'test' the group:

15 **WHAT ARE YOUR CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT?**

Describe the elements of a workplace that you need to be your very best. Which are the most important? Are these conditions or preferences for you?

Very important	Important	Not very important	
			Time you work.
			Tasks you perform.
			The setting or environment where you work.
			Pace or speed of work.
			Interacting with people, places or things.
			Expectations of a supervisor, co-workers or customers.
			Communication.

CONDITIONS AND PREFERENCES: ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
TIME	When it occurs
TASKS	What you do
SETTING or ENVIRONMENT	Where you do it – outside, inside, noisy, quiet
PACE	Speed
EXPECTATIONS	Supervisor, co-workers, customers
COMMUNICATION	Sending or receiving information

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75

DISCUSSION

As a group, talk through the elements of work where people may or may not have conditions or preferences. Ask for examples of each element.

Examples:

➜ **Time** – Third shift may be preferable for Veterans with PTSD who have trouble sleeping.

➜ **Tasks** – Heavy lifting, standing, or sitting for long periods of time may be a condition for someone with a back injury.

➜ **Settings or Environment** – Someone may need a quiet space to work due to distractibility.

➜ **Pace** – Someone may become anxious in a fast-paced environment; therefore, a more moderately paced work environment might be a condition for success.

➜ **Expectations** – Having very clear expectations may be needed.

➜ **Interactions** – Limited interaction with the public may be a condition.

Ask the group to discuss the elements of work that are **most** important for them. What is negotiable? What isn't negotiable? What if you have too many non-negotiable conditions?

Discuss what people expect from a supervisor, co-workers, etc.

Ask how many people enjoy working with customers? Why or why not?

DISCUSSION

Exercise 15 provides a template for people to write down their thoughts about conditions they may have around each element. Once they are finished, discuss with a partner and rank each one as **very important**, **important**, or **not very important**.

FACILITATOR NOTES

After participants have had time for discussion, ask each participant to name one or more conditions they identified.

See Activity 15, next slide.

14 **CONDITIONS VS. PREFERENCES**

Decide whether the following examples describe a general condition for employment or a preference. Come up with your own situation and 'test' the group.

✔ C for CONDITION or P for PREFERENCE		Situation
C ☐	P ☐	Employment location on a bus line (if you use public transportation)
C ☐	P ☐	Having your own office
C ☐	P ☐	Getting paid minimum wage or higher
C ☐	P ☐	Reporting to a supervisor you like
C ☐	P ☐	Add your own to 'test' the group:

15 **WHAT ARE YOUR CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT?**

Describe the elements of a workplace that you need to be your very best. Which are the most important? Are these conditions or preferences for you?

Very important	Important	Not very important	
			Time you work.
			Tasks you perform.
			The setting or environment where you work.
			Pace or speed of work.
			Interacting with people, places or things.
			Expectations of a supervisor, co-workers or customers.
			Communication.

Reasonable (Job) Accommodations

JOB ACCOMMODATION

- A job accommodation is a reasonable adjustment to a job or work environment that makes it possible for an individual with a disability to perform their job duties.

- It is any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities.

LEAD CENTER   79

DISCUSSION

A *reasonable accommodation* is an adjustment or modification to the job, work setting, or work environment that makes it possible for an individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform his/her job duties once employed, or access the same benefits of all other employees.

Can you name some accommodations that people may need? Give examples, if needed, such as an accessible building and work area for someone who uses a wheelchair, or a flexible schedule for someone with frequent dialysis appointments.

Accommodations are not disability specific.
They are people and job specific.

LEAD CENTER

DISCUSSION

Accommodations are not disability specific. They are people and job or job task specific, since every person is different and every job is different.

Do all people who are blind require materials in Braille? (No, not all people who are blind read Braille.)

Do all wheelchair users need a raised desk? (No, some wheelchair users can transfer to a chair. Some wheelchairs do not have arm rests.)

Provide examples as needed.

Sam needs a task list to keep him on track. Is that reasonable for an employer to provide? Could that benefit other employees as well?

EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS

- Physical changes (ramps or modifying work stations)
- Adjusting work schedules or job restructuring
- Special equipment, devices or software
- Providing quiet work spaces to reduce distractions
- Services to ensure an employee can participate fully in meetings, seminars, etc., such as a sign-language interpreter or a reader
- Additional training
- Paid or unpaid leave needed due to the disability

LEAD CENTER   81

DISCUSSION

While there are many different types of reasonable accommodations, according to the Department of Justice, these are some of the most common workplace accommodations (same list as above, but expanded):

→ Physical changes, such as installing a ramp or modifying a workspace or restroom

→ Sign language interpreters for people who are deaf or readers for people who are blind

→ Providing a quieter workspace or making other changes to reduce noisy distractions for someone with a mental health condition

→ Training and other written materials in an accessible format, such as in Braille, on audio tape, or in electronic form

→ TTYs or amplification technology for use with telephones by people who are deaf or hard of hearing, and hardware and software that make computers accessible to people with vision impairments or who have difficulty using their hands

→ Time off for someone undergoing treatment for a disability-related condition

→ Additional training or extended time to learn a new task

→ Adjustments to the work schedule

DISCUSSION

Use the examples on the slide to come up with some creative solutions to help someone with job performance.

Read each bullet and ask the group to come up with some accommodations the person might be able to use on the job.

Discuss the fact that these scenarios are NOT disability specific, but job and person specific.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Juanita's employer _may_ be able to flex her work schedule. If, for example, Juanita is the only person to open the store at 8:00, this may not be reasonable, given her specific job.

Disclosure

WHAT IS DISCLOSURE (ON THE JOB)?

- Disclosure refers to releasing personal and private information to an employer or someone else at work for a specific purpose.

- Disclosure is a very personal decision – and one that deserves thought and reflection.

LEAD CENTER   84

DISCUSSION

Sharing personal information with an employer (about a disability, medical condition, or other barrier to employment) is a **personal** decision. It is a decision that deserves some thought, discussion with people you trust, and then weighing your options. Many people are confused and unsure about disclosing a disability and need an accommodation from an employer. Even if they decide to disclose, they are often unsure *when* to do it. The reality is there is no absolute right answer. There are pros and cons when it comes to disclosure, and it is your decision to make.

Do you think you might benefit from an accommodation at work? If you are a person with a disability, it is your responsibility to let an employer know you need a reasonable accommodation in order to do your job. This is called **disclosure.** It is important to remember that requesting an accommodation at work does not mean you are asking for special treatment. It is just a way to alleviate a disability-related condition, to help you do your job, just like everyone else.

Often, people with physical disabilities or a disability that can be seen and recognized by someone else don't have too much trouble asking for an accommodation. However, the majority of people with disabilities working today have a non-visible disability, and they often are reluctant to request an accommodation.

DISCUSSION

False.

People might disclose later because they find a need to share that information. Perhaps they need an accommodation that they didn't realize they would need when they were hired.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Worksheet 16 provides a space for participants to answer **True or False** to the questions on the following slides, or you could walk through them together.

16 **DISCLOSURE: TRUE OR FALSE?**

T ☐	F ☐	If you don't disclose when you are hired, you cannot disclose later.
T ☐	F ☐	If you choose to disclose, an employer is required by law to provide you with the accommodation you want.
T ☐	F ☐	An employer should provide you with an accommodation whether you disclose or not.
T ☐	F ☐	If you disclose a disability to an employer, you can never be fired.
T ☐	F ☐	If you communicate using sign language, you should bring a friend with you to an interview so he/she can interpret for you.
T ☐	F ☐	You should only disclose if you have a visible disability. People with hidden, or non-apparent, disabilities should never disclose.

17 **READ THE FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS. WHAT IS WRONG WITH EACH ONE? WHAT INFORMATION WOULD YOU CHANGE – AND WHY?**

"My disability causes me to work more slowly than co-workers".	
"I have a felony on my record because I was set up. I didn't do anything wrong, but now no one will hire me."	
"I suffer from an anxiety disorder and have been hospitalized a couple of time. I have a lot of trouble focusing."	
"I am a wheelchair user and have an interview next week. I'm not sure if the interview location will be accessible."	

DISCLOSURE TRUE OR FALSE?
If you choose to disclose, an employer is required by law to provide you with the specific accommodation you request.

DISCUSSION

False.

The employer and employee need to work together to find a suitable solution. For example, in the previous example where Lisa had to stock supplies on a tall shelf, some of you suggested a ladder or step stool. What if the employer thought this might pose a safety risk to other employees, and suggested instead that they move the supplies to a lower shelf? It still allows Lisa to complete her work – just a different strategy.

DISCLOSURE TRUE OR FALSE?
An employer should provide you with an accommodation whether you disclose or not.

16

LEAD CENTER

DISCUSSION

False.

Employers are generally happy to accommodate people, but they are not mind readers. You need to let them know what you need and why (stress how the accommodation will help you do your job efficiently).

DISCLOSURE TRUE OR FALSE?

If you disclose a disability to an employer, you can never be fired.

16

LEAD CENTER

DISCUSSION

False.

People can be terminated for various reasons. Disclosing a disability does not "protect" you from losing a job.

DISCUSSION

False.

Accommodations apply to accessing employment, too! So, if you need an accommodation for an interview, or other "pre-hire" activity, you will need to disclose upfront. Can you name some other examples where someone might need an accommodation prior to being hired?

Examples: Someone who uses a wheelchair may need to verify that the interview location is accessible; someone with a learning disability may need assistance with filling out paperwork or online applications.

DISCUSSION

False.

Examples of non-visible disabilities and/or challenges include, but are not limited to a PTSD, TBI, depression or other mental health-related challenges. If you need accommodations, or there are other reasons to disclose, you may want to. It is a personal decision.

TO DISCLOSE OR NOT TO DISCLOSE

- Why might someone choose to disclose a disability to an employer?
  - What are the benefits for the individual?
  - What are the benefits for the employer?
- Why might someone choose not to disclose a disability to an employer?

LEAD CENTER

92

DISCUSSION

Someone might choose to disclose for various reasons. For example, safety might be a reason if someone has seizures or another medical condition that might need attention.

Accommodations are a big reason why people choose to disclose. Do you think you might benefit from an accommodation at work? If you are a person with a disability, it is your responsibility to let an employer know you need a reasonable accommodation to do your job.

Note: It is important for facilitators to note that disclosure does not always mean disclosing a diagnosis. For those with hidden disabilities, functional disclosure may be more appropriate; e.g., anxiety issues, difficulty concentrating in busy noisy environments, etc.

TOP REASONS PEOPLE DISCLOSE

- To ask for job accommodations
- To receive benefits or privileges specifically for people with disabilities
- To explain any circumstances that could be misinterpreted as "unusual" or "out of the ordinary" to an employer
- To help an employer meet federal hiring requirements or receive tax credits

LEAD CENTER   93

DISCUSSION

Benefits or privileges specific to people with disabilities:

1. The employee gains protection under the ADA:

➜ Anti-discrimination

➜ Freedom from harassment

➜ Freedom from intimidation

2. To explain circumstance that could be misinterpreted. Example: Co-workers may think a person with hearing loss is ignoring them or not paying attention. Knowing the reason for not responding is due to hearing loss helps people understand and make sure you get the information.

The employer, staff, coworkers, etc. gain:

➜ Awareness

➜ Compassion

➜ Sensitivity

➜ A good worker

Federal Hiring Initiatives: The federal government encourages diversity and the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workforce. Sometimes you might be asked to disclose whether

you have a disability to make sure the employer is doing their part to actively recruit people with disabilities. Disclosure is still always voluntary.

FACILITATOR NOTES

If participants want more information on employer incentives, briefly discuss or provide resources on the following:

Federal Hiring Initiatives:

➔ Schedule A Hiring Authority allows the federal government to fill positions non-competitively.

➔ OFCCP 503 encourages federal contractors to actively recruit and employ people with disabilities.

Tax Credits exist that can provide incentives for employers and help with accommodations, including offsetting additional training time.

Examples:

➔ The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) provides a tax credit up to $2,400 for the first year of employment. This amount is higher for Veterans.

➔ Disabled Access Credit assists employers who modify their businesses to accommodate persons with disabilities and can include changes to the workplace, acquiring or modifying equipment, or alternate forms of communication (such a sign language interpreter).

➔ Some states offer state tax credits.

Your Workforce Center can provide additional information about Federal Hiring Initiatives and/or Tax Credits.

MILITARY SPECIFIC

O*NET online has a Military crosswalk search: https://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk/MOC/

RecruitMilitary helps employers connect with America's best talent -- its veterans: https://recruitmilitary.com/job-seekers

If you're a Veteran who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and were separated under honorable conditions, you may be eligible for veterans' preference, as well as other veteran specific hiring options: https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/veterans/

TOP REASONS PEOPLE CHOOSE NOT TO DISCLOSE

- Concern about being fired or not being hired
- Concern about being treated differently by supervisor/co-workers
- Concern that the employer may focus more on the disability than on actual work performance/abilities
- Fear that opportunities for promotion will be more limited
- Concern about losing or not receiving healthcare benefits
- Concern that one's supervisor would not be understanding/supportive
- Concern about being viewed differently by supervisor/co-worker
- A belief that the disability does not have an impact on ability to perform the job
- A desire to keep the disability private

LEAD CENTER

94

DISCUSSION

Again, disclosing is a personal decision. You need to think about the pros and cons of disclosing your situation. If there is no reason to disclose (don't need accommodations, not a safety issue, etc.), you may not need to disclose.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO DISCLOSE...

Consider who needs to know:

- Immediate supervisor?
- HR representative?
- Co-workers?
- Other?

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95

DISCUSSION

Begin a discussion about who might need to know and why. Think of disclosure as information you provide on a "need to know" basis. Do co-workers need to know? Or only a supervisor or HR person?

Ask if the group has had any experience disclosing disability information on the job, and if it was a negative or a positive experience.

WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO DISCLOSE?

- Disclose disability-related information **only** as necessary
- Consider what you need...and when
- If you are working with an employment specialist, discuss what disability information you're comfortable with **them** sharing about you

LEAD CENTER

96

DISCUSSION

If someone is working on your behalf, what information are you comfortable with them sharing? Example: Rod has schizophrenia but he was not comfortable with his Employment Specialist sharing that. What they decided together, after weighing the pros and cons, is that he was comfortable with the Employment Specialist sharing that his disability sometimes makes it difficult for him to focus, so a quiet work environment is best.

HOW TO DISCLOSE
(FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION)

- Be straightforward in your statements
- Discuss your disability briefly and in a positive light
- Describe yourself by what you can do and your qualifications for the job, not by disability
- Articulate and demonstrate how you can perform the tasks the employer needs to have done

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97

HOW TO DISCLOSE
(FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION) - CONTINUED

- Do not volunteer negative information
- Avoid medical terms or human service jargon as they can confuse and potentially scare the employer
- Emphasize current, positive activity rather than dwelling on past negative experiences

LEAD CENTER

98

DISCUSSION

The bottom line with disclosure is figuring out how to discuss (or frame) information that is personal and sensitive. These two slides offer an opportunity to discuss how someone might choose to frame disability and other personal information in a professional environment.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Examples to follow in the next slides.

DISCLOSURE EXAMPLE #1

"I can sell insurance like nobody's business, and my sense of humor and smile make customers love me. I have arthritis in my hands, so I need text-to-speech software, but other than typing, my computer skills are top notch.

If I'm away from my desk and need to make notes, I always carry my phone and use voice memos, which get sent directly to my computer."

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DISCLOSURE EXAMPLE #2

"I have five years of experience in retail sales, and I hope to have many more, because I just love meeting new people.

I have a learning disability that affects my memory, so I find written instructions more helpful than verbal. Because I write so much down, I've gotten very good at taking notes and keeping organized."

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DISCUSSION

These two slides offer examples of how someone might choose to disclose personal information.

Have participants identify the suggestions for framing sensitive information (being straightforward, focusing on qualifications for the job, discussing disability briefly and discussing how s/he can do the job, avoiding medical jargon, etc.).

Discuss with participants what it might be like to be the person disclosing the information and how an employer might react.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THESE DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

17

1. "My disability causes me to work more slowly than my co-workers."
2. "I have a felony on my record because I was set up. I didn't do anything wrong, but now no one will hire me."
3. "I have an anxiety disorder and have been hospitalized a couple of times. I have a lot of trouble focusing."
4. "I am a wheelchair user and have an interview next week. I'm worried your interview location will be not be accessible."

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101

DISCUSSION

Divide up the larger group into four teams. Ask each team to tackle one of the questions, by describing what is wrong with the disclosure statement. Also, ask them to reframe the statement into a more positive form of disclosure. (Suggested reframing examples appear below.)

You may also wish to discuss when someone might choose to disclose the information and the reasoning for the decision (e.g., before an interview, at the interview, after a job offer, after starting work, or never).

FACILITATOR NOTES

Have each group report. If groups have difficulty, provide some of the following suggestions:

ORIGINAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT: "My disability causes me to work more slowly than co-workers."

REFRAMED (SUGGESTED): "I pay attention to detail, and I am very accurate. I may not be fast, but I make sure I get it right."

ORIGINAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT: "I have a felony on my record because I was set up. I didn't do anything wrong, but now no one will hire me."

REFRAMED (SUGGESTION): "Ten years ago, I was convicted of a DUI. I served time in prison for this offense and used every opportunity I could during that time to advance my education and gain the skills I needed for the workforce. I regret my actions and have since turned my life around. I can provide you with letters of recommendation."

ORIGINAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT: "I suffer from an anxiety disorder and have been hospitalized a couple of times. I have a lot of trouble focusing."

REFRAMED (SUGGESTION): "I live with a mental health condition that I manage very well using a few simple strategies, such as taking a short 5-10 minute break every 90 minutes or so. It also helps if I have a workspace with plenty of light. In fact, I have a small light box that I can bring with me to work and set up at my desk. I am very motivated and committed to working and being a productive member of your team. I am confident I will do a great job."

ORIGINAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT: "I am a wheelchair user and have an interview next week. I'm worried your interview location will not be accessible."

REFRAMED (SUGGESTION): "I am really looking forward to our interview. I use a wheelchair and have already driven by your building, so I know where the accessible entrance is located. I just wanted to be sure the interview room would accommodate a wheelchair."

16   **DISCLOSURE: TRUE OR FALSE?**

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17   **READ THE FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS. WHAT IS WRONG WITH EACH ONE? WHAT INFORMATION WOULD YOU CHANGE – AND WHY?**

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"I have a felony on my record because I was set up. I didn't do anything wrong, but now no one will hire me."	
"I suffer from an anxiety disorder and have been hospitalized a couple of time. I have a lot of trouble focusing."	
"I am a wheelchair user and have an interview next week. I'm not sure if the interview location will be accessible."	

REVIEW OF SESSION THREE

- Conditions and preferences for employment are different.
  - Conditions are what you NEED for success
  - Preferences are "nice to have"
- Accommodations are reasonable adjustments made to help you perform your work successfully.
- Disclosure is a personal decision, but is a first step in requesting accommodations at work.

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103

ASSIGNMENT #3
MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT DISCLOSURE

18

- What information might you want to share?
- What are the pros & cons of disclosing?
- Why might you want to share this information?
- How might you frame it?
- When might you disclose?
- If you are working with a counselor or employment specialist, what information are you comfortable with them sharing on your behalf?

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104

DISCUSSION

Go to Activity 18 in your workbook. If time allows, have people start this in class, and they can refine it before the next session.

Assignment #3 is about Making Decisions about Disclosure. See Worksheet 18 and the example on the following page.

FACILITATOR NOTES

If participants have medical issues or other conditions that might significantly affect work, consider discussing personal routines. For example, needs assistance with toileting or personal care at work.

18 **ASSIGNMENT #3: PERSONAL DISCLOSURE DECISIONS**

What sensitive information might you need to share with an employer?
(Disability, criminal history, something else?)

What are some of the pros and cons of disclosing this information?

Pros:

Cons:

Why might you want to or need to share this information?

How might you frame this information?

When might you share this information?

If you are working with a job coach or an employment specialist (service provider), what information, if any, are you comfortable with *them* sharing with a potential employer?

Session Four: The Art and Science of Networking

SESSION FOUR

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF NETWORKING

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THE ART AND SCIENCE OF NETWORKING OBJECTIVES

18

- Review assignment #3
- Discover how important personal contacts can be when looking for a job.
- Begin to develop and practice a "networking pitch" to use in your job search.

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107

REPORTS FROM ASSIGNMENT

- What pros and cons did you identify in disclosing your disability/other personal information?
- When might you disclose?
- How would you frame it?
- If you are working with a counselor or employment specialist, what information are you comfortable with them sharing on your behalf?

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108

DISCUSSION

Have each person discuss the assignment from Session 3.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Make sure people are capturing this information on their Employment Blueprint at the end of the Participant Workbook.

Session Four: The Art and Science of Networking

OBJECTIVES:

- Report and reflect on independent research assignment
- Update Blueprint for Employment
- Begin to map personal contacts
- Introduce the concept of networking and begin to map personal contacts
- Review and discuss independent research assignment

Mapping Personal Contacts

DID YOU KNOW?

About 80% of all jobs are never formally advertised!
If employers don't advertise, how do people find their jobs?

Think of at least 3 different ways people find jobs.

LEAD CENTER

DISCUSSION

If people can't answer, ask them if anyone has found a job through their parents? Siblings? Friends? School counselor or teacher? Other?

How do people get their first jobs if they don't have experience? It is generally through "who they know" – people willing to recommend them and speak positively on their behalf.

Facilitate a discussion on why it is important to reach out to people and let them know you are looking for work, and the type of work that would be a good match.

GIVEN THE CHOICE

- People are almost always more willing to hire someone that is recommended to them by a colleague or a friend.

- About 60% of people looking for employment find a job with the help of friends, family members, and acquaintances.

LEAD CENTER   112

DISCUSSION

Given the choice, most employers prefer to fill positions without advertising. It saves money and time. More importantly, managers who do the hiring often believe the best candidates are people who already work for them (or used to) or are referrals from people they know. People tend to be *much* more willing to offer an opportunity to a person who is recommended to them by a friend or colleague.

About 60% of people looking for employment find a job with the help of friends, family members, and acquaintances – and many people get their first job through a friend or family member. Think about *your* first job or a time when you, or someone you know, got a job because they had a "connection" or knew someone.

Networking is all about connecting with people who you can help and who can help you. Your network begins with the people you know and the people who *they* know.

Think about who you know that could help you in your job search. You already started this list when you identified your network of support. Veteran interactions, in general, are aligned with teamwork and the comradery of family, friends and fellow veterans.

Now it's time to add to it. Map out your personal contacts by making a list of the different people in your life who can help you find employment.

DISCUSSION

In activity 20, write the names of people in each category. For example, Jason listed "Larry," "Dawn," and "John" as friends. He lists "Mom" and "sister" under family. Under "Other Supporters," he lists "Stephanie," his case manager at the Workforce Center. Under Military Brothers & Sisters, he lists "Kari" and "Seth.". For Community, he identifies his neighbor and some acquaintances from church.

Try to identify at least a few in each category.

➜ How can these people help?

➜ Who are you willing to ask for help?

➜ What would you ask?

➜ Is it reasonable to ask that person based on your relationship?

HOW MOST PEOPLE FIND JOBS?

Think of at least one person who you know who found a job through:

A friend: _____

A family member: _____

A counselor, case manager or other supporters: _____

Someone in the community: _____

21 MAP YOUR CONTACTS

Friends/Other Veterans

Family

Case Manager/ Counselor/ Other Supporters

Community Contacts

MAP YOUR CONTACTS (22)

FRIENDS
- Where do your friends work?
- Where do their friends work?

FAMILY
- Where do your family members work?
- Who does your family know?
- What community connections do they have?

COUNSELOR/ OTHER SUPPORT PERSON
- Do you have a case manager, counselor, or someone else you see frequently?
- How might they help you?

COMMUNITY
- Do you know any neighbors well?
- Do you belong to any groups? Church?
- Businesses you frequent?
- Civic Organizations
- Veterans Advocacy Organization

LEAD CENTER

133

DISCUSSION Once you've identified your contacts, consider how they might help you.

→ How can these people help?

→ Who are you willing to ask for help?

→ What would you ask?

→ Is it reasonable to ask that person based on your relationship?

CASUAL CONTACTS

- What businesses do you or your family frequently use in your community for groceries, clothing, auto repair, home services and/or other purchases?

- Do you or your family know anyone who owns a business? Do you think they would be willing to network for or with you?

LEAD CENTER

116

DISCUSSION

Discuss parameters of relationship and who it is reasonable to ask and who might not be.

Talk about how casual contacts can be used for informational interviews, how businesses you frequently use are sometimes happy to help with ideas or answer questions related to their businesses. Most people love to talk about what they do. Mention that, if people are interested in self-employment, it is really helpful to talk to other business owners about their business and experiences.

DISCUSSION

Networking is equally important in the business world. Small business owners use networking as a marketing strategy to get the word out on their products and services. Everyone networks, and people enjoy helping people they know and like.

PLACES YOU MIGHT NETWORK

- At a formal event (a Job Fair)
- At an informal event (a neighborhood BBQ, the grocery store, etc.)
- An arranged event (an informational interview)
- Industry related events (a trade show, class, or training event)
- Other?

LEAD CENTER

118

DISCUSSION

Networking can happen in formal and informal settings. Think about with whom you want to network and where you might come in contact with them. Sometimes there are formal events to meet employers (Job Fairs), but more likely, you'll be depending on informal and arranged events.

Informational Interviews are when you set up a time to talk to a business owner or manager about what they do and get ideas and recommendations from them. You might call and ask if you could set up time to meet with them for 15-20 minutes. Come prepared with questions to ask, and make sure you ask for their advice on next steps!

Where might you be able to network with people who share your Vocational Themes™?

NETWORKING STRATEGIES

- Be prepared. Research the person or company you want to meet.
- Focus on getting to know the person for who they are – not for what they can do for you.
- Be confident. Know who you are…your positive personality traits, skills, interests, etc.
- Be positive and smile ☺.
- What else?

LEAD CENTER

119

DISCUSSION

If you want something from this person, make sure you know what it is (information, a recommendation, ideas about employers who might need help).

NETWORKING PITCH

A Networking Pitch is a tool job seekers use to quickly describe who they are, the type of job they are seeking, and what they can offer to an employer... to anyone who might be in a position to help.

LEAD CENTER

DISCUSSION

A Networking Pitch needs to be practiced enough so that it is smooth and you can use it flexibly in different situations, whether you're at the Job Fair or the Neighborhood BBQ. It should be short enough that you could give your pitch on a short elevator ride (sometimes called an "elevator pitch"). 30 seconds is all you need.

DEVELOP YOUR NETWORKING PITCH

- Smile and introduce yourself
- Name-drop if someone recommended you.
- State the type of work you are interested in doing
- Describe your skills or positive personality traits related to the type of work you are seeking
- Give an example of at least one success
- Make a specific request. (Ask for their advice, ask for an informational interview, etc. If you can, give an example of the types of tasks you could offer a company and how the company would benefit)
- Thank the person

LEAD CENTER   121

DISCUSSION

You want to be able to use this flexibly, so if you already know the person, there is no need to introduce yourself. You could start by letting them know that you're looking for work, and would appreciate any assistance they could offer.

NETWORKING PITCH SAMPLE

"Hi! My name is Sarah Smith. Nancy, your neighbor, recommended I talk to you. I'm looking for a job that involves data entry.

I've been into computers since I was a kid, and my keyboarding skills are excellent. In fact, I scored first in my keyboarding class for speed and accuracy. I am primarily interested in doing data entry, maintaining data bases, or similar tasks on the computer.

Would it be possible to come by next week and learn more about your business?

LEAD CENTER   122

DISCUSSION

In this example, Sarah is approaching a person who works in the IT department at the Head Start Program in her community.

READ SLIDE

Ask participants to identify what Sarah included in her networking pitch:

➔ She introduced herself.

➔ She name-dropped ("Your neighbor, Nancy, recommended I talk to you.").

➔ She stated the type of work she was seeking.

➔ She provided examples of the types of tasks she can offer an employer.

➔ She ended with a specific request for an informational interview.

NETWORKING PITCH
SAMPLE #2

Hello. My name is John Dough, and I'm interested in a career in baking. I'm wondering if you could help me? I'm going to culinary school in the fall, but in the meantime, I need to get some work experience. I'm good at working with dough, making pastry and decoration. My friends and family all ask me to make cakes on their birthdays! I'm hard-working and dependable. Would you, or maybe someone you know, be able to use someone like me for the summer?

LEAD CENTER   123

DISCUSSION

John is approaching a Bakery Owner in his community.

READ SCRIPT

Ask participants to identify what John included in his networking pitch:

→ He introduced himself.

→ He stated the type of work he was seeking ("career in baking").

→ He highlighted potential contributions.

→ He highlighted a success ("My friends and family all ask me to make cakes for their birthdays!").

→ He specifically asked about work opportunities, and asked for advice about who he might talk to next.

FACILITATOR NOTES

After examples, go back to slide 122 and refer to Activity 22 in the Participant Workbook. Have people develop a pitch with their partner. After they've had some time to do this, get 1-2 people to volunteer to read their pitches. You might time them to give people an idea of how long it takes. Try to keep it to 30 seconds or so.

22   **NETWORKING PITCH:**

A networking pitch is a tool job seekers use to quickly describe who they are, the type of work they are seeking, and what they have to offer an employer . . . to anyone who might be in a position to help you find a job.

Develop your pitch:

Smile and introduce yourself	
Name Drop if someone recommended you	
State the type of work you are interested in doing	
Describe your skills or positive personality traits related to the type of work you are seeking	
Give an example of the types of tasks you could offer a company (and how the company would benefit)	
Give an example of at least 1 success	
Make a specific request (ask for their advice, ask for an informational interview, etc.)	
Thank the person	

ASSIGNMENT #4

- Finish mapping out your personal contacts and developing your Networking Pitch
- Practice your Networking Pitch on at least two new contacts. Be ready to do your pitch in class next time we meet.
- Update your Job Search Blueprint

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125

DISCUSSION

These are all tasks that you've started today (mapping personal contacts, developing your networking pitch). You just need to add the finishing touches and try it out with someone. This could be a "practice" session with someone on your job support team, or you could reach out to someone you think could help you in an area of interest. We'll be practicing your Networking Pitch and giving each other feedback next week.

23   **ASSIGNMENT #4: MAPPING PERSONAL CONTACTS & PRACTICE NETWORKING**

1. Finish mapping out your personal contacts and developing your Networking Pitch
2. Practice your Networking Pitch on at least 2 new contacts. Get feedback and be prepared to share it with the group.
3. Update your Job Search Blueprint

Networking Pitch

Smile and introduce yourself	
Name Drop if someone recommended you	
State the type of work you are <u>interested</u> in doing	
Describe your <u>skills</u> or <u>positive personality traits</u> related to the type of work you are seeking	
Give an example of the types of <u>tasks</u> you could offer a company (and how the company would benefit)	
Give an example of at least 1 success	
Thank the person	

FEEDBACK RECEIVED:

REVISED Networking Pitch

Smile and introduce yourself	
Name Drop if someone recommended you	
State the type of work you are <u>interested</u> in doing	
Describe your <u>skills</u> or <u>positive personality traits</u> related to the type of work you are seeking	
Give an example of the types of <u>tasks</u> you could offer a company (and how the company would benefit)	
Give an example of at least 1 success	
Thank the person	

Session Five: Putting it All Together—Taking Action!

SESSION FIVE

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER: TAKING ACTION

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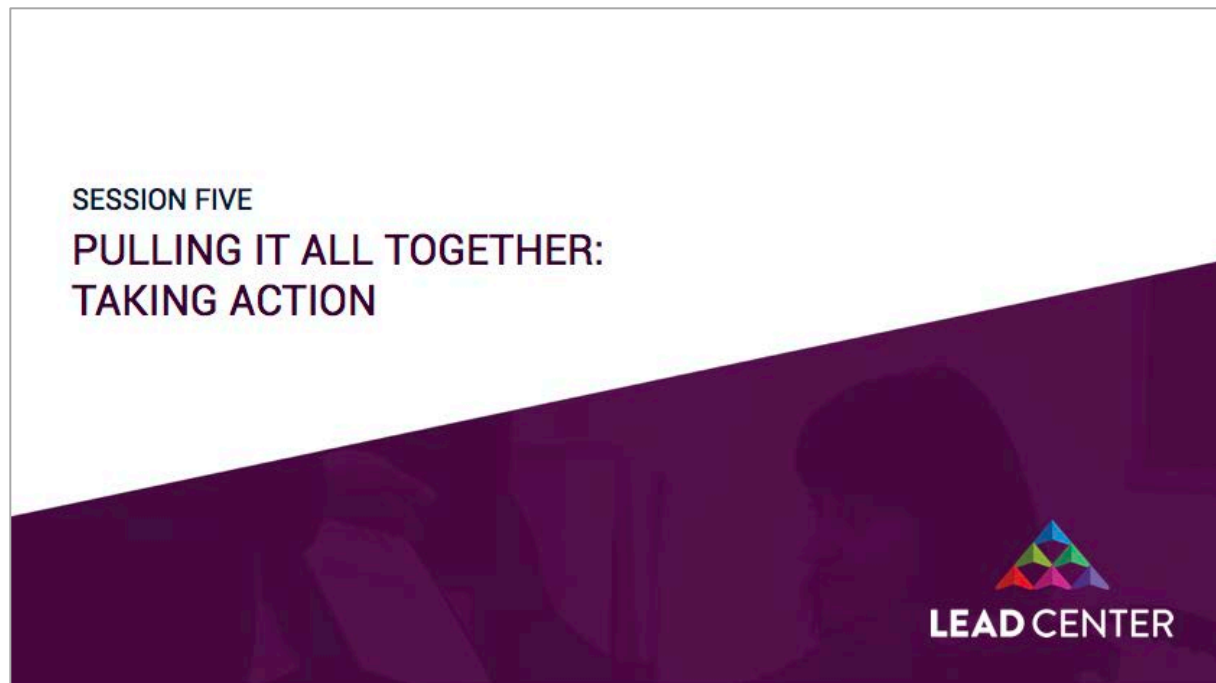
FACILITATOR NOTES

This is the culminating session. Give time and thought to the following:

1. Practice and give feedback on the Networking Pitch.

2. Finalize the Blueprint for Employment, including action steps.

Some Facilitators have scheduled additional topics or information during this session:

1. Information from agencies/resources who might help people in their next steps (Vocational Rehabilitation, Community Partners)

2. Information on how to access WIOA services, if not already enrolled

REVIEW OF SESSIONS

- Session 1 – Discovery and a different way to approach job search
- Session 2 – Interests and Contributions
- Session 3 – Conditions, accommodations and disclosure
- Session 4 – Networking
- Session 5 – Taking Action

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127

DISCUSSION

Session 1: Discovery and a different way to approach job search. Here, we talked about approaching job search differently. Instead of waiting for jobs to be posted, think about what you have to offer an employer, and actively propose employment to employers who are a good match.

Session 2: **Interests and Contributions.** In the second session, we talked about interests and skills, leading into identifying Vocational Themes™. By identifying at least three Vocational Themes™, you are more likely to get lots of ideas for jobs to explore.

Session 3: Conditions, accommodations and disclosure. This session focused on identifying those conditions you need to be successful. We also asked you to think about the differences between conditions (must have) and preferences (nice to have). We discussed how and when to request needed accommodations, and some of the pros and cons of disclosing a disability or other sensitive information. Disclosing is probably necessary if you need to request an accommodation.

Session 4: Networking. Many people find their jobs through who they know. It's important to reach out and let people know you are looking for work. You might even actively identify employers for whom you would like to work (and match with themes and tasks you would like to do), and set up time to talk to them.

Session 5: Taking Action. Today is our last session and we would like to focus on where to go from here. We'll start with reviewing our assignment from last session--your Networking Pitch!

22   **NETWORKING PITCH:**

A networking pitch is a tool job seekers use to quickly describe who they are, the type of work they are seeking, and what they have to offer an employer . . . to anyone who might be in a position to help you find a job.

Develop your pitch:

Smile and introduce yourself	
State the type of work you are interested in doing	
Describe your skills or positive personality traits related to the type of work you are seeking	
Give an example of the types of tasks you could offer a company (and how the company would benefit)	
Give an example of at least 1 success	
Thank the person	
Name Drop if someone recommended you	

TAKE OUT YOUR BLUEPRINT

24

- Review your Blueprint
  - Section 1 – Your Job Search Team
  - Section 2 – Contributions
  - Section 3 – Vocational Themes™
  - Section 4 – Conditions, Accommodations and Disclosure
  - Section 5 – Action Items

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131

DISCUSSION

Give people time to finalize their Blueprint. Some information from activities may be in your workbook, but not on the Blueprint itself. This is time for you to make sure you have all the information in one place – on the Blueprint! Let us know if you have questions or need some help, as we'll be collecting these at the end of today's session to make a copy so that you can keep a copy and we can have one to assist you with follow-up.

Job Search Team: See Blueprint and Assignment #1

Contributions and Emerging Vocational Themes™: See Activity 11

Conditions, Accommodations, and Disclosure: See Activity 15 and Assignment #3

FACILITATOR NOTES

Work the room as people are completing their Blueprints. Make sure people have information in all sections, and that it is relevant information. **DO NOT move forward until everyone has completed this.** If people don't have the information, use the group to help them finalize Sections 1-4.

NEXT STEPS

Refer to Section 5 of your Blueprint

- Consider at least 3 action steps you will take and share them with members of the group.
- Be prepared to discuss who you will ask for support and why.
- Decide on a reasonable time frame to complete the action.
- Don't forget to check off the action step once it's completed!

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132

DISCUSSION

Have participants go to their Employment Blueprint in the Participant Workbook and complete the final section (Action Items).

How has the information you gained during this course helped you as you begin or continue your search for employment?

What's next? How will you use the information you learned from this course to take control of your job search?

Think about the networks you've created during this Guided Group Discovery workshop. What connections have you made? Who will you continue to network with to help you with your employment search?

Think about your next steps. What are some action steps you can take?

➜ Do you need to sign up for services with the One-Stop Career Center, also known as American Job Centers (AJCs), Vocational Rehabilitation, or another agency?

➜ Do you need information on how working will affect your Social Security or other benefits (SNAP, housing, Medicaid, etc.)?

➜ Do you need to schedule an appointment with a job coach or employment specialist (service provider)? If so, show them this Blueprint and ask them to help you explore jobs that match your Vocational Themes™ and the contributions you've identified.

➜ Do you need to schedule an informational interview?

➜ What other employers might you want to reach out to?

➜ Should you schedule time to meet with the people in your Network of Support?
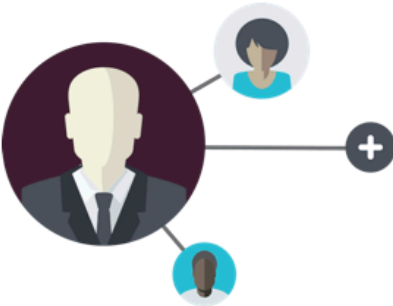
FACILITATOR NOTES

If participants are not enrolled in services with the American Job Center (AJC), Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) under the Veterans Benefits Administration, Therapeutic and Supported Employment Services (TSES) under the Veterans Health Administration, this would be a good time to discuss the process for doing so.

Have people share their Blueprints with the group and get feedback. This can be done verbally, or, if possible, projected on a screen. Another idea is to have laminated, poster-size Blueprints that can be worked on throughout the course and presented in final form at the end.

DISCUSSION

Reiterate the pride each participant should take in themselves and the fact that they finished this course. Consider the following thoughts:

➜ Be brave enough to accept the help of others.

➜ Take control: determine next steps and set goals.

➜ When you find an employer that matches your contributions, propose employment!

The following information appears on the last page of the participant workbook. Facilitators can use it for bringing the course to an end.

Here are some things to remember:

1. *Customizing your job search starts with YOU. It focuses on how job seekers can contribute to an employer's unmet needs. It creates a win/win situation –for both the job seeker and the employer.*

2. *Discovery is a process you can use to identify your interests and skills, conditions for employment, and more. It also helps you to identify the tasks you would like to do for pay.*

3. *Searching for employment truly "takes a village." Use your support team to help you as you continue your journey. Be brave enough to accept the help of others.*

4. *Take control and schedule regular meetings with your employment team to determine next steps and set goals.*

5. *Continue to network and conduct informational interviews.*

6. *When you find an employer that matches your contributions, propose employment!*

What additional items can you add to this list?

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

FACILITATOR NOTES

Have participants complete the evaluation.

Collect Blueprints and make copies or discuss how you will get them back to participants later if they can't be copied on-site.

Let people know to contact you if they need assistance with their next steps, and that you may be contacting them regarding their progress.

ADDENDUM: Optional Activities

Quotes

Some people enjoy inspirational quotes and reflecting on their meaning. Below is a series of different quotes that relate to the Guided Group Discovery sessions. Read each quote and think about how this information might be helpful to you as you continue this journey. What other quotes might you add to this list?

"I love meeting new people; I think everyone has a story to tell. We should all listen sometimes."	Kim Smith, actress
"I get by with a little help from my friends."	John Lennon, musician
"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself."	George Bernard Shaw, author
"If you want to discover the true character of a person, you have only to observe what they are passionate about."	Shannon L. Alder, author
"Success is not a function of the size of your title, but the richness of your contributions."	Robin Sharma, author
"If we all did the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves."	Thomas Edison, scientist/inventor
"Success is a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don't quit when you're tired. You quit when the gorilla is tired."	Robert Strauss, author
"He who looks outside dreams. He who looks inside awakes."	Carl Jung, psychiatrist
"I don't need easy. I just need possible."	Bethany Hamilton, surfer
"Just because a man lacks the use of his eyes doesn't mean he lacks vision."	Stevie Wonder, musician
"The world worries about disability more than disabled people do."	Warwick Davis, actor
"Understand that you can't achieve your dreams if you don't connect with people who guide you to improve upon the skills you have."	Israelmore Ayivor, author
"You can do anything as long as you have the passion, the drive, the focus, and the support."	Sabrina Bryan, singer

"Success doesn't come to you; you go to it."	Marva Collins, educator
"Every successful individual knows that his or her achievement depends on a community of persons working together."	Paul Ryan, politician
"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."	Lao Tzu, philosopher
"Duty, Honor, Country. Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be."	Gen. Douglas McArthur

TED Talks:

Consider watching one or both of these TED Talks.

How can this information be useful to you as you continue Discovery and plan to find the "right" job?

① **Your body language shapes who you are.**

Amy Cuddy is a social psychologist with a very interesting message: Our bodies change our minds, our minds change our behavior, and our behavior changes our outcomes.

http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are#t-532462 (21:02)

② **The power of vulnerability.**

Brené Brown studies human connection –our ability to empathize, belong, and love. In a poignant, funny talk, she shares deep insight from her research, one that sent her on a personal quest to know herself as well as to understand humanity.

http://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability?language=en (20:16)

Blueprint for Employment

Update this Blueprint based on the outcomes from each session of Guided Group Discovery.

JOB SEARCH TEAM		
Person	Relationship	*Contact information*

CONTRIBUTIONS: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU	
INTERESTS	**SKILLS**
TASKS	**POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
Emerging Vocational Themes™:	Where would People with Similar Themes Work?

CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT	ACCOMMODATIONS, DISCLOSURE, AND FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

ACTION ITEMS			
I will	I will ask for support from…	By when?	Complete (✓)
1.			☐
2.			☐
3.			☐
4.			☐
5.			☐
6.			☐
7.			☐
8.			☐
9.			☐
10.			☐

(On your organization's letterhead)

Guided Group Discovery Course

Wednesdays, April 22-May 13, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Topeka Workforce Center, 1430 Topeka Blvd.

- *Getting frustrated with the job search process?*

- *Feel like you're not competing well for open positions?*

- *Feel like you have skills and talents to bring to the workplace that are being overlooked?*

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, Group Discovery might be right for you! Group Discovery is the first step in a process known as "Customized Employment." The idea behind customizing a job is that we all have skills and talents to bring to an employment situation, but may not compete well in the open market. The traditional way of getting a job (identify job openings, fill out application, interview) is a very competitive process where the employer must decide who best meets the requirements of the job description.

Customized Employment focuses on YOU! The Discovery Process will help you identify your interests, potential contributions, and conditions for success. This information will be translated into tasks that can benefit a business, and help you proactively approach employers about how you might be able to help them meet one or more unmet business need.

The Group Discovery course consists of four weekly sessions held each Wednesday, beginning April 22 through May 13. Each session will be held from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Topeka Workforce Center, 1430 Topeka Blvd., Topeka, Kansas.

> **"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."**
> — Albert Einstein

You can learn more about the LEAD Center Customized Employment Initiative at www.leadcenter.org.

Guided Group Discovery Course

Wednesdays, April 22- May 13, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Topeka Workforce Center, 1430 Topeka Blvd., Topeka

- *Interested in "taking control" of your own job search?*

- *Seeking full-time employment (30 hour or more per week)?*

- *Someone who enjoys working in small groups, both helping and learning from others?*

- *Able to attend a four-week workshop (One two-hour session per week for four consecutive weeks)?*

- *Are you a person with a disability who believes you would benefit from a different approach to finding employment?*

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, Group Discovery might be right for you! Group Discovery is the first step in a process known as "Customized Employment." The idea behind customizing a job is that we all have skills and talents to bring to an employment situation, but may not compete well in the open market. The traditional way of getting a job (identify job openings, fill out application, interview) is a very competitive process where the employer must decide who best meets the requirements of the job description.

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The Group Discovery course consists of four weekly sessions held each **Wednesday, beginning April 22 through May 13. Each session will be held from 1:30-3:30 p.m.** at the Topeka Workforce Center, 1430 Topeka Blvd., Topeka, Kansas.

"The voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes. But in having new eyes."
— Marcel Proust

You can learn more about the LEAD Center Customized Employment Initiative at www.leadcenter.org

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www.leadcenter.org

Checklist for Facilitators

Prior to Group Discovery Sessions:

____ Review session materials

____ Divide up responsibilities for co-facilitating

____ Make copies of Participant and Facilitator evaluations

____ Make copies of Interagency and Photo release forms (1st session)

Morning of Group Discovery:

____ Set up room (so people can see each other)

____ Set up PowerPoint

____ Nametags

____ Pens

____ Refreshments, if desired

During Session:

____ Walk through material

____ Assist participants with activities

____ Ask participants to complete evaluation forms

____ Make sure participants who need help with assignments have a plan

After Group Discovery:

____ Debrief

____ Complete Facilitator Feedback Forms

____ Discuss and divide responsibilities for next session

____ Send Participant and Facilitator Feedback Forms to LEAD Contact

G U I D E D   G R O U P   D I S C O V E R Y   F A C I L I T A T O R   G U I D E - V E T E R A N S   E D I T I O N

SAMPLE - AUTHORIZATION TO SHARE INFORMATION

Guided Group Discovery Pilot

NAME: **SS#:**   -   -

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our systems-collaboration pilot: *Guided Group Discovery!*

Please know the confidentiality of your records and personal information is of the utmost importance to all agency/program partners involved in this effort. Program partners and agency staff associated with the *Guided Group Discovery Pilot* will not disclose your personal information without your written consent/authorization and only as needed to carry out the goals of this project.

_____ I authorize the Guided Group Discovery facilitators and case-management staff associated with the agencies indicated below to communicate about me, for the sole purpose of streamlining employment services and supports. Specific information may include one or more of the following:

- Demographic information (name, social security number, date of birth, address)
- Workshop progress/facilitator notes
- Services provided/service provider
- Supportive services needed/requested
- Program referrals requested/discussed
- Blueprint for Employment (as a result of Guided Group Discovery)
- Employment Plans developed by program partners
- Disability verification and program or workforce accommodation needs
- Employment information (employer name, hours worked, wages, hire date, job classification, benefits, length of job retention, and case closure status)
- ☐ Other (please indicate):

_____   _____
Agency   Agency

_____   _____
Agency   Agency

A photocopy of this authorization shall be considered as valid as the original. A copy of this authorization has been given to me.

SIGNATURES

_____   _____   _____
Jobseeker Name (please print)   Jobseeker Signature   Date

GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY
FACILITATOR FEEDBACK

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www.leadcenter.org

FACILITATOR: _____   **SESSION #:** _____

SITE: _____   **DATE:** _____

Please use the scale below to rate your experience with the Guided Group Discovery materials.

5 = strongly agree   4 = agree   3 = no opinion   2 = disagree   1 = strongly disagree

	5	4	3	2	1
1. The workshop materials were user-friendly.					
2. The content offered a balance of instruction vs. group work.					
3. I was able to comfortably cover the session material in the allotted time-frame (1 ½ - 2 hours).					
4. The hands-on exercises were clear.					
5. The supplementary PowerPoints were helpful.					
6. The materials kept participants engaged.					
7. (SESSIONS 2, 3, AND 4 ONLY): Participants were able to complete the independent research (homework) activities.					

8. Were there any particular activities in this session that worked extremely well? YES NO
     Please describe:

9. Were there any particular activities that bombed?   YES NO
    Please describe:

10. What specific suggestions can you offer to help us improve the materials from this session?

AFTER FINAL SESSION: Would you recommend this curriculum to others? Why or why not?

SITE: _____   **SESSION #:** _____

DATE: _____

Please use the scale below to rate your experience with the Guided Group Discovery materials.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The workshop materials were easy to follow.	4	3	2	1
2. The information presented in this session will help me in my job search.	4	3	2	1
3. The facilitators were knowledgeable about the material they presented.	4	3	2	1
4. I enjoyed this session.	4	3	2	1

5. What did you like best about this session? Why?

6. What did you like least about this session? Why?

7. What would you add or change about this session?

8. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

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GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK -- VETERANS EDITION

A journey in self-exploration for Veterans who are ready to take control of their employment search

2019 EDITION

ODEP
Office of Disability
Employment Policy

NDI
National
DISABILITY INSTITUTE

Session 1: Introduction to Guided Group Discovery

1 **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Get to know each other
2. Discuss the different ways in which people tend to approach their search for employment
3. Introduce the concept of *Discovery*
4. Present the Blueprint for Employment
5. Think about your personal employment network
6. Review assignment

2 **TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO THINK ABOUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS COURSE.**

1. What do you hope to learn?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. What expectations do you have for yourself?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. What will you expect of others?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3 **THINK OF 3 SKILLS OR TALENTS YOU HAVE. FOR EXAMPLE:**

- What do you do well?
- What have people complimented you on in the past?
- What types of activities did you do well on a previous job?
- What tasks at home do you do well?

Make a list of your skills and/or talents in the spaces provided below.

Skill or Talent #1

Skill or Talent #2

Skill or Talent #3

Now, turn to the person next to you and introduce yourself. Be sure to tell the person about your skills and/or talents (or what you like and can do well).

Then be sure to listen carefully when your partner tells you about him/herself. Ask more questions – because in a few minutes you will be introducing your partner to the rest of the group.

About your partner: _____

_____

_____

4 **THINK ABOUT AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

Have you ever helped a friend or family member in need?	
What did you do?	
How do you think it made them feel to know they could depend on you?	
How did it make you feel to help someone else?	

5   **BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT**
      Update this Blueprint based on the outcomes from each session of Guided Group Discovery.

JOB SEARCH TEAM		
Person	Relationship	*Contact information*

CONTRIBUTIONS: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU	
INTERESTS	**SKILLS**
TASKS	**POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
Emerging Vocational Themes:	Where would People with Similar Themes Work?

SECTION 3

CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT	ACCOMMODATIONS, DISCLOSURE AND FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

SECTION 4

ACTION ITEMS			
I will	I will ask for support from...	By when?	Complete (✓)
1.			☐
2.			☐
3.			☐
4.			☐
5.			☐
6.			☐
7.			☐

SECTION 5

8.			☐
9.			☐
10.			☐

6 ## ASSIGNMENT #1 – BUILDING YOUR TEAM OF SUPPORTERS

Identify 3 people you know and trust. On each page, list the person's name, why you have chosen the person to be part of your job support network, and be sure to include his/her contact information.

Interview each person using the interview questions provided. Be prepared to share your interviews in the next session

Support Person #1:

This person is part of
my network because:

Phone:

Email:

Interview Questions

What do you admire most about me?	
What do you think are my best skills?	
What do you think I have to offer an employer?	

In what type of environment do you think I would work best?	
What do you consider my most positive personality characteristics	

Support Person #2:

This person is part of
my network because:

Phone:

Email:

Interview Questions

What do you admire most about me?	
What do you think are my best skills?	
What do you think I have to offer an employer?	
In what type of environment do you think I would work best?	
What do you consider my most positive personality characteristics	

Support Person #3:

This person is part of my network because:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Interview Questions

What do you admire most about me?	
What do you think are my best skills?	
What do you think I have to offer an employer?	
In what type of environment do you think I would work best?	
What do you consider my most positive personality characteristics	

SESSION ONE NOTES

Session 2: Interests and Contributions

7 **OBJECTIVES**

1. Identify interests that could focus your job search
2. Generate a list of contributions (what you bring to the job)
3. Identify tasks you would like to do

8 **THINK ABOUT YOUR INTERESTS**

— What activities do you enjoy? — What do you do in your free time? — What hobbies do you have? — What are things in your home/enviroments that might relate to your interests?	

Listen to a partner's interests. Based on his/her interests, what types of work might he/she enjoy doing? Can you think of different places that might use his/her skills?

9 **CONTRIBUTIONS: SKILLS, TASKS AND POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Think about the work you would most like to do.
Don't think about job titles, think about the actual work you would do

What skills would you be using?	What tasks would you be performing?

10a   **WHAT ARE SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS OF YOUR PERSONALITY? ARE YOU:**

☐ Action oriented	☐ Patient
☐ Ambitious	☐ Positive / upbeat
☐ Approachable	☐ Punctual
☐ Confident	☐ Resourceful
☐ Cooperative	☐ Responsible
☐ Creative	☐ Self-motivated
☐ Dependable	☐ Team-oriented
☐ Effective communicators	☐ Works well under pressure
☐ Flexible	☐ Other: _____
☐ Hardworking	☐ Other: _____
☐ Meticulous	☐ Other: _____
☐ Organized	☐ Other: _____

10b   **MATCHING INTERESTS TO POTENTIAL VOCATIONAL THEMES™**

Draw a line between the interest and the corresponding Vocational Theme™

INTEREST   POTENTIAL VOCATIONAL THEME™

Using an IPad   Outdoors/Nature

Tattoos   Advocacy

Hiking   Art

Jewelry   Technology/Computers

Gardening   Agriculture

Helping People in Need   Fashion

Think about your own interests and Vocational Themes™:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

11 ASSIGNMENT #2: CONTRIBUTIONS CHART

Consider your contributions. Ask one of your job search support people to assist you – OR – share the information with someone you know and trust. Ask for their feedback.

Type of contribution	What does this mean?	What employer might be interested in this contribution
SKILLS	*I am able to...*	
TASKS	*I enjoy...*	
POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS	*I am...*	
OTHER types of contributions: For example: – Education – Certification – Equipment – Transportation	*I have...*	

SESSION TWO NOTES

Session Three: Conditions, Accommodations and Disclosure

12 **OBJECTIVES**

- Update Section 2 of your Blueprint for Employment
    - Share two new items with the group
- Define and discuss
    - Conditions of employment
    - Job accommodations
    - If, when and how to disclose sensitive information

13

CONTRIBUTIONS: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU	
INTERESTS	**SKILLS**
TASKS	**POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

GO TO BLUEPRINT

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
Emerging Vocational Themes:	Where would People with Similar Themes Work?

14 CONDITIONS VS. PREFERENCES

Decide whether the following examples describe a general condition for employment or a preference. Come up with your own situation and 'test' the group.

✔ C for CONDITION or P for PREFERENCE		Situation
C ☐	P ☐	Employment location on a bus line (if you use public transportation)
C ☐	P ☐	Having your own office
C ☐	P ☐	Getting paid minimum wage or higher
C ☐	P ☐	Reporting to a supervisor you like
C ☐	P ☐	*Add your own to 'test' the group:*

15 WHAT ARE YOUR CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT?

Describe the elements of a workplace that you need to be your very best. Which are the most important? Are these conditions or preferences for you?

Very important	Important	Not very important	
			Time you work.
			Tasks you perform.
			The setting or environment where you work.
			Pace or speed of work.
			Interacting with people, places or things.
			Expectations of a supervisor, co-workers or customers.
			Communication.

16 DISCLOSURE: TRUE OR FALSE?

T ☐	F ☐	If you don't disclose when you are hired, you cannot disclose later.
T ☐	F ☐	If you choose to disclose, an employer is required by law to provide you with the accommodation you want.
T ☐	F ☐	An employer should provide you with an accommodation whether you disclose or not.
T ☐	F ☐	If you disclose a disability to an employer, you can never be fired.
T ☐	F ☐	If you communicate using sign language, you should bring a friend with you to an interview so he/she can interpret for you.
T ☐	F ☐	You should only disclose if you have a visible disability. People with hidden, or non-apparent, disabilities should never disclose.

17   **READ THE FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS. WHAT IS WRONG WITH EACH ONE? WHAT INFORMATION WOULD YOU CHANGE – AND WHY?**

"My disability causes me to work more slowly than co-workers".	
"I have a felony on my record because I was set up. I didn't do anything wrong, but now no one will hire me."	
"I suffer from an anxiety disorder and have been hospitalized a couple of time. I have a lot of trouble focusing."	
"I am a wheelchair user and have an interview next week. I'm not sure if the interview location will be accessible."	

18   **ASSIGNMENT #3: PERSONAL DISCLOSURE DECISIONS**

What sensitive information might you need to share with an employer? (Disability, criminal history, something else?)

What are some of the pros and cons of disclosing this information?

Pros:	Cons:

Why might you want to or need to share this information?

How might you frame this information?

When might you share this information?

If you are working with a job coach or an employment specialist (service provider), what information, if any, are you comfortable with *them* sharing with a potential employer?

SESSION THREE NOTES

Session Four: The Art and Science of Networking

19 **OBJECTIVES:**

- Report and reflect on independent research assignment
- Update Blueprint for Employment
- Begin to map personal contacts
- Introduce the concept of networking and begin to map personal contacts
- Review and discuss independent research assignment

20 **HOW DO MOST PEOPLE FIND JOBS?**

Think of at least one person who you know who found a job through:

A friend: _____

A Military Brother or Sister: _____

A family member: _____

A counselor, case manager or other supporters: _____

Someone in the community: _____

21   **MAP YOUR CONTACTS**

Friends/ Other Veterans

Family

Case Manager/ Counselor/ Other Supporters

Community Contacts

22 **NETWORKING PITCH:**

A networking pitch is a tool job seekers use to quickly describe who they are, the type of work they are seeking, and what they have to offer an employer . . . to anyone who might be in a position to help you find a job.

Develop your pitch:

Smile and introduce yourself	
Name Drop if someone recommended you	
State the type of work you are <u>interested</u> in doing	
Describe your <u>skills</u> or <u>positive personality traits</u> related to the type of work you are seeking	
Give an example of the types of <u>tasks</u> you could offer a company (and how the company would benefit)	
Give an example of at least 1 success	
Make a specific request (ask for their advice, ask for an informational interview, etc.)	
Thank the person	

23 **ASSIGNMENT #4: MAPPING PERSONAL CONTACTS & PRACTICE NETWORKING**

1. Finish mapping out your personal contacts and developing your Networking Pitch
2. Practice your Networking Pitch on at least 2 new contacts. Get feedback and be prepared to share it with the group.
3. Update your Job Search Blueprint

Networking Pitch

Smile and introduce yourself	
Name Drop if someone recommended you	
State the type of work you are <u>interested</u> in doing	
Describe your <u>skills</u> or <u>positive personality traits</u> related to the type of work you are seeking	
Give an example of the types of <u>tasks</u> you could offer a company (and how the company would benefit)	
Give an example of at least 1 success	
Thank the person	

FEEDBACK RECEIVED:

REVISED Networking Pitch

Smile and introduce yourself	
Name drop if someone recommended you	
State the type of work you are <u>interested</u> in doing	
Describe your <u>skills</u> or <u>positive personality traits</u> related to the type of work you are seeking	
Give an example of the types of <u>tasks</u> you could offer a company (and how the company would benefit)	
Give an example of at least 1 success	
Thank the person	

SESSION FOUR NOTES

24

Session Five: Pulling It All Together – Taking Action

- Review your Blueprint
- How has the information you gained during this course help you as you begin or continue your search for employment?
- What's next? How will you use the information you learned from this course to take control of your job search?

25

- – Consider at least 3 action steps will you take and share them with the group
- – Be prepared to discuss who you will ask for support and why.
- – Decide on a reasonable time frame to complete the action.
- – Don't forget to check off the action step once it's completed!

ACTION ITEMS			
I will	*I will ask for support from...*	*By when?*	*Complete (✔)*
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

26 CONGRATULATIONS!

You took a big step starting this workshop...and you have taken an even bigger step finishing it! You should be extremely proud of yourself – and feel better prepared to continue your journey.

Now that you have finished this course, what's next?

Here are some things to remember:

1. Customizing your job search starts with YOU. It focuses on how job seekers can contribute to an employer's unmet needs. It creates a win/win situation – for the job seeker *and* for the employer.

2. Discovery is a process you can use to identify your interests and skills, conditions for employment and more. It also helps you to identify the tasks you would like to do for pay.

3. Searching for employment truly "takes a village." Use your support team to help you as you continue your journey. Be brave enough to accept the help of others.

4. Take control and schedule regular meetings with your employment team to determine next steps and set goals.

5. Continue to network and conduct informational interviews.

6. When you find an employer that matches your contributions, propose employment!

What additional items can you add to this list?

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

FINAL SESSION NOTES

BLUEPRINT FOR EMPLOYMENT

Update this Blueprint based on the outcomes from each session of Guided Group Discovery.

JOB SEARCH TEAM		
Person	Relationship	*Contact information*

CONTRIBUTIONS: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU	
INTERESTS	**SKILLS**
TASKS	**POSITIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

VOCATIONAL THEMES™	
Emerging Vocational Themes:	Where would People with Similar Themes Work?

CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT	ACCOMMODATIONS, DISCLOSURE AND FRAMING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

ACTION ITEMS			
I will	*I will ask for support from...*	*By when?*	*Complete (✓)*
11.			☐
12.			☐
13.			☐
14.			☐
15.			☐
16.			☐
17.			☐
18.			☐
19.			☐
20.			☐

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Congratulations! This award certifies that

[Recipient Name]

Has Successfully Completed

GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

PRESENTED BY:

DATE:

LEAD CENTER