

Employment Support Indicators

Preferences
Choices
Self-determination



A Guide for Planning

Center for Learning and Leadership • University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

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The *Employment Support Indicators* guide was developed by the Center for Learning and Leadership, Oklahoma's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), specifically to support our work with self-advocates, families, professionals, and academic and community colleagues. The Center for Learning and Leadership is located at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, College of Medicine, P.O. Box 26901, ROB 342, Oklahoma City, OK 73126-0901. If you would like additional copies, please contact the Center for Learning and Leadership in Oklahoma City at (405) 271-4500 and press "0" to have your call directed. This publication is available in alternative formats for accommodations on the basis of disability.

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Employment Support Indicators: A Guide for Planning

The purpose of this guide is to address basic employment supports. According to the *U.S. Department of Labor, Interagency Committee on Disability Research, Employer Perspectives on Workers with Disabilities: A National Summit to Develop a Research Agenda*, Washington D.C. (September 2007), “The overall level of employment among people with disabilities has remained relatively unchanged, due in part to the high rate of people with disabilities leaving jobs (job exits). Until the ratio between job placements and job exits changes, the net gain in employment for people with disabilities will continue to be smaller than desired. Causes of low retention include the inability to sustain adequate work performance; changes in work, work conditions, health conditions, or personal circumstances; and employer policies and management practices that discourage continued work (e.g. lack of tolerance for flexible work schedules).”

The *Employment Support Indicators* are designed to assist professionals, individuals with disabilities, students and their families, and potential employers in determining a range of basic supports which may be necessary in order to become or remain employed.

The *Employment Support Indicators* are organized into three domain areas. The domains are designed to identify supports to help individuals sustain work activity, prepare for work change and work quality evaluation, and get along with co-workers and supervisory personnel. The indicators are organized in order of individual skill sets, but could be applicable in any order. It is important to remember that employment for persons with disabilities may be valued differently than the typical workforce. Employment may be a main source of social interaction, help with inclusion into the community, and improve self-esteem; it is not solely a financial reward.

The domain areas covered by the *Employment Support Indicators* are:

- ☐ **Social Supports**
- ☐ **Work Setting Supports**
- ☐ **Work Style Supports**

Someone is “work-ready” when they can make the educational and vocational decisions and perform the kinds of educational and vocational tasks (behaviors) that are expected by schools and employers (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 1995). Individuals differ in their readiness to deal with career development tasks at the “expected” or “appointed” time. Some youth are more aware than others of the work-related decisions that must be made at various points in their lives and are, therefore, better equipped to enter and participate in the world of work. Research indicates that youth with disabilities tend to lag behind their peers in readiness for the career development process (Faas, D’Alonzo, & Stile, 1990). Family involvement in skill development has been shown to positively contribute to the development of work-readiness skills for youth with and without disabilities (Mooney, 1998; Way & Rossmann, 1996). Excerpt from US Office of Special Education “Employment 101” ; ED.gov

SOCIAL SUPPORTS

Which statements best describe the social support needs of the job candidate?

Reading Affect

- Understands facial expressions and gestures of others?
- Understands own facial expressions?
- Does not consistently interpret expressions and gestures of self or others?

Interpersonal Skills

- Gives cues and understands personal space (self and others)
- Understands what is appropriate to say to whom, when, and where
- Can maintain appropriate voice volume in work

- Needs support to: get clarification, understand instructions from one or everyone in work setting or needs to have demonstrated what is wanted/expected

Handling Criticism/Stress

- Can accept criticism and change behavior
- Cannot accept criticism

Communication

- Combination of words, gestures and pictures used to understand and communicate
- Assistive devices used to communicate
- Interpreter services

WORK SETTING SUPPORTS

What are the environmental preferences of the job candidate?

Lighting

- Brightly lit area
- Dimly lit area
- Natural vs. artificial light

Noise Levels

- A quiet/semi-quiet area in order to focus and concentrate
- A setting where “startling” noises are unlikely

Number of People

- Limited number of people in close proximity
- One person in workspace to mentor and provide support

Size of Work Area

- May need key areas limited to several rooms within a building
- May need key areas limited to one room or space within one room

WORK STYLE SUPPORTS

Which style of performance support is preferred by the job candidate?

Initiation and Sustaining of Work Activity

- Direction from a supervisor only when learning a new task
- Direction from a supervisor to get started, sustain, or to change to next task throughout the day (verbal, written schedule, clock, picture schedule)
- Direction from a supervisor at the beginning

Attention to Task

- Frequent prompts to stay on task
- Intermittent prompts, low level of supervision
- Intermittent prompts, high level of supervision

Body Clock

- Functions best morning
- Functions best in the afternoon
- Functions best in the evening

Endurance

- Frequent breaks
- Hourly breaks
- Breaks every 2-3 hours

Quality Assurance

- Low level of supervision of work quality and accuracy
- High level of supervision of work quality and accuracy

Independent Work Rate

- Slow
- Average steady pace
- Above average, sometimes fast
- Continual fast pace (may need to be supported with volume of work...underemployed)
- Rush-to-finish (information on the front end)

Communication Reinforcement

- Combination of words and pictures used to understand and communicate
- Assistive devices used to communicate
- Interpreter services

Sequencing

- Overall planning of assignment/duties and tasks
- Prompts to perform steps within task
- Prompts to proceed with next task

Decision-Making/Problem-Solving

- Help to identify options and impact of choice making
- Rules and structure to minimize decision-making

Adapting to Change

- A rigid routine is preferred (same people, same time, same task)
- A flexible routine, advance notice, and explanation

Time Awareness

- Functional understanding of time (may need cues)
- Cues must be provided

Document Evaluation

We want to know if this guide is useful to you. Please tell us by checking the box that fits best.

Employment Support Indicators	Yes	No	I don't know
1. Described employment supports accurately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Could be used for Transition planning, by students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Could be used for Transition planning by families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Could be used for Transition planning by professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. What I liked about the Employment Support Indicators:			
6. If I could make one suggestion for improving the format of this guide it would be:			
7. I will use this guide to . . . (do what?) :			

Notes:

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http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/hsht/supplement1_design_features.doc

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