



What should we expect from a Job Coach/Employment Specialist?

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Is work the most important in life?

NO.

BUT IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF LIFE
THAT WE IN HUMAN SERVICES **ARE LEAST
SUCCESSFUL AT HELPING OUR CONSTITUENCY
ACHIEVE!**

Joe Marrone, Institute for Community Inclusion (ISI)



"The Flow-Trough Model"

- It was believed that a person had to get 'ready' to work and that there were prerequisite skills that were necessary for successful employment
 - The focus is on training skills first and then placing people into jobs
- **But the model has not worked as few people actually make it through the model**

(Storey 2000)



Vocational rehabilitation: Status

“Most OECD countries offer special employment in a sheltered environment, be it in sheltered workshops, special businesses or protected segments in ordinary companies (...) **While sheltered employment increasingly is considered inappropriate for large numbers of people with disabilities and most countries would prefer to see it replaced by supported employment-type initiatives, empirically there are no signs of any significant cutbacks yet (...) attempts to raise transition rates have been successful only in a few cases.**” (OECD 2003:114)



Supported Employment

- Individualized job search
- Job development to get job match
- Employment specialist:
 - Clients' preferences
 - Employers needs

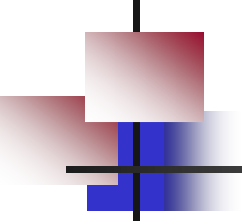
(Carlson & Rapp 2007, Bond et al. 2008)



Good practice Supported Employment

Supported Employment for people with disabilities in the EU and EFTA-EEA – good practices and recommendations in support of a flexicurity approach (Cowi, WRI, EUSE 2011)

- Key area for success and what made particularly good examples was the role of a SE agency and in particular the intervention of a job coach.
- In most of the examples, the jobs were specially created, showing that job development is a very important aspect of SE.
- In all events the job coach facilitated the final sustained, paid job outcome. **It is likely that in all the examples, the disabled job seeker would not have got the paid job outcome without the support given by the job coach.**



Main findings – good practices:

Job coach is the key

- Professional guidance through the systems and opportunities; matchmaker to make market work
- Organisational anchoring of Job coach is important to perform role
- On-the-job support – key for employers
- Job development – pro active approach
- Importance of frameworks

(Cowi, WRI, EUSE 2011)



Main findings of Compendium of good practices

- Short term Work Experience Placement was beneficial to the employer and prospective employee. The job coach was able to determine how much support would be required, and to observe if the particular work place and job tasks constituted a good job match.
- The main reason for the employers' positive attitude was the assurance that the job coach would take a proactive part in the inclusion process, so that the responsibility would not be left to the employer alone
- In many situations, employers genuinely want to accommodate a disabled person; they simply need practical help and guidance.
- Close co-operation between Job Coach and external services, as well as individual and pro-active support to the employer and the employee



Recommendations for service providers

- Clear competence requirements for job coaches
- Formal training of job coaches – protect title
- Ensure realistic case load
- Ensure reasonable remuneration of job coach
- Main tasks of job coach to include:
 - knowledge of entre relevant support system
 - establish good job-match
 - pro active dialogue with employers
 - job retention and career development
 - involvement of relevant external professional support services



The typical VR system

- Principal (employment, insurance, social)
- Agents (often sheltered sector actors)
 - Pre-vocational training
 - Sheltered workshops
 - Daily Care Centres
 - Activation Programmes
 - + Supported Employment

The general picture (Spjelkavik, Hagen, Härkäpää 2011, Spjelkavik 2013)

- Many actors, weak coordination in the support system
 - Many into activity, few into paid jobs
- Principal – agent model: 'Train – place' basis
 - Financially rewarding for service providers, who are also strong political lobbyists helping to cement the model
- Generally weak knowledge on Supported Employment
 - National SE organisations lack political influence and are part of the pre-vocational training system
- Little attention in the public support system to supply workplaces with an 'inclusion expertise'
 - More reliance on 'activity', pre-work training, flow-through schemes, and wage subsidises



Strengths of Nordic SE

- All Nordic countries have services to promote inclusion in regular employment for people with reduced work capacity that resemble SE
- Although SE in the Nordic countries have not had any great dissemination, a series of evaluations and various reports show that SE represents a very valuable alternative to the dominant services available to assist people with reduced work capacity to get a job in the regular labor market (Spjelkavik, Hagen, Härkäpää 2011, Spjelkavik 2013)



Weaknesses of Nordic SE

- Unclear and weak orientation towards ordinary working life
 - Many Work Experience Placements, but lack of methodology
 - Many clients fall out of work; unclear results and long-term effect
 - Job Coaches have more expertise on clients than on workplaces
 - Difficulty to achieve coordination and parallel support
 - Individual follow-up in accordance to 'Place – Train' is weakly defined and lacks funding
- Many SE-services are short-term or time-limited
- Job Coaches lack possibilities for skills development based on knowledge-based SE



What makes a good Job Coach?

The reason for clients and employers to participate in Supported Employment: Support

- To be respected and included in a workplace, and have both rights and duties as other employees
- To get wage and be treated like other employees and be part of a work environment
- Takes responsibility for the inclusion process:
- knows the right way through the system and how to resolve difficulties to achieve the goal
- provides assistance and opportunities for career development
- helps with paperwork and administration that are difficult for both employee and employer
- provides support at the workplace, helps to solve practical problems and helps to structure/adapt the work



Common conclusions

- Improve Job Coach competence
 - professional educations
- Increase the use of ordinary work (place – train)
- Higher attention to quality in process and results
- More attention to results based financing
 - but avoid creaming and locked-in effects

(Spjelkavik, Hagen, Härkäpää 2011, Spjelkavik 2013)



“What is the major challenge that Supported Employment faces today?”

“To actually implement the characteristics of Supported Employment”

Rush & Hughes (1990)