

## EMPLOYMENT

Whether it be paid employment or volunteering, giving of oneself is critical to developing self-esteem and feeling a part of the community. This holds true for people with disabilities. More and more people with disabilities are finding their place within the working world. Public policy recognizes that those with disabilities can and should have the opportunity to work. Employers are starting to see the tangible and intangible benefits of employing people with disabilities. What is your vision in the working world for the person with a disability that you support? What is his or her dream? What type of job promotes the person's strengths?

*Beverly has visual and hearing impairments in addition to her developmental disability. Despite these barriers, it has always been apparent that she loves to be busy working and earning money for her favorite activity, shopping. Beverly was found eligible for an employment program and was placed in a cleaning position. She did not perform well and was quickly labeled as "uncooperative", "not motivated to work" and was pulled from the position. Reassigned to a new employment counselor, the cleaning position was found to be a poor job match for Beverly. She could not see the dirt and often could not hear instructions over the noise of the vacuum cleaner. Beverly found a new position in a candle factory constructing boxes that held the candles. This position required her to rely on her tactile abilities, rather than sight and sound. She has held this job for several years, receiving pay increases due to increased productivity.*

The person with a disability may or may not have had employment opportunities in the past. If not, you probably have a good idea about what might work based on his or her strengths and support needs. If he or she has been employed, it is important to capture the information on whether it is positive or negative, for future reference.

You may also wish to consider how frequently the person can work, what time of day is best, what employment supports will be needed and the workplace culture that best fits his or her wants, needs and desires.

Work provides each of us with the opportunity to discover who we are and allows us to participate in something that is meaningful and valued. For people with disabilities, it is not the inability to work that keeps them out of the workforce, but often a lack of creativity on how to approach the world of work.

*The following tools may help you plan. Select those that work best for your situation or create your own. Provide as much detail as you can. Add extra pages if you need to.*



**Tools**

Work History

Accomplishments, Skills & Attributes

Ideal Work Day

Ideal Work Week

Work Factors

Things to Consider About Employment

Employment Questions



## WORK HISTORY

DATES	PLACE	ROLE



# SPECIAL SKILLS

List personal successes and the special skills the person with a disability brings to a job . . . . .

ACCOMPLISHMENTS	SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES





## Imagine an Ideal Work Day

__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	
__AM/PM	



# Imagine an Ideal Work Week

*DAY of WEEK*

<i>TIME</i>					
___AM/PM					
___AM/PM					
___AM/PM					
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# WORK FACTORS

List your thoughts about the following work factors . . . .

<p><b>Workplace Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quiet / Active</li><li>• Social / reserves</li><li>• Neat / cluttered</li></ul>	<p><b>Logistics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transportation</li><li>• Training</li><li>• Daily Support</li><li>• Breaks</li></ul>
<p><b>Wants</b></p>	<p><b>Needs</b></p>



## *Things to Consider About Employment*

*Describe ...*

### **The Ideal Workplace Culture**

- Personal rewards
- Environment
- Aspirations
- Mission/commitments
- Social “norms”

### **Strengths/Attributes**

- Preferences
- Achievements
- Learning style
- Initiative
- Tasks & responsibilities
- Physical, emotional & intellectual capacities

### **The Ideal Supports**

- Belonging/membership
- Managing tasks & responsibilities
- Supervision
- Instruction—methods & styles
- Expertise needed in workplace
- Reinforcement & confidence

### **Practical Requirements**

- Financial needs & expectations
- Travel distance & transportation
- Schedules & routines





