

# TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT WEBINAR SERIES

---

Ellen Condon & Theresa Baldry  
University of Montana, Rural Institute  
Montana Deaf-Blind Project

<http://mtdeafblind.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/>

[www.facebook.com/groups/MontanaDBproject/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/MontanaDBproject/)

# Transition To Employment Webinar Series

- February 19, 2019
- Accessing CIE through a Customized Approach
  
- April 16, 2019
- Using the Strategies of Discovery to Learn about a Student's Strengths, Interests and Support Needs
  
- September 17, 2019
- Translating Information from Discovery into Characteristics of a Well-Matched Work Experience

# DISCOVERY ANSWERS THE QUESTION, “WHO IS THIS PERSON?”

---

Where are they at their best? What do they do? How do they do it? What motivates the person? Activities of daily life across environments....

# The Role of Discovery

The role of Discovery is to determine, in a non-comparative, non-competitive manner, the “strengths, needs and interests” of the individual.

In Discovery we refer to these aspects as *conditions for success, interests towards aspects of the job market and potential contributions.*

The role of Discovery is to understand who the student is...

# Strategies for Facilitated Discovery

- Conversation
- Interview
- Time together
- Observation
- Participation with the student in activities both familiar and novel
- Finally, Review of records

# Discovery Activities

- Time at the student's home
  - Routines
  - Parent, sibling interviews
  - Observations
- Time at school
  - Observations
  - Interviewing Intervener, VI, O&M, OT, PT, SLP
  - Multiple perspectives and multiple contexts
- Time in the Community

# Asking Questions

- What does the student do....
- Describe what that looks like....
- What supports are provided to them....
  - In an activity where they need a lot of support
  - In an activity where they need the least amount of support
- You are looking for narrative, descriptive, non-judgmental information
- What do you see that makes you think that....

# Help on being Descriptive

- Describe the picture you see in your head.
- By using action verbs, in the present tense, you will begin to think and write descriptively.
- Avoid using adverbs...they tend to be evaluative  
– what would you say instead of “quickly”?

## Descriptive notetaking during observation...

Descriptive writing scenario, continued:

*Scott put his morning schedule and his pair of socks on the bed. He took off his shirt and pulled the pants off from around his ankles. Scott sat down on his bed and put on his socks. He picked up a pair of underwear that his support staff had placed on his bed and put them on. Scott then opened the closet and took out a thermal shirt. He put the thermal on and then reached into the closet for pants. He took the pants off of the hanger, re-hung the hanger up in the closet, walked to his bed and sat down. Scott put his pants on, then stood up and began to button his pants. He buttoned his pants and put on his belt. He went to his bed, picked up a t-shirt (staff had placed it there) and put the shirt on. Scott walked to his nightstand, opened the drawer, and took out his PDA case. He walked to his bureau, took his PDA off of its charger and began to check messages from his dad, Gerry.*

## Leads to descriptive writing in the Profile.

*The following represents the notes morphed into the Profile section that relates to Scott's routine:*

*Scott currently is awakened by his parents or in-home support staff at approximately 6:30 AM during the week. However, a plan is being put in place for Scott to begin using an alarm clock to wake up on his own as he begins the school year. Jessica (support staff) has programmed Scott's PDA as a way to prompt him to wake up, as well as complete his routine. He often is awake prior to 6:30 and he plays video games on the Gameboy that sits on his night stand. Scott checks his PDA and/or a typed sheet of paper first thing each morning for a "to do" list of tasks. He locates clothes in his dresser and closet and puts them on, though occasionally he gets items such as underwear and pants out of order and needs to be reminded by his staff person.*

# Robust Description

- Identify the task being performed
- Describe the individual's performance of the task
- Describe necessary supports, accommodations and solutions
- Note potential connections and contributions by and with others
- Gauge the individual's interest in their performance of the task in descriptive terms

# Descriptive Writing Scenario

To help understand the distinction between descriptive writing and evaluative writing, consider the following traditional *evaluative* scenario of a young person who is cooking brownies in his kitchen.

*Damian can cook simple items with assistance. He cannot set the oven temperature independently and care should be taken to assure that he does not burn himself. He cannot read the directions on the box. Damian requires one-to-supervision to mix and prepare the brownies and to put them into the oven. He cannot be trusted to cut the brownies with a knife.*

# What do you know about Damian?

- His skills and strengths?
- His support needs?
- Tasks he can offer an employer?

# Descriptive Writing Scenario

When writing descriptively, we focus solely on the performance of the individual, using action verbs in the active tense. Here is an example of the same scenario written descriptively during observation:

*Damian selects the brownie mix from the pantry, finds a mixing bowl from the cabinet and removes a mixing spoon from the utensil drawer, after being reminded by a staff person. As the staff person reads the directions he opens the box, pours the mix into the bowl and continues to blend in ingredients. When he completes the mixing he pours the mixture in a glass pan following a gesture by the staff person. The staff person says, "What's next?" and Damian points to the oven thermostat. The staff person says, "Which button is for bake?" and Damian pushes the **Bake** button.*

# Descriptive Writing Scenario

Descriptive writing scenario, continued:

*Damian then begins to turn the thermostat and the staff person says, “Stop at 375.” As Damian nears 375, the staff person says, “That’s it” and he stops at a nearby indicator. The staff person says, “One more click” and Damian completes the setting. The staff person asks, “How long do we cook them?” and Damian says 30 minutes. Damian sets the timer similar to the oven. When the timer goes off, Damian puts an oven mitt on his right hand and opens the oven with his left. As he reaches in the staff person says, “Careful, everything is hot.” Damian grasps the pan and slides it out of the oven, keeping the container level. When the brownies have cooled, Damian removes a serving knife from the utility drawer and cuts the brownies into small squares with hand-over-hand assistance from the staff person.*

# What do you know about Damian?

- His skills and strengths?
- His support needs?
- Tasks he can offer an employer?

# What do you need to learn in Discovery?

## (1 of 3)

- If the end goal of Discovery for this student is to develop several well-matched work experiences, we need to know:
  - What will motivate the student to participate?
  - What tasks can they do?
  - When are they at their best?

# What do you need to learn in Discovery?

## (2 of 3)

- What are the characteristics of an environment that will work best?
  - Vision
  - Hearing
  - Communication
  - Physical work space
  - Social aspects to the workplace
- What are the characteristics of the work and tasks?
  - Flow to the tasks
  - Pace, precision required
  - Materials

# What do you need to learn in Discovery?

## (3 of 3)

- What supports will the student need at the experience?
  - Before it starts:
  - At the experience while they are learning the tasks:
  - Ongoing supports:
  - Considerations that may need to be negotiated up front:

Performance changes in well-matched positions. The context of where we get to know someone matters! A job trial matched to Jack's conditions showed different performance.

# Turning 'issues' and assumptions about support into Conditions:

He requires staff supervision at all times to be appropriate with women, avoid wandering off, and to remain on tasks.

Do to her lack of safety skills with strangers she needs to be in a supervised setting.

## Using Discovery to clarify support needs:

- Jack does best in an environment where the rules are clear and enforced
- Mostly male
- Working around the same few people daily
- Succinct instruction up front
- A variety of familiar tasks
- Physical tasks

## Clarifying support needs and ideal conditions:

An ideal condition of success is to have a predictable schedule and a coworker nearby to remind him to check his list if he looks lost or if he is not at his station.

An ideal condition for success is a workplace with familiar consistent coworkers and no interaction with unfamiliar people.

# Expanded Discovery

*Expanded Discovery* involves utilizing additional strategies such as internships and work experiences to gain additional information to enhance initial Discovery.

*Expanded Discovery* may also utilize post-secondary educational/training environments as a lens through which to see richer life activities for the individual.

# LET'S USE WORK EXPERIENCE

---

To get to know what each student can do and show them they can work in the community!

# Purpose of Work Experience

- Provide a foundation for the expectation of employment for all students
- Provide an array of experiences from which specific interests might emerge
- Provide increasing insight into necessary conditions for success and discrete contributions
- Provide information to guide curricular content in classrooms

# Building Skills during Work Experiences

- Communication skills
- Money management
- Time management
- Getting to and from work
- Understanding work expectations- timeliness, following rules, dress codes, break times, calling off work, requesting time off
- Adhering to a schedule
- Reading, writing, using a computer, math
- Learning specific job tasks

# Resources

- <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57fa78cd6a496306c83a2ca7/t/5830f850cd0f682710894569/1479604305325/Customized+Transitions.pdf>
- <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57fa78cd6a496306c83a2ca7/t/5830f70bb3db2be72dcccb400/1479603979455/Discovery+is.pdf>
- <http://www.marcgold.com/forms>



**Rural Institute**  
For Inclusive Communities

**The Montana Deaf-Blind Project is supported by grant #H326T180038 from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department.**