Understanding the Employer’s Side of Customized Employment

Information for providers to assist individuals and families to access customized employment
Using a Concept Portfolio for Presenting CE to Employers

A sales tools to negotiate customized jobs

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The Concept Portfolio

The concept portfolio is basically a sales tool, similar to a “pitch book” used in generic sales, that can be used by job developers to communicate CE to employers, to pace presentations, to clarify essential selling points and to provide a visual confidence builder.
The Concept Portfolio

In order to develop a Concept Portfolio, it is first necessary to determine those aspects of CE and your agency’s services that will be offered to potential employers.

Remember, CE requires negotiation and in negotiation one should never put everything on the table at the onset of interactions with employers.
Why is a Concept Portfolio useful?

- It represents a shift from an agency marketing strategy to an individualized, customized marketing strategy.
- Traditional expectations of employers make it difficult for applicants with significant disabilities to benefit from typical strategies.
- Helps make sure that job developers give consistent info to employers.
- Teaches employers how to think about customization.
Why is an Concept Portfolio useful?

• Helps explain natural supports
• Provides additional avenues for giving information to employers beyond verbal explanation.
• Requires agencies to come to terms with the manner in which they support and represent individuals, use language and negotiate.
• Outlines Essential Selling Points
Structure of the Concept Portfolio

- Images – important that they say what we intend to convey
- Narrative summaries of information
- Information about the school/agency
- Support strategies
- Essential selling points
Alternative Platforms for the Concept Portfolio

• *Show-File* presentation binder
• Laptop computer
• Tablet (iPad, Samsung, etc)
• Brochure
• Information packet
Alternate Platforms
Outline for a Concept Portfolio

1. Introduction your agency/school
   - Introduce your agency -- brochure, fact sheets - briefly in one page

2. Explain the Concept: Customized Employment
   - “We match applicant skills with employer needs”
   - Give examples through images
Outline for a Concept Portfolio

3. Explain how we do what we do
   - Use portfolio to explain employer–employee supports and the seven phase sequence

4. Wrap up with a outline of services offered
Additional considerations

• Taking photos
• Assuring variety
• Clarifying your message
• Layout, length and formatting
• Focusing on performance
• Remembering to “hold back” items for negotiation
**MG&A**: Twenty five years of serving employers and persons with disabilities
We match job seeker skills
With employer needs.....

The people we represent have unique skills to contribute to your business.

Our job is to determine whether you have specific needs which match these skills.

If a match is identified, a job description is customized to suit both you and the applicant with a disability.
Customized Employment

The US Department of Labor is encouraging employers and applicants to consider negotiating an employment relationship when current job descriptions and other expectations create a barrier. This concept is known as *customized employment*. 
Business Focus for Customized Employment

**Unmet Workplace Needs:**
This area focuses on tasks that need to get done but are not getting done in the way the employer would like. It also can include tasks that have not been performed but need to be.

**Tasks better performed by others:**
This area focuses on aspects of jobs that might better be performed by others at a lower pay grade. This option can directly save money for employers.

**Specific benefit to enhance business:**
This area focuses on workplace needs for additional productivity in specific tasks. It must be matched with job seeker’s specific competencies.
Stocking check-out islands, assisting advertising, un-boxing electronic equipment, etc.
Mailroom assistance and inter-office delivery
Inventory Control tasks
Targeted maintenance and cleaning
Tasks providing assistance to reception, professionals, manager and sales
Sorting and filing of excess paperwork
Spot cleaning to reduce “slip and falls”
Tour and Needs Analysis

Before any agreement is made, we offer a free needs assessment.

We can either observe your various business procedures, or we can assist you to do so, to identify potential needs within your company.
Customized Employment targets specific worksite issues:

- Episodic duties
- Slower components of tasks
- Back-ups/Bottlenecks
- Material/tool supply
- Interruptions
- Additional assistance to meet high work demands
- Unattended materials/products
- Waste/scrap materials
- Misplaced materials/goods
- Dusty, broken, dirty goods/materials
- Unsafe or unsightly conditions
- Inconvenient location of materials
Job Analysis: The foundation of success

We focus on:

- The way you do things
- The *means* you use to train and support employees
- The *people* you assign for supervision..
Job site supports to both employer and employee
Benefits to employers and employees

To Employers
- Assistance in identifying workplace needs that might be met by applicants
- Identification of support providers, as necessary, for customized employees
- Recruitment and matching of the skills of applicants to employer needs
- Assistance in customizing job roles for current employees who become disabled

To Employees:
- In-depth discovery of the applicant’s strengths, needs and interests
- Customized planning assistance to target potential employers and contributions
- Representation assistance to negotiate customized relationships
- Resource identification to pay for necessary supports
Conducting an Employer Needs/Benefits Analysis

Developing the Employer’s side of the “needs template” for customizing job descriptions
Unbundling demand

Employers have typically met needs by bundling demands into job descriptions.

Job seekers with complex lives often don’t have the “whole package” to offer.

Customized Employment allows employers to “unbundle” demand and to take advantage of discrete competencies.
Employer Needs Analysis

All workplaces have unmet needs, even when fully staffed, but particularly in difficult economic times.
Employer Needs Analysis

Employers can turn each unmet need into a task.

1. Excess data entry
2. Assisting receptionist during heavy calling
3. Performing episodic duties: collating for meeting
4. Augmenting low producing employees
5. Relieving employees during break
Each unique workplace has needs

During Job Development, the Job Developer negotiates to perform a Needs Analysis
Conducting an Employer Needs Analysis

This process can be conducted in four ways:

- As a part of individualized job development, following the tour, one employer at a time
- As a part of informational, “discovery” interviews with employers, concurrent with individualized job development
- As an effort to assist a business (larger) to adopt internal customization
- As a part of general activity in the community by job developers, family members and job seekers
Job based on an Informational Interview

Identified general needs in:

• Reception
• DJs area
• Advertising
• Station manager’s office
Episodic task: Setting up a drum set
Slower component/Task better performed by others: Inserting background greenery
Material supply: Stocking cash registers
Unsafe conditions: Sweeping laminate chips
Chris was assisted to apply to a large managed care organization
Zon was employed as a result of an informal, community needs analysis done with a neighboring employer.
Preparing for Negotiations with Employers

Representing job seekers for customized employment
A Typical Job Development Process

Sales focused steps...

• Prospecting: research and preparation
• Making employer contacts: getting in the door
• Holding the initial meeting: making your pitch to explain CE
• Follow-up negotiations – employer needs analysis
• Closing the deal
Determining who to contact

In customized employment avoid personnel and HR. Target decision-makers in the company, usually the person at the top.
Getting the Appointment

Decide on the type of initial contact to use to get an appointment for a face-to-face meeting

☐ Third party connection
☐ Informal Context
☐ Drop-in Visit
☐ Telephone Contact with letter of self-referral
☐ E-mail Contact (only in certain cases)
Making your pitch: Initial Meeting

• Thoroughly plan for the initial meeting, focusing on fulfilling all the critical components.
• Develop a proposed outline and "flow" for the meeting.
• Get ready, practice for, and conduct the initial meeting.
The Role of the Portfolio

A presentation portfolio is a sales tool that can address the first four components of the initial meeting – introductions, explaining CE, explaining employer services and supports, and use a visual resume to introduce the job seeker.
Cutting the deal: Follow-up negotiations

- Learn about and assess the company through a Tour and Needs Analysis
- Offer in-depth information about the training, facilitation and support procedures which are to be offered to the employer.
- Match and negotiate the job seeker’s conditions for success
It is recommended that developers not try to close in the initial, or possibly even after the second, meeting with employers.

The “close” is appropriate and necessary when it is felt that the employer has enough information to make a positive decision about a customized job.