

**JOB ANALYSIS: A STRATEGY FOR ASSESSING AND
UTILIZING THE CULTURE OF WORK PLACES TO SUPPORT
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

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Job Analysis: A Strategy for Assessing and Utilizing the Culture of Work Places to Support Persons with Disabilities

Introduction

Job analysis in supported employment is an activity designed to assist employment facilitators to a) recognize the natural ways, means and people used by employers to typically perform and teach jobs; b) organize the information to be performed by the supported employee; and, c) develop a plan for balancing the natural features of support in the job site with the needs of the employee by using the Seven Phase Sequence.

This activity primarily occurs *after* the employer has given approval for the job to proceed but *before* the supported employee begins to work. However, it is important for the job developer to reference the features of job analysis during negotiations with the employer and for the employment facilitator to continue to refine the job analysis after the job has begun.

There has been discussion during recent years as to whether a job analysis should be performed by an outside employment facilitator. Concerns center around whether the presence of an outside support person interferes with the natural processes which are used by companies to plan for employee supports. It is the authors' opinion, at this time, that the facilitator's role remains a crucial one. The facilitator must be able to make decisions using the Seven Phase Sequence which balance the needs of the employee with the natural support features of the setting. In order to effectively make these decisions, the facilitator must be aware of all of the conditions of the work culture and the job expectations of the employer.

The reason that the facilitator's role remains critical to success is the continuing understanding that many persons with severe disabilities require supports, beyond those typically offered by employers, to be successfully employed. At this time, the funding and responsibility for the provision of these supports rests with human service agencies. The use of natural supports does not imply that human service supports are bad, but that they are best used to encourage and enhance the natural supports available to all employees. Therefore, it is vital that the employment facilitator be aware of all the conditions and expectations of employment for supported employees.

The usefulness of this approach to job analysis depends on the employment facilitator following a "chain of logic" throughout the process which results in the maximum use of natural conditions and supports while meeting the individual needs of the supported employee. The sequence of activities suggested here can be divided into three major categories:

- A. Steps performed during job development and before a job site visit;
- B. Steps performed on-site designed to learn and organize the task for decision-making; and,
- C. Steps which enhance the likelihood that the employee will "fit in" the work setting.

A Task Analysis for Job Analysis

The seventeen-step process of performing a job analysis described below begins with the premise that a well-matched job has been developed for the supported employee and that the employer has agreed, at least to some degree, to the provision of natural supports as suggested by the Seven Phase Sequence. Steps 1 - 5 relate to these considerations. Job developers must also effectively negotiate for a set of potentially-achievable tasks which will comprise the employee's tailored job description. This final fitting of the applicant to the job expectations allows the employment facilitator anticipate any accommodations which must be made in advance by the employer. It is suggested that initial negotiations for technology, accessibility and job station re-design be based on the belief that the accommodations are in keeping with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If there are other, more questionable, conditions which might become problematic, it is suggested that the job developer or employment facilitator wait and use the Seven Phase Sequence to resolve any problems.

The steps (Steps 6 - 12) involving the observation and performance are included so that the employment facilitator can gain an accurate mental picture of all the responsibilities of the job. It is from these pictures, and the subsequent content steps which flow from them, that the facilitator will make the decisions on the implementation of the Seven Phase Sequence for initial training of the supported employee.

The final set of steps (13 - 17) involve getting a feel of the natural procedures, relationships, politics and other subtle features of the culture of the setting so that the supported employee can be successful as possible during the early days of employment. The facilitator must try to get to know who can and cannot be counted on to provide assistance, who needs to be avoided and who the employee must please in order to stay employed.

The Job Analysis Process

1. **Conduct** a Vocational Profile or other individualized planning process to determine applicant needs and desires.
2. **Target** job responsibilities in relation to the applicant's conditions, preferences and contributions (from the Profile Meeting).
3. Begin to **assess** the culture, the potential for natural supports and the capacity of the setting to support all employees.
4. Through tours and site visits, "**capture**" all components and requirements of the job in large chunks of information using the Job Analysis Form.
5. **Consider** all information about the job in relation to the person(s) targeted for the job. If the "fit" seems right, go on to #6. If not, develop another job or target another prospective employee.
6. **Visit** the job site to begin a detailed Job Analysis for the tasks/routines identified in #4.
7. **Observe** the way in which current employees perform the various routines.
8. Based on the analysis, **Determine** who will be the initial trainer and **Decide** on the need for detailed job analysis and inventories for the various task/routines of the job. Some tasks may be deemed especially important by the employer, others may correspond to identified deficit area of the prospective employee. Facilitators may choose have direct input in the most critical routines and may work less directly with co-workers and supervisors to less critical and more infrequently performed routines.
9. Have someone at the job site **teach you** the routines. Notice the procedures, cues, amount of supervision provided and complexity of the routines.
10. **Perform** the routines which are the most critical for success until you have a "feel" for the job (Note: For some complex tasks, this may not be a reasonable activity).
11. **Write** task analyses and inventories for the tasks/routines which you feel will require the most support and assistance. Write the steps of the analyses and inventories to reflect the needs of a typical employee of the company. Consideration for the choice of the methods chosen for the various tasks/routines should first reflect the natural methods used in the company and secondly, if necessary, the particular needs of the employee.

12. **Get approval** from the employer on the methods chosen for the tasks/routines to be trained and any modifications or adaptations which you feel are necessary to begin employment.
13. **Identify** procedures, including natural cues and consequences, in the work routines of the employee. For example, the natural cue to take a break might be that the clock shows 10:00 AM and the consequence of not responding to the natural cue is that you miss your break. In another company, the natural cue for break may be a buzzer and everyone leaving their work stations and the consequence of not responding may be that the supervisor comes by and says, "It's time for a break!".
14. Based on #11 and your knowledge of the needs and skills of the employee, **consider** potential training strategies, motivating strategies, possible adaptations, and opportunities for job restructuring and partial participation with other workers which may be necessary in the back-up phases of the Seven Phase Sequence. Also, develop data sheets to reflect the number of steps you expect the employee will actually need to perform the critical tasks. The data sheets should be based on the steps identified in the analyses and routines developed in #9.
15. **Meet** and get to know other co-workers and supervisors in the setting. Try to remember names of employees so you can facilitate introductions when the employee starts work.
16. **Ask about and observe** company policies, acceptable dress codes, orientation procedures and other components of the company's "culture".
17. **Set** a start date, **communicate** with the employee and his/her family and **begin facilitation**.

The actual performance of the Job Analysis by the employment facilitator requires a visit to the job site of at least ½ day, but ideally one or two days. Generally speaking, the more time the facilitator invests, the more useful the job analysis becomes in facilitating successful performance and enhancing natural supports.

To Write or Not to Write: Should Job Analysis be a Formalized Process?

It is a valid question to consider whether or not it is necessary to "write-up" the findings of the Job Analysis Process described above. Several experts have suggested recently that writing formal job analyses continues the artificial process which has characterized much of traditional supported employment. Their simple question is why not rely exclusively on natural features of employee support? The response to this reasonable suggestion is that a) a job analysis need not interfere with or replace any natural feature of support and b) that a written job analysis stands as the blueprint for the human service supporter's role in facilitating job success for persons with disabilities and, as such, represents a necessary document of accountability for supported employees, families, employers and funders. A job analysis form is included in the appendix of this article which can be used by the facilitator to summarize the findings of the job analysis.

The facilitator will identify the natural ways the employer wants the job performed, the natural means used to teach and maintain the job and the people who are responsible for training new employees. The job analysis form also requires the facilitator to examine relationships among employees, physical requirements of the job, cultural aspects of the setting and other factors relating to successful job performance.

For those employees who will need job site modifications and technology, the facilitator will conduct an accessibility survey and will attempt to identify for the employer any reasonable accommodations which might be covered under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehab Act.

Finally, the facilitator must consider how to best proceed with the use of natural supports in relation to the direct support and training available by the facilitator. This may involve providing information to designated co-workers and supervisors, modeling good training techniques or simply answering concerns and questions by the person(s) responsible for supporting the new employee.

Job Analysis Considerations

- 1. Core Routines** are job routines which have cycles which are naturally repeating, without significant interruption between the cycles. The cycle of a task begins with the first step of a job sequence and ends with the step which precedes the initial step of the next sequence. Core routines are also those tasks which are likely to be most frequently performed by the employee.
- 2. Episodic Work Routines** are tasks required for the job but which have cycles which occur infrequently; two or three times per shift, once a day, or possibly a few times per week. These routines are often more difficult to train because of the time lapse between the cycles.

3. **Job-Related Routines** involve skills and routines which are not explicitly required by the employer for the job, but which are vital for successful performance of the job. These routines may occur either on-site or off-the-job, and are often ignored by job-site trainers. Additionally, poor performance of these routines is more likely to occur than on core work routines. Many workers with disabilities lose their jobs when assistance is not offered to facilitate acceptable performance.
4. **Accommodating to the "Culture" of the Company** deals with the expectations an employer has for the employees and the degree of flexibility which is allowed in a workplace. Trainers often make the assumption that all employers have the same expectations and will allow only a small degree of difference in their companies. The fact is however, that work sites differ widely in the way in which they view employee behavior. In some work settings, it is fine to sit when a worker has completed a certain amount of work, in others the worker may be fired for sitting. Some employers expect workers to deal with personal differences away from work while others tolerate occasional spats among workers. It is in this category, particularly, that effective job matches are made. If job site developers more closely considered this category of skills, many more persons with severe disabilities could be employed. Even persons with significant "excess behaviors" can be matched to particular job settings by creative and committed job developers and trainers.

Relevance of Job Analysis

The relevance of these considerations is that each has impact on the role and use of natural supports and teaching of skills. Core routines are naturally repeated often during the work day. Therefore, these tasks might be more quickly learned but they will likely require more time in direct supervision, because of the repetitive performance, in order to assure successful acquisition of the task. Episodic and Job Related tasks are often more difficult to teach because of the time delay between cycles, but natural co-workers or supervisors need not tie up significant time for support due to the occasional nature of the tasks. Cultural rules and mores are best taught by those natural to the setting, but facilitators must assure that the supported employee understands the importance of these conditions, which are often subtle and not directly taught.

Perhaps even more important is the opportunity provided by Job Analysis to study and analyze the various work cultures into which persons with disabilities will become employed. There is no more opportune time to observe the ways, means and people natural to an employment site than during the period between acceptance by the employer and the date which work begins.

Finally, Job Analysis allows the job facilitator to clearly imprint the manner in which tasks are typically performed in the setting. This critical aspect of training is often overlooked even by those natural to work places. The facilitator can bring this clear standard of performance to the training and supports offered to the supported employee. Without this perspective, it is likely that the performance of many persons with disabilities will continue to reflect human service rather than natural conditions.

Conclusion

Job Analysis provides an excellent opportunity for job facilitators to understand the culture of the setting and to prepare for problems which may arise during natural supports. At this time, there remains a need for facilitators to enter into work places before a supported employee begins work. The time spent on Job Analysis must identify and reference features of naturalness, as well as the individual needs of the applicant. It is recommended that persons facilitating supported employment for persons with severe disabilities read "The Seven Phase Sequence for Balancing Naturalness and Individual Employee Needs" available through Marc Gold & Associates

The Job Analysis Process: Considerations

- Job analysis in supported employment is a human service activity designed to assist facilitators to: a) organize the information to be performed by the supported employee; b) recognize the natural ways, means and people used by the employer to typically perform and teach the job; c) develop a plan for balancing the natural features of support available at the job site with the needs of the employee; and d) form the relationships necessary to accomplish the seven-phase sequence.
- This activity formally begins *after* the employer has given approval for the job to begin and *before* the supported employee begins to work. However, the job analysis begins informally even before the job developer's initial contact with the employer. In order to achieve the maximum benefits of natural supports, Facilitators must seek to identify factors of natural capacity as a consideration of which employers to call on. During job development, facilitators must consider the features of natural capacity while negotiating with the employer. Care must be taken to set the scene for employer involvement from the onset of employment and to distinguish this naturally-referenced approach from more traditional approaches of supported employment.
- The actual performance of the formal Job Analysis by the employment facilitator requires a visit to the job site of at least ½ day, but ideally one or more days. Generally speaking, the more time the facilitator invests, the more useful the job analysis becomes in facilitating successful performance and enhancing natural supports.
- Given the reliance on and attention to natural supports referenced throughout this paper, readers may wonder why a job analysis should be performed by a human service facilitator. The answer, at this time, is that the facilitator's role remains a critical one. The facilitator must be able to make decisions using the Seven Phase Sequence which balance the needs of the employee with the natural support features of the setting. Effectively making these decisions requires that the facilitator be aware of all of the conditions of the work setting and the job expectations of the employee.

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- The reason that the facilitator's role remains critical to success is the continuing belief that many persons with severe disabilities require supports, beyond those typically offered by employers, to be successfully employed. At this time, the funding and responsibility for the provision of these supports rest with human service agencies. The use of natural supports does not imply that human service supports are bad, but that they are best used to develop and enhance other, more natural supports. Therefore, it is vital that employment facilitators be aware of all the conditions and expectations of employment for supported employees.
- The usefulness of this approach to job analysis depends on the employment facilitator creating a "chain of logic" throughout the process which results in the maximum use of natural conditions and supports while meeting the individual needs of the supported employee. The sequence of activities used in this process can be divided into three major categories:
 - A. Steps performed during job development and before a job site visit;
 - B. Steps performed on-site designed to learn and organize the task for decision-making; and,
 - C. Steps which enhance the likelihood that the employee will "fit in" the work setting.
- The process of performing a job analysis (attached to this article) begins with the premise that a well-matched job has been developed for the supported employee and that the employer has agreed, at least to some degree, to the provision of natural supports as suggested by the Seven Phase Sequence. Job development must also effectively negotiate for a set of potentially-achievable tasks which will comprise the employee's tailored job description. This final fitting of the applicant to the job expectations allows the employment facilitator to anticipate any accommodations which must be made in advance by the employer. It is suggested that initial negotiations for technology, accessibility and job station re-design be based on the belief that the accommodations are in keeping with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If there are other, more questionable, conditions which might become problematic, it is suggested that the job developer or employment facilitator wait and use the Seven Phase Sequence to resolve any problems.
- The steps involving observation and performance of the targeted job tasks are included so that the employment facilitator can gain an accurate mental picture of all the responsibilities of the job. It is from these pictures, and the subsequent content steps which flow from them, that the facilitator will make the decisions on the implementation of the Seven Phase Sequence for initial training of the supported employee.

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- The final set of steps involves getting a feel for the natural procedures, relationships, politics and other subtle features of the culture of the setting so that the supported employee can be successful as possible during the early days of employment. The facilitator must try to get to know who can and cannot be counted on to provide assistance, who needs to be avoided and who the employee must please in order to stay employed.
- A job analysis form is attached to this article and can be used by the facilitator to summarize the findings of the job analysis. This form follows the Seven Phase Sequence and allows the job analysis to follow the perspectives described in this paper.
- The facilitator needs to identify the natural ways the employer wants the job performed, the natural means used to teach and maintain the job and the people who are responsible for training new employees. The job analysis form also requires the facilitator to examine relationships among employees, physical requirements of the job, cultural aspects of the setting and other factors relating to successful job performance.
- For those employees who will need job site modifications and technology, the facilitator will conduct an accessibility survey and will attempt to identify for the employer any reasonable accommodations which might be covered under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehab Act.
- Finally, the facilitator must consider how to best proceed with the use of natural supports in relation to the direct support and training available by the facilitator. This may involve providing information to designated co-workers and supervisors, modeling good training techniques or simply answering concerns and questions by the person(s) responsible for supporting the new employee.