Effective supervision and career advancement of individuals with IDD

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Introduction

Many studies have found that people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) want to work in the community. When individuals with IDD share the reasons they want to work, these are: (a) earnings, (b) productivity, (c) the admiration of others, (d) the quality of social relationships.

People with IDD have also expressed the desire to do meaningful work, demonstrate their skills and talents, choose their own work hours, and to help the employee identify tasks that she needed to complete. The individual with IDD can convey whether the messages are being understood. Being concrete and positive helped to lay the groundwork for a working relationship where mutual understanding of what we had said. In fact, using simple words and an intensive paid 1:1 on-the-job support. While the literature contains rich knowledge of how employment service providers can support individuals with IDD and employers, there is limited literature directed towards employers themselves.

This poster highlights our experiences supervising individuals with IDD who are employed in the field of research and who receive both individualized supported instruction employment services and natural supports at the workplace.

Five Strategies for Effective Supervision of People with IDD

Effective supervision of employees with IDD is not wholly different from effective supervision of people without disabilities. The five strategies we have found most effective are these:

1. Use clear and consistent communication.
2. Get to know the individual and let the individual get to know you.
3. Facilitate building a support network of co-workers.
4. Work directly with the employee on a project.
5. Be aware of who supervises the employee on and off the job.

Effective supervision of employees with IDD is also faced with issues related to effective communication. The literature has found that people with IDD want to work in the community. When individuals with IDD share the reasons they want to work, these are: (a) earnings, (b) productivity, (c) the admiration of others, (d) the quality of social relationships.

One strategy that we found useful in our supervision was to hold the first meeting with the employee in the employee's workplace. During the first days of employment it is vitally important to understand the employee's work design. How to plan ahead and communicate your plan: How to plan ahead and communicate your plan:

1. Take steps to improve the employee's skills and abilities.
2. Help the employee become more efficient in his or her current responsibilities.
3. Build the employee's proficiency through using general office technology.
4. Take a long-term view of the employee's career.

Conclusion

Every employer is on a career path. In order to grow professionally, all employees should be expected to improve their skills and be expected to do so. It is no different for people with IDD. To help support their career development:

1. Take steps to improve the employee's skills and abilities.
2. Help the employee become more efficient in his or her current responsibilities.
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Four Tips to Support Career Advancement and Long-Term Job Satisfaction

Employees with IDD also face issues related to career advancement and long-term satisfaction in their work. Based on our experience, we have developed four tips to successfully lay the groundwork for professional advancement:

1. Take steps to improve the employee's skills and abilities.
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