

Increasing the Expectation of Employment through Discovery and Customized Work Experiences

**Ellen Condon, Transition Consultant NCDB;
Project Director, University of MT, Rural Institute**

Does All mean All?

**Including students with
significant disabilities
including deaf-blindness
and ensuring access**

Starting the Conversation about Work

- Don't wait until the first Transition Meeting!
- Reference what same age peers are doing for chores, responsibilities, to earn and use money;
- Explain that jobs can be created based on who a person is and what an employer needs; examples help!
- One step at a time.

Defining Discovery

A process to uncover who this student is in terms of where they are most who they are.

- Interests, preferences, motivators;
- Strengths and skills;
- What the student does and how they do it;
- Supports offered and needed;
- What environments enable the student to contribute most?
- Impact of disability.

Characteristics of Discovery

- Optimistic
- Nonevaluative
- Descriptive and factual
- References a student's whole life
- Information is gathered in places and activities that are meaningful to the student
- Input from people who know the student well

Discovery and Person Centered Planning

Discovery

We interview people who know the student well to capture factual information.

We conduct observations to double check what we think we know about the student and to gather richer information.

Person Centered Planning

People who know the student well are gathered together to share what they know about them to guide planning

Information we typically collect

KB likes to watch Veggie Tales on TV and likes stuffed animals.

Discovery Uncovers More

When the video is about to end KB maneuvers herself to the TV and slaps the video back into the VCR.

Mom stated that it took KB awhile to like the stuffed animals. KB uses the animals to communicate that she is tired by pressing the button on the pink dog's foot to play the lullaby song. KB has 10 different stuffed dogs that have different music selections.

Discovery Tools

Interview people who know them well-

Teasing out factual information

Observations-factual and without evaluation

Spending time- with the student where they are most comfortable

Descriptive Writing

Translation of information- into Ideal Conditions, Strengths & Skills and Tasks.

Discovery for Students

- A point in time;
- Outcomes or purpose differ based on age
(chores or activities at home, community or school, an individualized work experience, or the first paid job);
- Not as time intensive for students as adults;
- Revisited annually;
- Add pieces of information throughout the year;
- More likely to be conducted by a team;
- Family involvement;
- Can be woven into what schools already do.

Importance of a well matched experience

- Work experiences provide information about competence and potential to students, families, support staff and the community.
- A well matched experience builds confidence, higher expectations of employment potential;
- A Poorly matched experience can lead to perception of a student who needs lots of support, direction, physical assistance.

Ideal Conditions

- Either select a work experience site that meets the conditions or negotiate those conditions with an employer.
 - Environment-lighting, acoustics, proximity to others, predictability of environment;
 - Accommodations or support needed;
 - Time of day, length of shift, timing and specifics of breaks;
 - Work materials, types of tasks, flow to tasks, time demands of tasks, transition between tasks.

Strengths and Skills

- Personal Attributes;
- Special training or experiences;

Preferences and Interests

- Has this student had adequate experiences to demonstrate clear preferences and interests?
- Do they have mobility or communication to express their preferences and interests?

Tasks

Tasks are the foundation of a customized work experience (not job titles)

- Tasks we have seen the student perform, or
- Tasks we know they could learn with instruction;
- For a student who uses technology such as switches- what could that technology do for tasks?
- Activities a student does at home, in the community.

**Is there a risk to
generic work
experiences?**

Discovery Pilots (slide 1 of 2)

- Arkansas, Utah, Montana;
- How does Discovery increase expectations for students with significant impact of disability including deaf-blindness?
- How does Discovery for students look different than Discovery for adults?

Discovery Pilots (slide 2 of 2)

- How does Discovery inform Pre-ETS activities?
- Are there unique aspects to Discovery for students with deaf-blindness?
- How does Discovery fit within Transition Services?
- Who is responsible for Discovery with students?
- What skills and credentials does someone providing Discovery to students need?

About NCDB

- The National Center on Deaf-Blindness is a Technical Assistance and Information Dissemination Center
- Our goal is to improve services, educational results, and quality of life for children who are deaf-blind
- Work closely with state deaf-blind projects and other partners across the country
- Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs

Nationaldb.org

<https://transition.ruralinstitute.ume.umt.edu/>



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