



WHAT WORKS? – A guide for young people with learning difficulties in moving towards employment

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CONTENTS

- 5 HAVING A JOB IS IMPORTANT
- 6 TRANSITION PLANNING AND EMPLOYMENT
- 7 PERSON CENTERED PLANNING
- 9 LEARNING ABOUT JOBS AT SCHOOL OR COLLEGE
- 10 THINGS THAT ARE GOOD TO LEARN AT SCHOOL OR COLLEGE
- 12 THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK EXPERIENCE
- 13 HAVING A WORK AGREEMENT
- 14 THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED
- 16 GETTING A JOB WHEN YOU LEAVE USING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
- 19 OTHER SERVICES WHO CAN HELP WITH A JOB
- 20 THIS PROJECT
- 21 USEFUL GUIDES ABOUT EMPLOYMENT
- 22 USEFUL WEBSITES

THIS IS WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR STUDY TOLD US ABOUT WORKING:

"You get better skills out of it"

"Makes you not lazy and want to do things, learn things"

"Might be nervous at first"

"People might need help to have a job"

"Working most of the time, you won't be able to do the things you like doing, playing football"

"People look at you in a different way"

"Make new friends, something to do, have more money"

"I want a job, my sister has a job. I like working"

"You've got to work, can't just muck around. Helps pay for your house, for holidays"

HAVING A JOB IS IMPORTANT



Many people with learning disabilities say they want to work, and their families want them to have a job.



Having a job when you leave school or college can be very important:

- It gives you money to live
- You can meet people
- It can keep you busy during the day
- Most people work at some time.



TRANSITION PLANNING AND EMPLOYMENT



Transition means getting ready to leave school and thinking about what to do next. A Transition Plan is a way of saying:

- What you want to do next
- How you will get there
- Who will help you.



The Transition Plan gets updated every year, from Year 9.

There is a meeting to do it. The meeting is about you so lots of people can come to help:

- Your family
- Your teachers
- A careers advisor
- A social worker (if you have one)
- A health worker (if you have one).



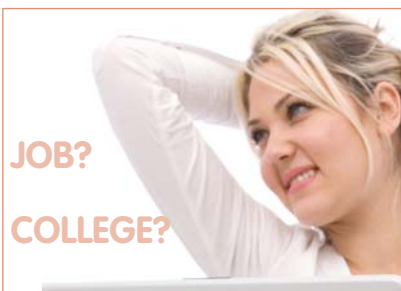
If you want a job when you leave school you need to make sure that 'getting a job' is in your Transition Plan. Having someone at the meeting who gets people jobs will help, if you want to get a job when you leave school.

PERSON CENTERED PLANNING



Some young people have a Person Centred Plan and maybe a Circle of Support (a group of people you know who can help you with your plan).

Saying in a Person Centred Plan that you want a job is another way to tell everyone what you want to do.



There are some important things you need to think about in your Person Centred Plan that will help if you want to get a job when you leave school:

What am I good at? What am I interested in? What have I done that might help me to get a job?

Geoff is good at emailing and typing – he might be able to get a job doing this in an office.

David is interested in fashion and clothes – he thinks he might like a job in a clothes shop.

Paula has done some work in a supermarket and has learned important things about how to work well.

Is having a job one of my hopes and dreams?
What kind of job do I want?

What can I do to let people know what I want and how I feel?

People need to know if they are to help me get a job.

PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

What would I want to have in a job?

Joan was a football fan and had lots of friends from there. She didn't want to work on a Saturday because that's when they play matches.

Bill needed to have his meals at the same time each day or he didn't feel well. A job would have to let him eat at the same times each day.

A job would have to be healthy and safe:

Jean has an arm that is hurt easily, so she wouldn't want a job that made her lift heavy things.

Paul wanted to lose weight, so he wanted a job that has a lot of walking about in it.

What do I need to learn or experience if I want to get a job?

Sean didn't know a lot about jobs and what you had to do. He should find out more about them while he is at school.

Lily wanted to try out a few jobs to see what she was good at and what she liked.

Will I need someone to help me find, learn and keep a job, like a job coach?

A job coach is a support worker who could help you find, learn and keep a job.

How might having a job affect any welfare benefits that I, and my family, get?

LEARNING ABOUT JOBS AT SCHOOL OR COLLEGE



Our project found that young people who were taught a lot about jobs while at school or college were more likely to:

- **Want** a paid job when they left
- **Get** a paid job when they left.



Learning about jobs at school or college can help you:

- Know what jobs there are
- Know what employers need you to do
- Know how to behave at work
- Think about what job you might want
- Make decisions about jobs
- Learn how to get on with people you work with
- Be more confident about having a job.



Not everyone can learn everything they need to know about a job before they get one. **This does not mean that they cannot get a job. It just means that they will need someone to help them find, learn and keep a job.**

**(The Job Coach) contacted the employer. They went with her to the benefit agency and went with her to the interview... she went for a working interview.
(Family member)**

THINGS THAT ARE GOOD TO LEARN AT SCHOOL OR COLLEGE



Understand what you are good at, and not so good at to do with work.

Find out about local jobs. What you learn needs to lead to real jobs that you might be able to get.

Understand who does what in local businesses. What would you be expected to do if you worked there?



As you learn more, you might want to change your idea of what is the best job for you. Keep thinking about what job you want and can do.

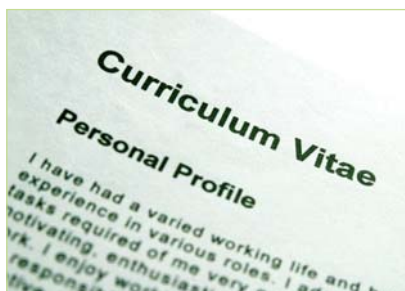


Do work experience, and think about what you have learned.

Learn useful work skills like time keeping, dressing right for the job, listening to instructions, working safely...

...understanding, and practicing how to speak to other workers, supervisors and customers properly.

THINGS THAT ARE GOOD TO LEARN AT SCHOOL OR COLLEGE



Write a **CV** – this stands for **C**urriculum **V**itae. It is a sort of letter that tells employers who you are, what you have done before and what you can do well.

Learn how to fill in an application form for a job.



Learn to write a letter of application that tells employers why you want a job with them.

Practice having an interview for a job. If you get a real one, prepare for it before you go.

There are some courses that you might be able to do through school or college that will help with all this:



- ASDAN Bronze Award – World of Work and the Workright programme
- OCR Entry Level Certificates in Job-seeking Skills and Preparation for Employment
- City and Guilds Entry Level Certificate in Preparing for Employment.

Ask your teachers or tutors if any of these would be right for you, if you want to get a job.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK EXPERIENCE



In our project we found that taking part in work experience (with support) helped young people to get a job when they left school or college.

A work experience placement works best when:

- It matches your needs and interests
- It is an ordinary job with an ordinary employer (not in school or college)
- You have someone who can help you find and learn the job and to help you settle in, if you need it (most people need help with some or all of this)
- That person needs to be good at getting just the right job for you. They are called a job coach or employment specialist.



Doing work experience while you are at school or college can help you to:

- Learn the right work skills in the real place – like time keeping, dressing right for the job, listening to instructions, working safely
- Become more independent and confident
- Understand what different jobs and workplaces are like, and whether you like them
- See how having a job works with the other things you do – like going out, meeting friends, leisure activities.

HAVING A WORK AGREEMENT



If you do a work experience placement, it's good to have an agreement. This says who will do what and covers things like:

- When you will start and finish the placement
- The hours you will work, and when you will take breaks
- What you have to do each day you are there
- The training you will get
- What you should **not** do while you are there
- How you should dress
- What you want other workers to know about you when you start
- How you will be supervised and how you will be told how well you are doing
- How you will get a reference from the employer if you have done well. This will help with applying for jobs.



THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED



When you have finished your work experience placement you will need to think about what you have learned. It will be good to think about:

- What you liked and disliked about the work
- What skills were needed to do this work
- What you were good at, and not so good at
- How well you got on with your work colleagues
- How you learned new tasks best
- What tasks would you like to do in a job.



THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED



- What type of workplace would you like to work in
- Any ideas you have for jobs and companies that you might want to work in
- Any support you must have if you do another placement, or get a paid job.



It will help if you keep a note of what you have done, and what you have learned. This is sometimes called a 'record of personal achievement'.

This will help you plan your next steps on the road to a job.



Remember to discuss your work experience, and what it has told you about the job you want to do in:

- Your Person Centred Plan
- Your Transition Plan
- Your Job Plan or Profile.

GETTING A JOB WHEN YOU LEAVE USING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT



Many young people with learning difficulties who want a job when they leave school or college still need help to find, learn and keep a job. They need help even if they have training, qualifications and work experience under their belt. Supported employment is a way of helping young people with learning difficulties to find and keep a job with or without training or qualifications. **Family members told us how agencies had helped find jobs:**

“Shaw Trust did work experience with him in November, one day a week. Then part-time until he left school and then they took him on full time.”

“(The job coach) helped with interviews, attended the interview with her... phones her regularly to see how she's doing. (The Job Coach) goes to see her employer if there are difficulties.”

The agencies that do supported employment have steps they go through:

1. Getting to know the young person really well. They sometimes call it Vocational Profiling. They will find out:
 - What type of job the young person wants
 - Things the person can do that might help find the person the right job.

GETTING A JOB WHEN YOU LEAVE USING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT



- The work skills people have
- The jobs and types of workplaces they might want to work in
- The support they might need at work.

2. Finding the right job and the right employer. They will find out:



- What jobs there are locally
- Find a paid job to meet a young person's needs
- Present the young person to the employer as a good worker
- Help the young person through applying for the job and interview
- Help the employer to support the young person well
- Write a job plan, agreed by everyone who needs to.

3. Training people on the job, if they need it. They will be able to:

- Teach the young person in the best way for them, including using pictures, and printed instructions if young people can read well.

GETTING A JOB WHEN YOU LEAVE USING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT



- Break tasks down into small steps if young people have difficulty learning it all in one go. Teach one bit at a time
 - Give people time to practise
 - Teach the job in the place it needs to be done. It is easier to learn that way
 - When the young person knows the job quite well, allow them to make mistakes and correct themselves with a prompt if they need it
 - Help less and less until the young person can do things on their own.
4. The young person in the job may need help in the future. Some young people need help to adapt at work or to get a better job or promotion. Supported employment should be able to:
- Keep checking in with the young person and the employer to see if the job is going well
 - Help to solve problems
 - Help talk to the employer to get a pay rise or change of job.

OTHER SERVICES WHO CAN HELP WITH A JOB



Jobcentre Plus – They can give you information and help. They have Disability Employment Advisors who can help find you work training and refer you to schemes like Access to Work, WORKSTEP, New Deal, or Pathways to Work.



Access to Work – They can pay for things like taxis to work, personal work aids, big changes to the employer's building, and job coach support for when you are first at work.



New Deal for Disabled People – Local organisations provide this. They have 'Job Brokers' to help people who want a job to think about their skills and abilities; they can help find jobs; help with applying for jobs; and find work training places.



WORKSTEP – Local organisations provide this. They can help with finding a job. They can help pay for support and give employers money for things like more training for you, or for a colleague to help you learn and to do your job well.

THIS PROJECT



Shaw Trust is a charity that helps young people with and without disabilities to get better at finding jobs, and to get jobs.



The Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities does research to find better ways of helping young people with learning difficulties to find jobs.



The Big Lottery gave us money to find out 'what works' best in helping young people with learning difficulties leaving school or college to get a job.

USEFUL GUIDES ABOUT EMPLOYMENT

Enquire have written *Getting ready to leave school*. These are guides to help to decide what you want to do next after school, and on attending meetings. You can get it on the internet from here:

www.enquire.org.uk/youngpeople/downloads.html

MacIntyre have written workbooks to support young people with learning difficulties during transition. They include: collecting information on yourself; learning and further education; work; leisure; families and relationships; independent travel; and leaving home.

www.macintyrecharity.org/transition/transition.html

Moving on Up This is a website designed to be used by young people. It gives advice on: learning and working; free-time; health and wellbeing; money; housing; culture and news and events.

www.movingonup.info

Partnership for Developing Quality have written *The Big Picture: Your guide to transition*. This provides accessible information about transition at school for young people.

<http://valuingpeople.gov.uk/dynamic/valuingpeople103.jsp>

Valuing People Support Team have collected a series of easy read documents helping young people to think about, and find, paid employment. They are called: *You can work it out*; *I can get a job*; *I want to work*; and *Valued in Public* (Easy Read version).

<http://valuingpeople.gov.uk/dynamic/valuingpeople120.jsp>

NIACE have written *Moving into work*. A set of information sheets about employment, one especially for people with learning difficulties.

<http://www.niace.org.uk/Research/HDE/documents.htm>

USEFUL WEBSITES

Transition Information Network (TIN) TIN works to improve the experience of disabled young people's transition to adulthood. TIN can give information and good practice for disabled young people, families and professionals. They have a website, magazine, e-newsletter and seminars. www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk

MENCAP Provides advice and employment services for people with learning disabilities and their families, and has a number of resources on employment. www.mencap.org.uk

NIACE (The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education)

Encourages more and different adults to engage in learning of all kinds, including people with learning difficulties. It has information on learning for, and about, employment. www.niace.org.uk

SKILL (National Bureau for Disabled Students) Promotes opportunities for young people and adults with any kind of disability in education, training and employment who are over 16 years of age. SKILL gives information on the telephone, in books, booklets, leaflets, DVDs. www.skill.org.uk

There are organisations that give information on supported employment, and details of local agencies that may help:

- British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) in England
www.afse.org.uk
- Association for Supported Employment Agencies (ASEA) in Wales
www.learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/supported-employment-networks.php
- Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE)
www.suse.org.uk
- Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE)
www.niuse.org.uk





The pictures of young people shown in this report are of young people involved with Shaw Trust services and not those involved in this study.