

## Discovering Personal Genius

The Foundation for Customizing Employment

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## The Challenge

- Creating lasting, satisfying, person-directed, employment beyond the confines of traditional job development



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## Activity

1. Align with someone in the room who you don't know
2. Find out 3 things about them that aren't obvious
3. Do this without asking any questions



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## Activity



4. Hint: Have a Conversation
5. Report Back

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## Activity Debrief

- It's hard to find out about someone without asking questions
- Think Conversation, not Interrogation

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## Activity Debrief

- It's best to let the environment guide our Discovery
- If we "live into the answers" the chances of getting an acquiescent response is lessened

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## Hanging Out With Intent (HOWI)

- Assistance NOT assessment
- Inventory real environments
- Do Not rely on data from segregated environments



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## Hanging Out With Intent (HOWI)



- One place leads to another; One person leads to another –
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Acquaintances
  - Professionals
  - Strangers

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## Hanging Out With Intent (HOWI)

- Discovery is a structured process
- We are not here to ask “What job or business would be best?”
- The more folks involved, the more diversity of activities & locations

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## Hanging Out With Intent (HOWI)

- The more activities & locations, the more diversity of thought
- The best way to get a great idea is to get lots of ideas

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## Exercise

- List 2 things most people don't know about you
- Where & when are you at your best?
- Where & when do you have the highest support needs?

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## Exercise

- Other than your immediate family, who knows you best?
- What gets you out of bed in the morning, besides work?

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## Assessment

- Vocational evaluation is not functional
- Data taken in segregated settings is false
- Checklists do not offer a diversity of choice

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## Assessment

- Unpaid work experiences are often stereotypical
- Are you at your best when being tested, or rather when you are exploring familiar and/or new places, people & things?

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## Assessment



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## Paying for Assessment

- VR, WIA, Schools (IEP), DD and MH day program can all pay for career development
- A PASS can purchase career exploration
- Personal budgets should contain hours and \$ for discovering vocational themes

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## What We're Looking for

- The ideal conditions of employment
- Strengths, interests, supports, contributions
- Relationships that matter & that help us get lots of ideas

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## How We Look for It

- Consider a listening circle
- Know the critical concerns (Agenda items)
- One person speaks at a time & we WAIT even if there's a pause in the conversation



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## How We Look for It



- Negative comments are discouraged
- Focus on facts, not speculation

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## How We Look for It

- “Overlong” talking by one person is discouraged
- Circle goes around until everyone has had an opportunity to talk
- Circle ALWAYS leaves with assignments

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## Relationship Mapping

- Identify people known to the job seeker
- Identify people known to the team who know the community



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## Relationship Mapping



- Create a community inventory of both formal & informal associational life
- Start visiting places & people of relevance

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## Developing a Plan

Discovery should lead to a solid Profile that captures the essence of the individual:

- What works & what doesn't
  - How will you know if things don't work until you've tried them?
- Best settings; support needs; talents

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## Developing a Plan

- What home is like; demonstrations of chores & hobby tasks, revealed Interests, the impact of disability
- What other things we need to observe or investigate both formally & informally

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## Going Where the Dream Makes Sense

As a course of action evolves  
(using the team process), visiting  
others who have the same interests is  
often a valuable step in collecting  
possible career information

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## Back to the Plan

- Once the information is collected, NOT before, we begin to ask about possible business or wage job ideas.
- Create a Job Development Plan

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## Back to the Plan

- Design a Personal Portfolio or Resume
- Create a Job Seeker's Relationship Map
- Develop a list of potential employers or products & services for a small business

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## Back to the Plan

- The rule of three
- Each team member develops at least 3 good ideas
- Throw out the 1st; it followed the path of least resistance

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## Back to the Plan

- Avoid the 5 jobs meant for people with disabilities
- Develop a prospecting list & schedule

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## Back to the Plan



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## Back to the Plan

### Best Practice Still Entails:

- Quality job or business development with the person
- Job analysis & discrete task analysis
- Training plan for their new employee
- Natural support analysis
- Consultative approach

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## Clint's Creations

- Love of Flowers
- Gardening
- Family Support
- Outreach to Florists & Suppliers
- Personal Budget from CP Center

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## Chef Kevin

- Loves cooking
- Max 6-week tenure in any job
- No family support
- Bosses are not OK
- Loves to Work

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## Tim: Fisheries Specialist

- Works best independently
- Little work history
- Shows frustration vigorously
- Bosses are not OK
- Loves Animals
- Strong work ethic

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## Jake: House Painter

- Works best independently
- No work history
- Shows frustration vigorously
- Unsteady on a ladder
- Loves to paint
- Loves the outdoors

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## Rich: Spanish Language Publisher

- Works best independently
- Immigration work history
- Shows frustration vigorously
- Knows Latino community
- Loves language
- Brilliant thinker

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## Turena's Reflexology

- Works best independently
- Health Concerns regarding a day job
- New Age
- Health Conscious
- Self Starter
- Creative
- People Oriented

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## Mellowny: Artist

- Works best around other artists
- Desired day job that fed her passion
- Avoidance of starving artist
- Creative & diverse thought
- Love of learning
- Likes being in business
- Spiritual

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