



VCU AUTISM CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

Lunch and Learn:

Best Practices, Tips, and Resources to
Support the Employment of Adults with
Disabilities

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ABOUT US



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MADDY
DUNIVIN



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JENNICA
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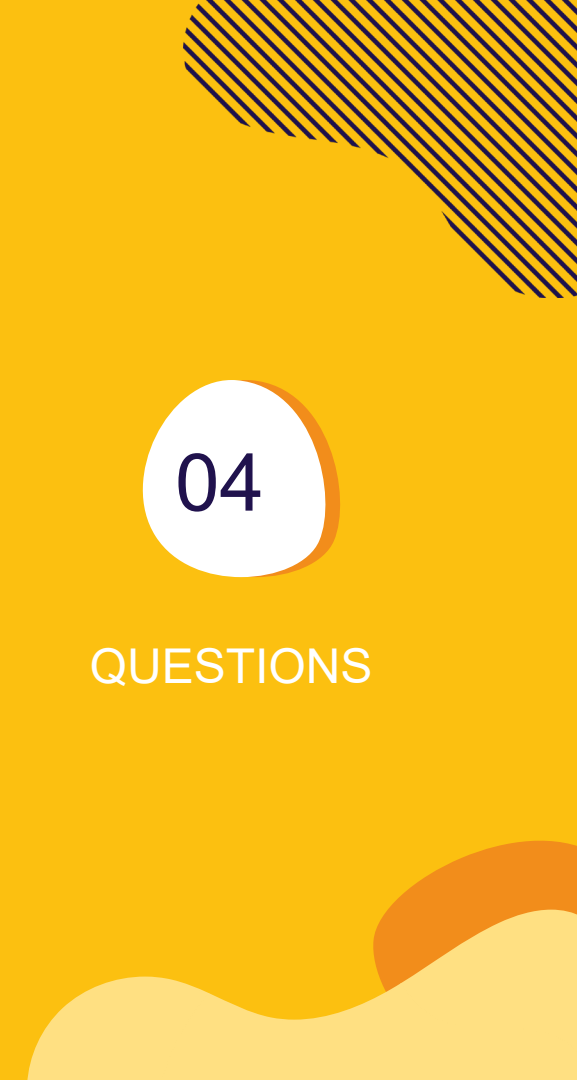
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01

INTRODUCTION

FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS

VCU-RRTC

Virginia Commonwealth
University-Rehabilitation
Research and Training
Center

DARS

Department for Aging
Rehabilitation Services

ESO

Employment Services
Organization

SE

Supported Employment

PWD

Person with a Disability

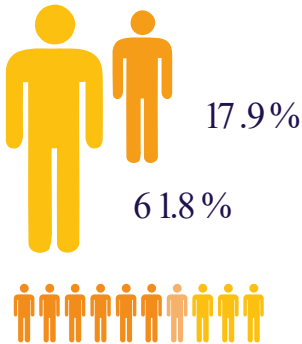
PWOD

Person without a Disability

CURRENT LABOR FORCE



- 1 PERSONS WITHOUT A DISABILITY
- 2 PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
FOR PWD IS
TWICE
THE RATE OF PWOD

(US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021)



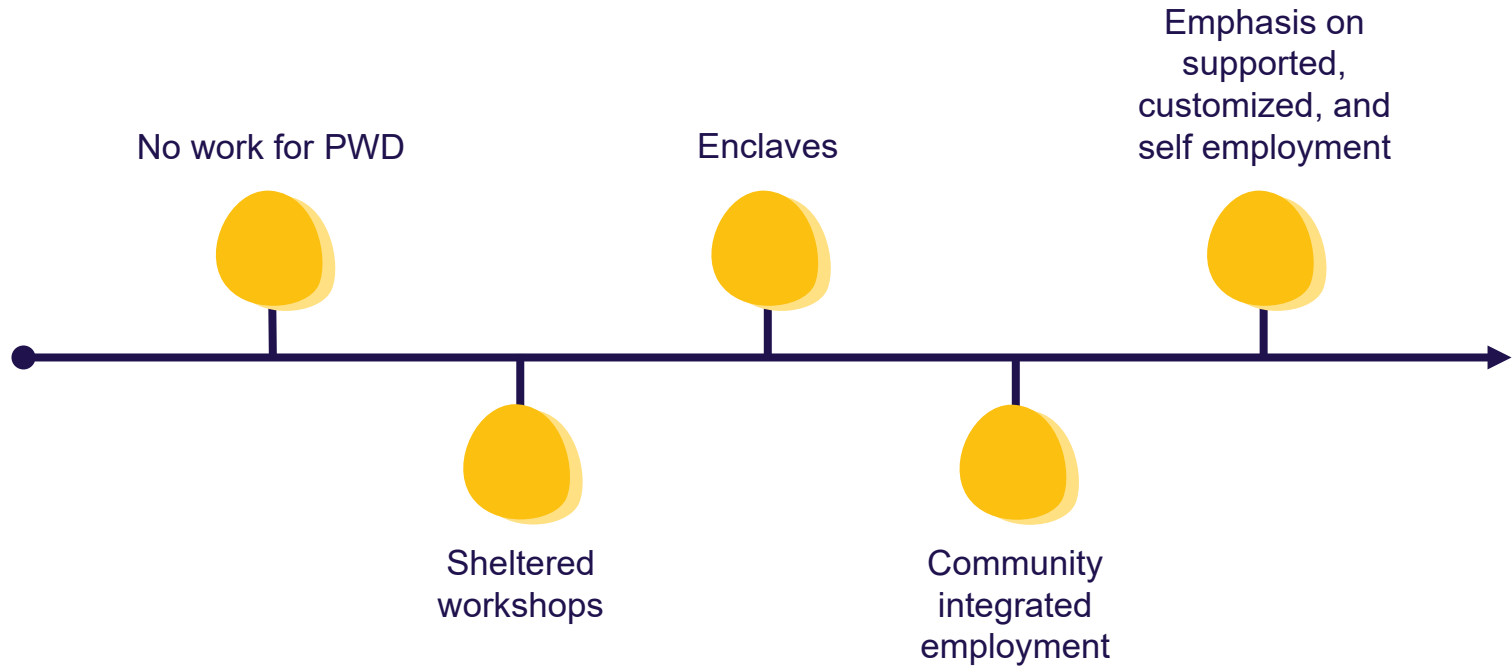
OUR MISSION

Business Connections at VCU is committed to providing **person centered** and customer directed supported and customized employment services to assist individuals with **all types of disabilities** in seeking and obtaining **community based competitive employment** with a focus on job retention.

OUR VISION

To provide a valuable demonstration of how community based integrated, competitive employment can become a reality for all individuals who desire to work by their strengths.

WE'VE COME SO FAR...



BUT WE HAVE SO MUCH FURTHER TO GO!



02

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

PROCESS OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT



1

SITUATIONAL
ASSESSMENT



2

JOB
DEVELOPMENT



3

JOB SITE
TRAINING



4

FOLLOW
ALONG

WHAT IS A JOB COACH, ANYWAYS?

Supports individuals with disabilities
in obtaining a positive job match

1

On the job site trainer to identify client
strengths, implement compensatory supports,
and promote mastery in task acquisition

2

Collaborates the client, employer,
DARS, and support network

3






SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT



A trial work experience is used to assess the client in an integrated employment setting, with a focus on interests, skills, abilities, and to determine the following factors:

- Strengths
 - Barriers
 - Stamina
 - Skill set
 - Exposure to novel environments
 - Interpersonal skills
 - Potential compensatory strategies
- 

VERONICA

SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT



- 26 year old woman
- Loves Disney, animals and working with people
- Opened a case with DARS in high school
- Completed an internship training program at a local hospital
- Previous employment
 - Data entry (1 year)
 - Local grocery store (3 years)
- Lack of opportunity at previous position

JOB DEVELOPMENT



Results from Work Experience/Community Support are then used to obtain a positive jobmatch with these approaches:

- Community networking and collaboration
- Job carving and restructuring positions
- Employment proposals
- Established employer connections

Get creative - think outside the box with the employer!



VERONICA

JOB DEVELOPMENT



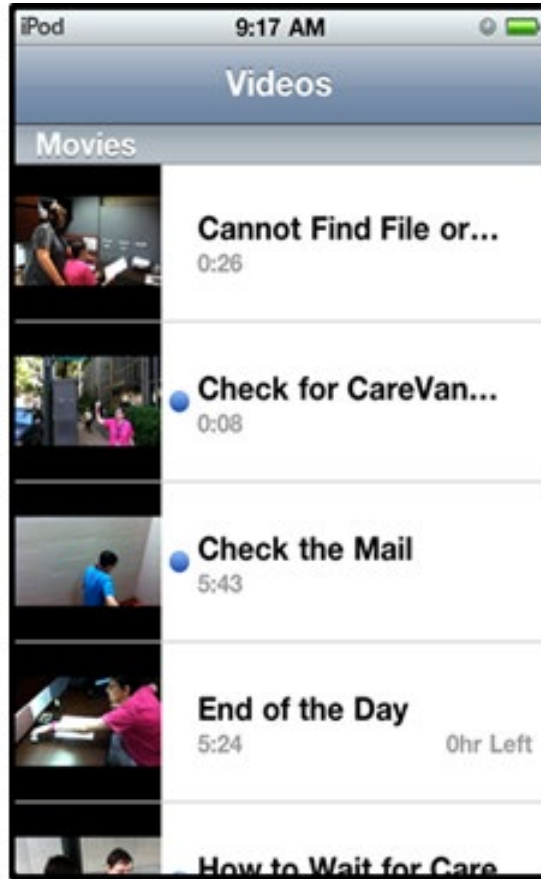
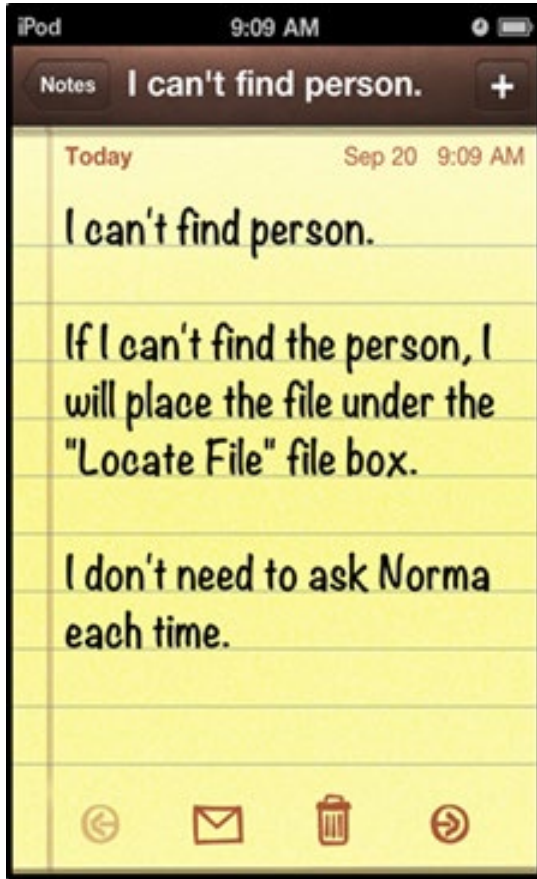
- *Goal: employment that utilized Veronica's clerical and customer service skills*
- Used interests and previous experiences
- Job coach used previous employer contact
- Met with employer to discuss potential employment opportunities
- Identified a position but the logistics weren't quite right for Veronica and her family
- Job coach negotiated the role so it was a great fit for all!

JOB SITE TRAINING



One the job training and supports, which includes:

- Create individualized supports that foster independence
- Provide education to co-workers and employer
- Identify co-worker(s) as a natural support
- Help new employee navigate work culture and establish daily routines
- Advocate on behalf of the employee for any necessary accommodations and supports



EXAMPLES OF TOOLS USED IN THE WORKPLACE

VERONICA

JOB SITE TRAINING

- **Employed!**
- Hospitality aid at a local rehabilitation and nursing center
- Uses clerical and customer service skills
- Works alongside co-workers without a disability
- Earning \$12 an hour; 25 hours a week
- Support during onboarding, initial job training, and individualized supports from job coach



FOLLOW ALONG

Once independence is reached, a fading plan will be introduced. The RRTC provides support for the life of the employment. What does this look like?

- Check in with the employee/employer at least 2x/month
- Job coach is available by phone or email daily
- Increased support can be added when
 - New routines occur
 - Change in management
 - Drastic change in hours or duties
 - Promotion
 - Regression

REAL WORK FOR REAL PAY



VERONICA
Employee

“It’s been great. Certainly takes a load off my shoulder in finding a place to work. My job coach has tried to work towards my skill set. I like the serenity of my new job.”



Bennett
Employer

“We’ve worked closely with he and his job coach. He asks appropriate questions, picks up on tasks quickly, and the work product has exceeded expectations!”



03

DEPARTMENT FOR AGING AND
REHABILITATIVE SERVICES (DARS)



HOW WE COLLABORATE WITH DARS

- ESO Services
- Benefits Counseling
- Monthly communication to ensure success and smooth provision of services
- Non-employment related services



DARS ELIGIBILITY



Physical,
mental, or
cognitive
impairment -
substantial
impediment to
employment

Be able to
benefit from
services - in
terms of
employment
outcome

Requires
services to
prepare for,
enter, and
engage/retain
employment

Eligible to work
in the U.S.



DARS Virginia Guide to Supported Employment

[https://vadars.org/essp/downloads/SEGuide/SEGuide15\(FinalProvider\).pdf](https://vadars.org/essp/downloads/SEGuide/SEGuide15(FinalProvider).pdf)

DARS CONTACT INFORMATION

DARS Central Office

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Sherrina Sewell (Greater Richmond District
Manager)



04
QUESTIONS?

THANKS!

Feel free to reach out with any additional questions:

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www.vcurrtc.org

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