GET A JOB

The beauty of supported employment lies in the strength of a very simple concept: Individuals with disabilities will obtain and maintain employment in competitive employment positions with planned supports (Brooke, Wehman, Inge, & Parent, 1995). This simple yet profound concept emerged gradually from three historical events (Rusch & Hughes, 1989). First, research from the 1970s demonstrated that individuals with mental retardation could learn complex job skills (Bellamy, Horner, & Inman, 1979; Gold, 1972; Mithaug, 1979). Second, demonstration projects depicted individuals with mental retardation being successfully employed in competitive, community-based, nonsheltered workshop positions (Rusch, Connis, & Sowers, 1978; Rusch & Mithaug, 1980; Wehman, 1981, 2001; Wehman, Hill, & Koehler, 1979). Third, a philosophical shift began when Whitehead (1979) reported that the sheltered workshop system prepared people for nonexistent jobs and that few people in sheltered employment left for competitive employment in the community

(Bellamy, Rhodes, Mank, & Albin, 1988; Rusch & Schutz, 1979). As the supported employment concept grew from these three historical events, questions regarding the ability of individuals with disabilities to do a community job, which previously barred them from community employment, began to fade (Rusch & Hughes, 1989).

Before supported employment, vocational rehabilitation and educational programs used a train-and-place model. Clients in sheltered workshops were trained to "get ready" for community employment, but few ever left the sheltered workshop for competitive employment. The first supported employment model questioned the train-and-place approach. The place-and-train model (Rusch & Mithaug, 1980) first placed individuals into community-based competitive employment settings, then trained them to complete the job tasks ("New Directions," 1992).

The place-and-train model (Rusch & Mithaug, 1980) and a set of basic procedures (Wehman, 1981) set the stage for the formal intro-

duction of the term *supported employment* in the landmark Developmental Disabilities Act of 1984 (PL 98-527). This law, and the later Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 (PL 102-569), defined *supported employment* as paid employment for people with disabilities who require ongoing support to work at a community job setting (Rusch & Hughes, 1990). Wehman and Revell added clarity when they said,

[Supported employment] is not readiness training in classrooms or work centers intended to develop generalized skills for use in a job sometime in the future. Supported employment focuses on wages, working conditions, job security, and job mobility. It values full participation of persons with significant disabilities in the community and assumes that each individual has the capacity to work if appropriate and individualized ongoing supports are made available. It utilizes rehabilitation technology, the resources of the employer, family, and community networks as well as the experience of a job coach as some of the many ways to provide supports (Parent, Unger, Gibson, & Clements, 1994). Supported employment creates opportunities for social integration and redirects the image of an individual with a disability away from a focus on dependency. (1997, p. 68)

This revolutionary concept shifted focus from questions of competence to the procedures, types, and amount of supports that individuals need in order to attain community-based, competitive employment (Rusch, 1986). The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities summarized this major shift:

Supported employment facilitates competitive work in integrated work settings for individuals with the most severe disabilities (i.e., psychiatric, mental retardation, learning disabilities, traumatic brain injury) for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred and who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need ongoing support services in order to perform their job. Supported employment provides assistance such as job coaches, transportation, assistive technology, specialized job training, and individually tailored supervision.

Supported employment is a way to move people from dependence on a service delivery system to independence via competitive employment. Recent studies indicate that the provision of on-going support services for people with severe disabilities significantly increases their rates for employment retention. (1998, p. 1)

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AS A SET OF METHODS

The supported employment concept is manifested in the methods that schools and adult agency programs use to facilitate community employment. Moon, Inge, Wehman, Brooke, and Barcus considered it "a specific job placement and training approach" (1990, p. 1). Rusch and Hughes defined *supported employment* as "an intervention package containing several components" (1989, p. 354). Horner (1990) perceived *supported employment* as a behavioral technology for assisting people to become employed. Beyer and Kilsby (1997) thought that training by a skilled job coach was essential to a successful placement. These practices involve activities and procedures that take place before the person becomes employed and those that take place once the person becomes employed (Martin, Mithaug, Agran, & Husch, 1990). The outcome of supported employment practices is a competitive community job (Wehman & Kregel, 1998).

What are these methods, and what roles do individuals with disabilities play? How have supported employment methods changed since their inception in the 1980s? Supported employment methodology evolved through three major phases, with each subsequent phase including many of the best practices of those preceding it. These phases are Phase One: get a job—any job—and keep the individual at the job; Phase Two: get a job that you think is a match for the individual, and then use staff or natural supports to keep the job; and Phase Three: self-directed employment.

Each phase represents best practice as reflected by the predominant values, attitudes, and available methodology during that time period. This chapter examines these three phases by reviewing their prominent features. Dates for these phases are approximate. Practice does not move in a linear fashion, and as one phase begins, the previous phase often continues. A few employment programs still only use Phase One techniques, while others are implementing Phase Two or Three methodologies. Pancsofar and Steere (1997) noted that some employment programs still focus on readiness and use numerous means to classify individuals with disabilities as being unable to work at community jobs. Others still deny individuals with disabilities supported employment opportunities. For example, one

lobbyist for sheltered workshops advocated placing individuals with disabilities in sheltered workshops instead of in community employment. *Mouth Magazine* suggested that if this happens, people with disabilities will continue to be put into positions of servitude instead of getting an actual community job ("Caught in the Act," 2001). As with any system change, overlap of evolving procedures exists.

Since its introduction in the early 1980s, supported employment methodology evolved from simply getting a person a job, to the emerging self-determination–oriented employment practices of today (Browning, 1997; Gilmore, Schuster, Timmons, & Butterworth, 2000; Wehman & Kregel, 1989). This chapter reviews these three phases and discusses who answered the following questions.

- What are the worker's job, task, and characteristic preferences and interest?
- What are the worker's skills and limits?
- Do the available jobs match the worker's interests and preferences?
- Do the available jobs match the worker's skills and limits?
- What job accommodations are needed?
- Can the worker do the job tasks?
- How does the worker do the job tasks?
- What are the worker's problems and how are they solved?
- Who established the on-the-job support network?
- Who determines if the worker should leave the job?

Those who answered these questions varied by phase. Yet, regardless of who, the simplicity and the revolutionary nature of the idea—get a job in a community setting—comes through in every phase. Choice initiates the self-directed employment process, and these questions frame the self-directed employment orientation. But how does choice manifest itself in the self-directed employment process?

CHOICE MAKING

Unlike any previous era, people with disabilities now have greater opportunities to participate in making choices about their own daily lives (Harchik, Sherman, Sheldon, & Bannerman, 1993). Transition and supported employment programs provide an excellent opportunity for individuals to learn to make choices (Stalker & Harris, 1998; West & Parent, 1992). In 1984, Shevin and Klein issued a strong call to the field to create opportunities for exercising choice for individuals with severe disabilities but warned this process would be undertaken in "relatively uncharted territory, without the comforts of traditional behavioral definitions and research methodologies" (p. 161). Fortunately, since 1984, the field has learned a lot about vocational choice making.

Choice-Making Roadblocks

Individuals with severe disabilities often have fewer choice opportunities in the course of their daily lives than do peers without disabilities (Kishi, Teelucksing, Zollers, Park-Lee, & Meyer, 1988; Sands & Kozleski, 1994). Their teachers often pay scant attention to expressions of preference, especially in instructional situations (Houghton, Bronicki, & Guess, 1987). Parents often assert that they know what their child wants or that their child does not have preferences (O'Brien, O'Brien, & Mount, 1997; Parsons & Reid, 1990; Stalker & Harris, 1998). These roadblocks to personal expression of preferences result in far too many youths and adults with severe disabilities not having an opportunity to make choices (Dattilo & Rusch, 1985; Mithaug, 1991). It should be no surprise then that often "employment programs unknowingly suspend basic employment rights that nonhandicapped workers enjoy" (Martin & Mithaug, 1990, p. 87).

The Choice-Making Process

Individuals with severe disabilities, like those without, have personal preferences, likes, and dislikes (Shevin & Klein, 1984). If provided with the opportunity, they use their everyday life choices to define their identity (Guess, Benson, & Siegel-Causey, 1985; O'Brien, 1987) by expressing their preferences (Parsons & Reid, 1990). *Choice making* is "an individual's selection of a preferred alternative from among several familiar options" (Shevin & Klein, 1984, p. 160). It involves uncoerced selection. That is, no

consequences exist for selecting one choice over another except that which come from the characteristics of the choices themselves (Brigham, 1979). The choice-making process relies on three essential elements: 1) having options, 2) understanding the options, and 3) possessing the power to take action on these options (Stalker & Harris, 1998). To make a choice, individuals with disabilities must communicate their preference to others and receive support from teachers, parents, or significant others to facilitate choice-making opportunities (Rawlings, Dowse, & Shaddock, 1995). In order for choice making to become a critical aspect of the decision-making process, preference-based choice-making skills must be taught (Shevin & Klein, 1984; West & Parent, 1992), and opportunities for choice making must be provided for both daily and lifestyle decision making (Hughes, Pitkin, & Lorden, 1998).

A review of the choice research literature found that once a choice-making response is taught, "most people with severe developmental disabilities can cope with choice situations and perform choice responses" (Lancioni, O'Reilly, & Emerson, 1996, p. 402). The literature has also shown that choice making is purposeful, can be done successfully within the context of a person's daily routine, and positively affects performance and behavior (e.g., Lancioni et al., 1996). The choice-making process must be structured, too, so that the individual with severe disabilities makes an informed choice. This structured process fits well into a vocational assessment process.

Informed Vocational Choice

The type and quality of choice that a person with a disability makes are determined in part by the amount of practice the person has had in making choices (Rawlings et al., 1995). To yield an informed vocational choice, the process must involve multiple, individualized choice opportunities across time that become validated through community on-the-job experience (Bambara & Koger, 1995). An informed vocational choice for a person with severe disabilities requires direct exposure to and interactions with the requirements, duties, and characteristics of a job (Schaller & Szymanski, 1992).

Preference Assessment   Preference assessment yields an individual's unique interests and expectations (Lohrmann-O'Rourke & Browder, 1998). Repeatedly collecting data during work sampling facilitates direct preference assessment (Bambara, Koger, Katzer, & Davenport, 1995; Windsor, O'Reilly, & Moon, 1993). This process enables individuals with severe disabilities to realize what their preferences are and to tell others. Research demonstrates that a person's own choice produces better outcomes than choices made by a significant other. Lohrmann-O'Rourke and Browder (1998) suggested that a preference assessment should include:

- Repeated opportunities to make choices
- Direct assessment rather than third-party (e.g., teacher, parent) reporting of preferences
- Mass trial assessment with observation in the actual environment where the choice exists
- Repeated assessment across days
- Periodic assessment across time to assess any preference changes
- Presentation of assessment stimuli in a manner individuals can use (e.g., actual item, picture)
- Identification of selection and rejection responses to assessment stimuli (e.g., picking up the object)
- Presentation of assessment stimuli in a paired format with limited time available to make the selection and produce a list of preferred and nonpreferred items.

Until opportunity expands to making lifestyle decisions, the self-determination of people with severe disabilities will remain limited (Brown, Belz, Corsi, & Wenig, 1993). Hughes and colleagues (1998) asserted that preference assessment must be extended to affect the lifestyle decisions made by individuals with severe disabilities. Lohrmann-O'Rourke and Browder (1998) cautioned that identifying preferences for long-range choices or lifestyle decisions becomes problematic because of the level of abstraction needed to think about oneself in the future. Still, opportunities must be provided for individuals with severe disabilities to make meaningful lifestyle choices, such as choosing a job (Brown et al., 1993).

LIFESTYLE DECISION: MAKING EMPLOYMENT CHOICES

In order for people with disabilities to begin to prepare for working lives, they must first choose a career (Wilcox, McDonnell, Bellamy, & Rose, 1988). Individuals' "career goals should be a driving force in the development of employment opportunities within integrated community environments" (Powell et al., 1991, p. 27). Each person's own work preferences should determine job placements (Neumayer & Bleasdale, 1996). The individual with a disability must be the one to select a career path after experiencing a variety of vocational experiences and supports. School transition and adult supported employment programs must become consumer-driven so that each person with a severe disability can select a job and make proactive decisions to retain or leave it (Brooke et al., 1995).

Yet, typical vocational assessment procedures, such as standardized testing, interest inventories, simulated job task evaluation, or job developer analysis of job characteristics, do not provide adequate assessment information to facilitate vocational placements (Culver, Spencer, & Gliner, 1990; Targett, Ferguson, & McLoughlin, 1998). Often high school transition and postsecondary supported employment programs use aptitude measurement, work samples, interest inventories, and behavior checklists to assess individuals with severe disabilities (Agran & Morgan, 1991). These tools are inappropriate for individuals with severe needs (Menchetti & Flynn, 1990). A single point-in-time interest or skill assessment simply does not provide a valid profile (Gaylord-Ross, 1986). Results from an interest inventory, for example, completed on one day can change as the individual with a severe disability gains additional experience the next day (Buschner, Watts, Siders, & Leonard, 1989). Verbal preference statements may not match the results of career interest inventories (Elrod, Sorgenfrei, & Gibson, 1989). The results of a single-use, picture-based interest inventory often produce questionable results, too (Buschner et al., 1989).

Rather than using traditional vocational assessment tools, school-based transition teachers and supported employment specialists must learn how to implement a self-directed situational assessment and job matching process (Agran, Test, & Martin, 1994; Test & Wood, 1995). Individuals with severe disabilities must make decisions by considering their needs, interests, skills, and limits when given the tools to do so (Agran et al., 1994; Mithaug & Hanawalt, 1978; Mithaug & Mar, 1980). A preference-oriented assessment process enables the individual with a severe disability to experience choice and control (Wehmeyer, Kelchner, & Richards, 1995).

Simply stating a preference by itself, however, does not constitute informed choice. Although many individuals with severe disabilities can express a preference if requested to do so, their choices may not match what they later discover to be important (Moon et al., 1990). A person with a cognitive disability must experience several different job conditions and environments—otherwise, the expressed preferences will not reflect an informed decision. People with limited or no previous vocational experience—regardless of their communication skills—are not be able to make valid, meaningful, and informed choices, but people who have hands-on experience with different jobs understand what they like and want. Individuals with severe disabilities need the opportunity to compare initial preferences with knowledge gained from experience in order to determine if initial preferences match what they learned through on-the-job experience (O'Brien et al., 1997).

Workers with severe disabilities can make consistent choices (Mithaug & Hanawalt, 1978; Mithaug & Mar, 1980). Preference for working specific tasks is one of the work conditions that must be given consideration in making job-choice decisions (Moon et al., 1990). "Various studies concerned with the vocational adjustments of youth with handicaps point out that work interests and motivation are far more critical variables than specific job capacities and skills" (Berkell, 1987, p. 68). The process of comparing choices to actual environmental experiences enables the individual with a severe disability to discriminate among work conditions, duties, and variables (Martin & Mithaug, 1990). Making a match between expressed preferences and actual environmental traits leads one to make an informed choice (Schaller & Szmanski, 1992). Yet, roadblocks to providing choice opportunities exist.

Ecological Perspective

If a mismatch between the person and the job environment occurs, the placement usually fails (Mank, 2000; Thurman, 1977). The self-directed employment approach avoids this problem by emphasizing the interrelationships between individuals with disabilities and their environments. The process produces a job choice based on the match between individually stated preferences and specific environments (Schalock & Jensen, 1986). It depends on the comparison of choices with the reality of the workplace. The match between the individual with a disability and the job increases the likelihood that on-the-job behavior meets the job and environmental expectations (Chadsey-Rusch & Rusch, 1988). An ecobehavioral job match allows self-examination of behavior–environment relationships in the natural environment and provides opportunities for the person to make informed job choices (Rogers-Warren & Warren, 1977). In other words, a person's opinion of different job settings can be determined through self-evaluation of numerous job dimensions including characteristics, activities, and setting (Chadsey-Rusch & Rusch, 1988).

Too many individuals with severe cognitive disabilities lack the vocational experience to make informed choices. Typical interest inventories—especially those presented only in writing—are not appropriate for individuals with severe support needs. Some suggest that teachers and supported employment specialists observe people with severe disabilities doing different jobs (McLoughlin, Garner, & Callahan, 1987). But at best, this is a choice by proxy—teachers or employment specialists make the choice, not the person with the disability. In Phase Three practice, input by the individual with the disability is the beginning of the match process. The individual with the disability examines the job, observes other workers, tries the tasks, and compares the attributes of one job to another. To make a choice, the person needs directed hands-on experience with different job options. We believe that individuals with severe disabilities must have the opportunity to choose their own jobs. This begins by answering the question: What job do I like? Those who answer this question have changed as supported employment practices have evolved.

PHASE ONE: GET A JOB—ANY JOB—AND KEEP THE INDIVIDUAL AT THE JOB

This first supported employment phase, which started in the late 1970s, emphasized inclusion of people with severe disabilities in the community workforce instead of segregated sheltered workshops, work activity centers, and isolated school programs (Rusch & Hughes, 1989). The supported employment pioneers faced numerous problems and issues that had never before been addressed, including lack of readily available models and methodology on which to draw. So these pioneers created new models and infused existing methods into these new models.

Phase One Methodology

The first supported employment demonstration projects showed that individuals with mental retardation could become employed and remain employed if provided with long-term support (Rusch & Schutz, 1979; Wehman, 1981; Wehman et al., 1979). Using these initial findings, Rusch and Mithaug (1980) created the *survey, train, and place employment model.* This began with employment staff surveying employers to find job placement sites and concluded with procedures to "help the trainee maintain employment" (Rusch & Mithaug, 1980, p. 185). This model encouraged employment specialists to

1. Conduct a telephone or mail survey to identify potential job placement sites
2. Complete a job analysis at the locations that expressed interest in hiring a trainee
3. Analyze employer, supervisor, and co-worker expectations
4. Develop a work performance evaluation form that staff will use to get information from the worksite about the trainee's performance
5. Place the trainee in the job
6. Follow-up after placement to evaluate performance, identify problems, and provide on-the-job interventions

The employment staff assessed job requisites, assessed trainees' skills in those job requisites,

specified instructional objectives, developed materials and procedures to obtain those objectives, secured a job, and taught the worker any needed job and social skills.

Vocational training for individuals with severe vocational disabilities prior to the 1980s primarily consisted of "vague instructions and occasional prompts to stay on task" (Gifford, Rusch, Martin, & White, 1984, p. 287). To achieve productive employment levels, the survey, train, and place model used applied behavior analysis techniques to teach trainees the required work and social skills (e.g., Bellamy et al., 1979; Rusch & Mithaug, 1980).

Job Match Factor Approach

Moon, Goodall, Barcus, and Brooke (1986) suggested that employment specialists use specific worker factors to develop successful job placements. They listed 27 factors to consider when making a job placement.

1. Availability to work (e.g., days, weekends)
2. Availability of transportation to and from the jobsite
3. Initiative and motivation
4. Strength for lifting and carrying objects
5. Endurance (hours of continuous work)
6. Independence in work areas of different sizes
7. Physical mobility
8. Independent work rate
9. Appearance
10. Communication abilities
11. Appropriate social interactions
12. Absence of unusual behaviors
13. Attention to task and perseverance
14. Independent sequencing of job duties
15. Adaptation skills
16. Reinforcement needs
17. Family support
18. Individual's financial situation
19. Discrimination skills
20. Time awareness
21. Functional reading skills
22. Functional math skills

23. Financial support benefits the individual with disabilities needs or presently has
24. Independent street crossing skills
25. Ability to handle criticism/stress
26. Limited amount of aggressive behavior or speech
27. Travel skills

Employment specialists use these factors to make job placements decisions. Notice that individual worker preferences do not enter into the placement process and that interests do not appear among the 27 factors. Involvement in the job placement decision-making process by individuals with disabilities is nonexistent. According to Moon and colleagues,

[The] results of the job/worker compatibility analysis determine which consumers are appropriate to interview for the position. If two or three individuals appear equally suitable, there is almost always a factor that tips the decision toward the selection of one individual over another (e.g., one person's family is more enthusiastic about employment than others, or a person lives closer to the job site, or a person has more experience related to the job). In addition, do not overlook your intuition or "gut feeling" as to which individual you feel may be the best match for the job opening. It is often said that there is art, as well as science, in the process of job placement. Once the job trainer has chosen a client for the job, arrangements are made for the employer to interview your candidate. (1986, p. 59)

Clearly, in this early model, job trainers choose jobs. They based their decisions on the 27 factors without giving systematic consideration to individual preferences. Moon and colleagues acknowledged worker choice but in a limited manner.

When an individual states that he or she does not want to perform a certain job duty, such as operating a dishwasher, respect this decision. Do not pressure anyone to take a job, hoping that he or she will grow to like it. There are many demands and stresses during the initial phase of job training and a positive attitude on the part of the worker can be a crucial factor for success. (1986, p. 55)

Who Answers the
Self-Directed Employment Questions?

Table 1.1 depicts typical Phase One answers to questions regarding self-directed employment. To be considered a self-directed employment practice, the worker with a disability must directly answer at least eight of the ten questions. During Phase One, the employment specialist answered eight of the questions. No one answered the two interest questions. Clearly, worker preference simply did not enter into the job match decision. Employment staff determined the individual's skills and limits, made a placement that matched the person's skill level, and provided all the training and support needed at the jobsite. Jobsite personnel answered only three questions regarding basic employment decisions. The individual with a disability answered none of these questions. He or she was simply told what job to do and where to go.

Phase One methodology did not use self-directed employment practices. The procedures did, however, begin the exodus of people with disabilities from sheltered workshop settings into community jobs. As practices evolved, individual preferences became more important, as demonstrated in Phase Two.

PHASE TWO: GET A JOB THAT IS A MATCH FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

By the 1980s and early 1990s, workers with disabilities from across the United States benefited from supported employment programs (Ellis, Rusch, Tu, & McCaughrin, 1990; Hill & Wehman, 1983; Kregel, Wehman, Revell, & Hill, 1990; McDonnell, Nofs, Hardman, & Chambless, 1989). These programs began to flourish across the world, too. Australia (Anderson & Wisener, 1996), Britain (Beyer, Kilsby, & Willson, 1995), Jamaica (Bent, 1997), Germany (Barlsen & Bungart, 1997), Norway (Blystad & Spjelkavik, 1997), Finland (Harkapaa et al., 1997), and Spain (Verdugo, Borja, Urries, Bellver, & Martinez, 1998) all established effec-

Table 1.1.   Who answers the self-directed employment questions with the Phase One stage of supported employment?

Self-determination methodology question	Individual with disabilities	Employment specialist	Jobsite co-worker or supervisor
What are the worker's job, task, and characteristic preferences and interests?	no	no	no
What are the worker's skills and limits?	no	yes	no
Does the available job match the worker's interest and preferences?	no	no	no
Does the available job match the worker's skills and limits?	no	yes	no
What job accommodations are needed?	no	yes	no
Can the worker do the job?	no	yes	yes
How does the worker do the job?	no	yes	yes
What are the worker's problems and how are they solved?	no	yes	no
Who establishes the on-the-job support network?	no	yes	no
Who determines if the worker should leave this job?	no	yes	yes

tive supported employment programs. Texts regarding Phase Two supported employment issues and methodology appeared with titles such as:

- *Competitive Employment: Issues and Strategies* (Rusch, 1986)
- *Getting Employed and Staying Employed* (McLoughlin et al., 1987)
- *Vocational Preparation and Employment of Students with Physical and Multiple Disabilities* (Sowers & Powers, 1991)
- *Helping Persons with Severe Mental Retardation Get and Keep Employment* (Moon et al., 1990)
- *Supported Employment: Models, Methods, and Issues* (Rusch, 1990)
- *Supported Employment for Persons with Disabilities: Focus on Excellence* (Wehman & Kregel, 1989)
- *A Working Relationship: The Job Development Specialist's Guide to Successful Partnerships with Business* (Fabian, Luecking, & Tilson, 1994)
- *Natural Supports in School, at Work, and in the Community for People with Disabilities* (Nisbet, 1992)

Supported employment programs expanded from only securing community employment for workers with mental retardation to also include those with mental illness (Anthony & Blanch, 1987), physical and multiple disabilities (Sowers & Powers, 1991), and traumatic brain injury (Wehman, Kreutzer, Stonnington, & Wood, 1988). During the Phase Two years, methodology also received increased attention.

Phase Two Methodology

The vocational preferences of individuals with disabilities must direct job placement (Martin et al., 1990; Reid, Parsons, & Green, 1998; West & Parent, 1992). Phase Two methodology acknowledged this mandate but, as documented in the following examples, employment specialists answer the two interest questions—self-directed employment practices have not yet emerged. Numerous Phase Two examples exist, but discussion is limited here to four.

Example 1 Beyer and Kilsby (1997) described a five-step supported employment model representative of Phase Two methodology.

Step 1. Staff create a vocational profile for the applicant, which includes a description of ideal job characteristics.
Step 2. Staff canvass employers until a job is found that the staff believe matches the worker's interests, abilities, and needs.
Step 3. Staff analyze job tasks and work culture, compare worker traits to the job, and if a match, secure placement.
Step 4. Staff provide training and support, then fade to the lowest level possible to maintain performance with the use of natural supports.
Step 5. Staff continue monitoring, problem solving, and working on career development issues.

Beyer and Kilsby's (1997) model added two evolutionary steps to the Phase One methods, while keeping most of the Phase One components. Staff created a vocational profile that reflected each person's interests and skills and obtained jobs that matched each person's profile. Beyer and Kilsby recognized that as a person worked in his or her job, the profile changed, and the job would need to be changed to match the changed career aspirations. They continued the use of applied behavioral training techniques on the job and infused natural supports as a means to fade support and maintain the worker's employment.

Example 2 McLoughlin et al. (1987) also used vocational profiles to assist with job placement. Their profile "is a composite picture of a potential employee's skills, experiences, available supports, *preferences,* needs, and living situation" (p. 112; italics added). Preference factors included

a.) type of work that applicant wants to do, b.) type of work that the parent/guardian feels is appropriate, c.) what the applicant enjoys doing at home, d.) observations of the kinds of work that the applicant likes to do best, and e.) observations of social situations that the applicant likes best. (p. 114)

Preference, however, does not drive the job match process. It is only one of ten profile factors, and staff make the final decisions. These

steps illustrate what employment specialists must do:

1. Develop a vocational profile of each person
2. Target several employers who somewhat match the profile.
3. Develop the job site; assess the requirements; negotiate accommodations; and complete the Quality Checklist.
4. If the site represents the type described in Step 2:
   a. Compare the conditions and requirements of the job site with the profiles to determine if there are large discrepancies.
   b. If the match appears close, contact the applicant and arrange with the employer to have the employee begin working.
   c. If discrepancies exist that might turn out to be problematic, consider negotiating with the employer, discussing options with the applicant (and parents/guardian), and determining what accommodations are available by the agency to delimit or in some way reduce the importance of the identified discrepancies.
   d. If it is not possible to reconcile the discrepancies, look for another job site.
5. If the job site represents the type noted in Step 4 d:
   a. Review the profiles of other applicants and select one or more who seem to be consistent with the conditions and requirements of the employer.
   b. Narrow the list to one applicant by using local criteria (McLoughlin et al., 1987, p. 116).

Individual preference becomes a proxied choice. Staff members make the actual job placement decisions. The individual's input is minimal, and often others in the person's network make the choices when using a person-centered planning type approach (Hagner, Helm, & Butterworth, 1996; O'Brien et al., 1997).

According to Phase Two methodology, do individuals with disabilities choose their own job? According to Steps 4 a and b, the employment specialist determines whether there is a good match between the person's profile information and the qualities of the job. Individuals with disabilities do not choose; the employment specialist makes the final job decision. The profile guides the match, but individuals often have little direct input into the profile. The person's only choice is a reactive one—workers may directly or indirectly decide that they do not want the job. They can refuse to go to the job or express their displeasure once there through poor production or other unwanted behavior. This is negative empowerment—through an on-the-job veto—not proactive choice.

Example 3   Powell and colleagues (1991) developed a four-stage model: career planning, job development, instruction, and ongoing support. The first career plan stage establishes the foundation for subsequent action. It begins with a personal profile of an individual's likes, preferences, dislikes, special interests or activities, and personal choices. A partial profile for a sample employee, Mike, is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

The planning team, which includes the individual with a disability, uses the profile to determine employment outcomes and to identify top priorities. The individual with a disability comments on the selection of outcomes, and team members reach a consensus through subsequent discussion. Next, a subgroup meets to conduct a compatibility analysis to determine matches between priority outcomes and jobs. Of note, the individual with a disability is not a part of this subgroup. The analysis includes 1) proactive planning, 2) identification of job retention factors, 3) observation of employment options regarding priority outcomes and retention factors, 4) assessment of individuals regarding priority outcomes and retention factors, 5) development of matches between individuals with disabilities and jobs, 6) initial screening to determine general compatibility, 7) single-factor analyses to gather additional information from participants or employers regarding undecided factors, and 8) decisions by committee members regarding the match.

There are no formal computer generated answers for determining the ultimate feasibility of obtaining the best matches between participants and community employment sites. At best, a consensus occurs among team members to pursue a match that makes the most sense with the amount of information that is available. Team members weigh the pros and cons of each potential match and decide where to proceed from there. It is advisable to isolate the employment/participant factors that should receive more weight as being extremely critical to the long-term success of each participant. Initial planning of acquisition and

ongoing supports can be predicted based on the number of excellent, good, and poor matches that exist. (Powell et al., 1991, p. 51–52)

The driving force of this program is sound. Participants' likes, dislikes, special interests, and personal choices contribute to job matches. Personal profiles guide team discussions about employment goals and outcomes. Nevertheless, a familiar pattern emerges once again, as service providers take over, conducting compatibility analyses and making final decisions about the appropriateness of different jobs.

The individuals with disabilities have input but not the final choice. Input occurs at the beginning of the match process, but then it ends. Individuals with disabilities do not examine potential jobsites. They do not observe what other workers do. They do not compare different job visits to determine which is best for them. They do not talk with employees or supervisors. They do not try out tasks to get a feel for the kind of work they might perform. There is no need for the person to think, analyze, and decide what is best because, ultimately, the team decides.

Who Answers the Self-Directed Employment Questions?

The profile in Table 1.2 differs in many ways from the results in Table 1.1. In Phase Two, the employment staff answers all of the questions, whereas in Phase One, they only answered 80% of the questions. Employment site personnel answered only 30% of the Phase One questions, but in Phase Two, they played a bigger role, answering 60% of the questions. Unlike practices in Phase One, the employment specialists in Phase Two determined the worker's job, tasks, and characteristic preferences and matched this profile to available jobs. The role of the jobsite personnel expanded from simply answering a couple of questions about the workers' employment, to becoming involved in on-the-job training and long-term support functions. The individual with a disability, however, still did not substantially answer any of the questions.

Table 1.2 suggests that the focus of Phase Two clearly shifts from getting the person any job, which characterizes Phase One. In Phase Two, employment staff consider what they think

Table 1.2.   Who answers the self-directed employment questions with the Phase Two stage of supported employment?

Self-determination methodology question	Individual with disabilities	Employment specialist	Jobsite co-worker or supervisor
What are the worker's job, task, and characteristic preferences and interests?	no	yes	no
What are the worker's skills and limits?	no	yes	no
Does the available job match the worker's interest and preferences?	no	yes	no
Does the available job match the worker's skills and limits?	no	yes	yes
What job accommodations are needed?	no	yes	yes
Can the worker do the job?	no	yes	yes
How does the worker do the job?	no	yes	yes
What are the worker's problems and how are they solved?	no	yes	yes
Who establishes the on-the-job support network?	no	yes	no
Who determines if the worker should leave this job?	no	yes	yes

the interests and preferences of the individual are and how these match available jobs. To facilitate fading of the employment staff from the jobsite, Phase Two methods enlist co-workers and supervisors to provide additional training and support (Hagner & DiLeo, 1993; Mank, Cioffi, & Yovanoff, 1997; Murphy & Rogan, 1994; Nisbet, 1992). These results indicate that Phase Two programs do not operate in a self-directed manner. The individual with a disability still does not answer the questions—staff or employment site co-workers or supervisors do. As we now know, these subjective opinions of support personnel are often inaccurate (Everson & Reid, 1997).

PHASE THREE: SELF-DIRECTED EMPLOYMENT

International policy, federal mandates, and best practice all call for the infusion of self-directed employment practices into transition and supported employment programs. Article 23 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) declared that everyone has the right to free choice of employment. The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 (PL 102-569) mandated that supported employment programs establish informed choice and teach self-determination to individuals with severe disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 (PL 105-17) acknowledged that students must learn self-determination and advocacy skills in order to maximize empowerment and inclusion in their communities. Policymakers in the United Kingdom also established choice making as a fundamental concept underlying all practices for people with severe disabilities (Stalker & Harris, 1998).

Best practice suggestions for Phase Three emerged, too, from the Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Career Development and Transition (DCDT) when it stated that it "strongly believes that self-determination instruction during the elementary, middle, and secondary transition years prepares all students for a more satisfying and fulfilling adult life" (Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer, 1998b, p. 118). The American Association on Mental

Retardation (AAMR) advocated supporting the expression of citizens with disabilities to speak for themselves in making life choices, including work choices (Wagner, 2000).

Phase Three methods became clear when the Association of Persons in Supported Employment's (APSE) *Quality Indicators* (2001) called for supported employment practices to become self-directed. APSE wanted all individuals involved in supported employment programs to have opportunities to learn self-determination skills and engage in decision-making activities. To do this, APSE encouraged individuals with disabilities to learn the skills needed to lead and become active participants in their individualized education programs (IEPs) or their individualized plans for employment (IPEs). ASPE also advocated for self-determination–oriented employment practices through its *Ethical Guidelines For Professionals In Supported Employment* (DiLeo, McDonald, & Killam, 1996). These guidelines tell supported employment professionals to

- Provide opportunities for each individual to pursue his or her unique career path
- Realize that individuals receiving supported employment have varying interests, preferences, and aptitudes
- Provide each individual with disabilities with sufficient options related to his or her interests and desires so that each person may exercise control and autonomy over his or her life's direction
- Provide opportunities so the choices made by an individual are the result of being fully informed through direct personal experience
- Believe that individuals with disabilities (or at their invitation, family, friends, or co-workers) are the best source to personally convey information of their personal interests, preferences, skills and aptitudes, and life goals
- Provide a job placement that matches the personal interests, preferences, and abilities of the person with disabilities

Others join APSE in calling for infusion of choice and self-determination practices into employment programs for youth and adults with severe disabilities (Bodgan, 1996; Everson, 1996; Everson & Reid, 1997; Pumpian, Fisher,

Certo, & Smalley, 1997; Rusch & Hughes, 1989). Clearly, strong support exists for putting vocational choice-making decisions into the hands of individuals with disabilities. Phase Three procedures use vocational choice making as the foundation of a self-determination oriented employment practice. It enables the dreams and goals in peoples' hearts to become a crucial aspect of the planning and implementation of employment programs (Callahan & Garner, 1997).

Self-Directed Employment Model

Wehman stated that "if individuals are to experience personal satisfaction and quality of life regardless of whether or not they have a disability, it is critical for them to have the right to make choices, express preferences, and exercise control in their lives" (1997, p. 1). This requires a structure and the time for the individual with disabilities and his or her vocational specialists or teachers to meet to discover job preferences and establish an employment plan (Brooke et al., 1995). Any shortcuts taken during the preference discovery period will most likely result in additional training and support needs, job loss, and worker and employer disappointment (Parent, Unger, & Inge, 1997).

Self-Determination Self-determined individuals know what they want and how to get it. They advocate for their own interests. From an awareness of personal needs, self-determined individuals choose goals. They doggedly pursue their goals. This involves asserting their presence, making their needs known, evaluating progress toward meeting their goals, adjusting their performance as needed, and creating unique approaches to solve problems (Martin & Mithaug, 1990). A self-determined individual makes decisions and acts on those decisions (Martin, Mithaug, Husch, Frazier, & Huber Marshall, 2002).

Since the early 1990s, we have developed and implemented a *choose, manage, evaluate, and adjust model* to teach secondary students and adults with disabilities vocational choice making and other self-determination skills (see Figure 1.2). We developed and tested this model through the Self-Directed Supported Employment Program located at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs and then repli-
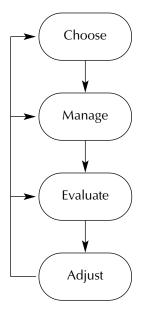
Figure 1.2.   Choose, manage, evaluate, and adjust model.

cated the process across numerous sites both within Colorado and across the nation (Martin & Mithaug, 1990; Martin, Mithaug, Agran, & Husch, 1990; Martin, Oliphint, & Weisenstein, 1994). These procedures enable the individual to tell his or her team what he or she wants based on his or her own experiences (Cross, Cooke, Wood, & Test, 1999). This model uses a repeated-measures self-evaluation to produce a cumulative profile that depicts the individual's preferred choices (Gaylord-Ross, 1986).

The Self-Directed Supported Employment Program consists of three consecutive phases, with each having its own questions that the worker must answer (see Figure 1.3). The first is a structured community-based situational assess-

ment, followed by a placement process, during which time the person learns situational specific problem-solving and self-management skills. Last, long-term follow-up and support facilitates job success or change management. Individuals systematically complete a structured curriculum as they progress from one phase to the next. The procedures help each person think about and then reliably answer critical vocational questions, phase-by-phase.

Methodology

Assessment   The assessment process uses an ecological approach that provides the opportunity for individuals with disabilities to learn
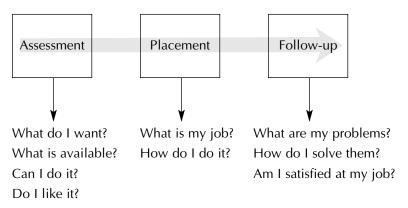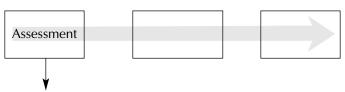

Assessment	Placement	Follow-up
What do I want?	What is my job?	What are my problems?
What is available?	How do I do it?	How do I solve them?
Can I do it?		Am I satisfied at my job?
Do I like it?		

Figure 1.3.   Self-Directed Employment questions.

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│  Assessment  │═════════════════════════════════════▶     │
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What do I want?

- Job choices method
- "Characteristics I like" method

What is available?

- "Job Characteristics I like versus those at the site" method
- Shadowing method

Can I do it?

- Work, social, personal, and task improvement method
- Job needs and accommodations method
- Self-determined improvement method

Do I like it?

- "Job Characteristics I like versus those at the site" method
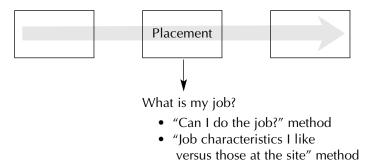- Task choice method

Figure 1.4.   Assessment stage questions and methods.

what they like, can do, and how to match these characteristics to available community jobs. The individual with disabilities begins by making many choices. Through a series of structured community-based experiences, the individual then narrows his or her selections to two jobs that match stated preferences and market availability.

The Self-Directed Assessment process enables individuals with disabilities to answer four questions listed in Figure 1.4. Structured opportunities enable individuals with disabilities to determine 1) what do I want? 2) what's out there? 3) can I do it? and 4) do I like it? Upon entry into the program, individuals make initial job, task, and characteristic choices. Second, they explore these choices and choose again based on their recent experiences. Third, they complete a series of working on-the-job assessments to get a hands-on "feel and taste" of the job duties, characteristics, and demands. Then they choose again on the basis of what they learned. Individuals repeat this process many times across available entry-level jobs until a consistent profile emerges.

Placement   Placement secures a job through a three-stage process. It starts at the end

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│     ═════════════════▶  Placement   │════════════════▶    │
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What is my job?

- "Can I do the job?" method
- "Job characteristics I like
  versus those at the site" method

How do I do it?

- Improvement contract method

Figure 1.5.   Placement stage questions and methods.

of assessment and continues until the placement is considered successful. During placement, workers answer two basic questions: 1) What is my job? and 2) how do I do it? (see Figure 1.5).

Stage 1 This phase secures the person a preferred job. Employment specialists do not simply place the person in a job that matches the choices made during assessment. Because large environmental differences may often exist from site to site within the same job class, each person must answer specific questions about any potential jobsite. Using structured forms and systematic procedures, the person decides whether he or she can do the job and whether the characteristics at the site match his or her preferences.

Stage 2 During this phase, the worker learns how to do the job. The actual process is site dependent. Usually co-workers train the needed skills. In difficult training situations, employment specialists or peer job coaches enter to facilitate skill development. They help restructure the environment, teach the person self-management strategies (e.g., self-instructions), or provide trainer-directed instruction. Unlike the traditional job coaching model, the trainer teaches the individual to use self-management skills to cope with changing situations. Program staff do not do the work for the individual, as each person must assume responsibility for his or her assigned job duties.

Stage 3 This phase focuses on fluency, maintenance of learned skills, and adjustment to changing on-the-job demands. As the worker nears mastery of the required job duties, Phase 3 begins. Central to this phase is the "thinking process" depicted in Figure 1.6. Based on supervisor feedback from the previous day, the worker uses improvement contracts to establish a short-range plan to solve the problems, implements the plan, self-evaluates his or her performance, states any adjustments that are needed in either the plan or his or her actual performance and then repeats the cycle.
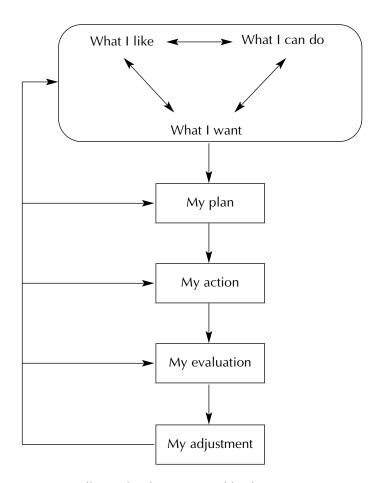

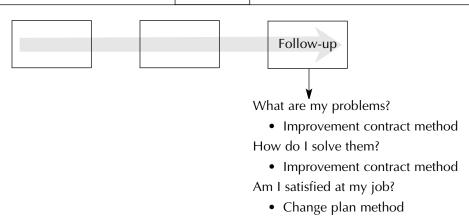Figure 1.6.   Self-Directed Employment process of thought.

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[ ]          [ ]          [ Follow-up → ]
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What are my problems?
- Improvement contract method

How do I solve them?
- Improvement contract method

Am I satisfied at my job?
- Change plan method

Figure 1.7.   Follow-up stage questions and methods.

Follow-Up   Individuals, as depicted in Figure 1.7, answer three questions during this phase: 1) What are my problems? 2) how do I solve the problems? and 3) am I satisfied at my job? During this phase, individuals continue to use their Improvement Contracts each week to identify and solve problems. In addition, the person completes a structured format to facilitate on-going career development. Through the use of a Change Plan, which is completed biannually, the individual compares what he or she wants with what is available at the job site. If discrepancies exist, the person implements a plan to remove the discrepancies. This may involve, for instance, getting another job, securing a promotion, or earning more pay.

Who Answers the Self-Directed Employment Questions?

The profile in Table 1.3 differs substantially from the results in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2. In Phase Three, the individual with disabilities answers all of the questions. Employment specialists and job-site personnel do not answer any of the questions,

Table 1.3.   Who answers the self-directed employment questions with the Phase Three stage of supported employment?

Self-determination methodology question	Individual with disabilities	Employment specialist	Jobsite co-worker or supervisor
What are the worker's job, task, and characteristic preferences and interests?	yes	no	no
What are the worker's skills and limits?	yes	assists	assists
Does the available job match the worker's interest and preferences?	yes	assists	assists
Does the available job match the worker's skills and limits?	yes	assists	assists
What job accommodations are needed?	yes	assists	assists
Can the worker do the job?	yes	assists	assists
How does the worker do the job?	yes	assists	assists
What are the worker's problems and how are they solved?	yes	assists	assists
Who establishes the on-the-job support network?	yes	assists	assists
Who determines if the worker should leave this job?	yes	assists	assists

but they do assist the individual with answering nine of the ten questions. The individual with disabilities substantially answers all of the questions. Table 1.3 shows how decision making shifts from the employment specialists–directed answers in Phase Two. In Phase Three, both the staff and job-site personnel facilitate answers. They set the occasion for the individual to determine what to do. These results indicate that Phase Three programs do operate in a self-directed manner. Why? The individual with disabilities answers the questions—not staff or co-workers. Rather than others making the decisions, the voice of the person with disabilities is heard and acted upon.

SUMMARY

Supported employment practices have evolved through three distinct phases. The methodology has gone from staff telling the person what job he or she will do to listening to what each individual wants to do. Although the methodology has changed, the purpose of supported employment remains the same. The heart of supported employment lies in the strength of a very simple concept: Individuals with disabilities can obtain and maintain employment in competitive positions with planned support.