

Vocational Peer Support

Trainer's Guide

money recovery
success choose
VPS job satisfaction esteem keep career support
future get dreams

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Table of Contents

Content	Page
How to Use the Trainer’s Guide	5
Principles and Key Concepts of Vocational Peer Support	6
Modules of the VPS Curriculum	7
Tips for Trainers	9
Training Preparation	18
Overview of the Materials	19
Format of the Lesson Plan	20
Lesson Plan	21
Introduction to VPS Lesson Plan	21
Module 1 Lesson Plan	23
Module 2 Lesson Plan	26
Module 3 Lesson Plan	35
Module 4 Lesson Plan	46
Module 5 Lesson Plan	54
Module 6 Lesson Plan	60
Module 7 Lesson Plan	69
Module 8 Lesson Plan	76
Module 9 Lesson Plan	81
Module 10 Lesson Plan	89
Supervising VPS Skill Use	92
Example Evaluation of VPS Training	93
Example Certificate of Participation	94
References and Resources	95

How to Use the Trainer's Guide

What is the Trainer's Guide? The Vocational Peer Support Training Program (VPS) Trainer's Guide is designed to give you tools, concepts, and lesson plans that you will need to offer a training in Vocational Peer Support.

There likely will be more content in the Trainee Handbook, Training Slides, and Trainer's Guide than you will be able to use. Having more information is better than having less; we offer this information knowing that you will need to decide the needs of your particular training group.

Who should use the Guide? It is assumed that trainers of Vocational Peer Support will have had expertise-level training in both the Vocational Peer Support Training Program and a Train-the-Trainer training in Vocational Peer Support. This Guide will not offer a word-for-word script for each Module, rather, given the expertise the trainer is expected to bring to the training, we offer a Guide with a Plan for teaching VPS skills, conceptual knowledge, and introductions to VPS tools.

This Guide will give you:

- Key instructions for conducting the training
- Picture and page number "anchors" to let you know where you are in the Trainee Handouts and PowerPoint slides
- Key questions to get class discussions going
- Responses to look out for
- Potential responses for key discussions and exercises

How should you use the Guide?

Do:

- Read over the Trainer's Guide before delivering VPS training.
- Create your own personal training plan (see Tips for Trainers) and/or outline, formed from this Trainer's Guide, as you prepare for training.
- Use the Trainer's Guide while teaching.

Don't:

- Be constrained only to the words on these pages. The Lesson Plan is designed to be a guide and can offer key concepts to convey, key questions that have been tested in classrooms, discussion leads, and class exercises to help develop skills and knowledge. However, add your own stories and examples, and train in your own "voice."
- Worry if you notice slides without corresponding workbook pages, and vice versa. This was done to avoid repetition, and to create movement and interest in the training.

Principles and Key Concepts of Vocational Peer Support

Vocational Peer Support (VPS): Vocational Peer Support is an approach to providing employment and educational supports through peer-to-peer mutual support. VPS is designed for trained and/or certified peer specialists who want to support vocational aspirations through mutual peer support.

VPS is not designed to duplicate or take the place of other employment support approaches, such as vocational rehabilitation or supported employment; rather, it is designed to complement other vocational services, utilizing the lived and professional expertise of peer supporters. VPS builds on core peer support skills and knowledge by adding VPS concepts, skills, and tools.

The approach: Vocational Peer Support uses the Choose-Get-Keep approach to employment support, which uses the Psychiatric Rehabilitation approach (Anthony, Cohen, Farkas & Gagne, 2002; Anthony & Farkas, 2011) as a basic framework. Choose-Get-Keep, originally described by Danley & Anthony (1987), upended the traditional approach of *assessment, placement, and follow-along* in employment services and created a person-directed approach in which the person chooses a vocational direction, goes after the desired position, and keeps desired jobs or other vocational roles, with supports as needed and wanted.

Consider-Choose-Get-Keep: Psychiatric Rehabilitation includes a component to support people to determine for themselves their willingness to make an environmental change (Farkas & Nicolellis, 2003). In VPS, we have added the term, "Considering" to Choose-Get-Keep to signify that people who are deciding whether work is feasible or desirable at this time are indeed *considering* employment before they choose, get, or keep it. We have named this process, "Motivational Foundations" in VPS, as it refers to the *motivation* of the person to move forward, but also the *foundations* upon which the remainder of employment decisions are made. Considering whether or not to Choose, Get, or Keep work allows people who are unsure about work to explore factors, such as their need for a change, their beliefs about working, information about options and self, and their level of support for making a change now.

Vocational Recovery: Vocational Recovery in VPS is defined as "*an individualized journey of claiming or reclaiming one's right and capacity to choose, get, and keep vocational paths.*" This definition recognizes that each person's path will be different and tailored to his or her own preferences, values, strengths, and interests. It affirms the basic *right* of people in recovery to both have and go after their vocational dreams. Research over the past few decades clearly has indicated that psychiatric diagnoses are not good predictors of people's *capacity* to work, or even the types of work that people can do (Rogers & Macdonald Wilson, 2011); VPS affirms that people who have been given psychiatric labels can and do live full vocational lives.

Modules of the VPS Curriculum

Module 1: Introduction to Vocational Recovery and Vocational Peer Support. Module 1 reviews the basics of Peer Support and introduces conceptual basics of Vocational Peer Support, Vocational Recovery, and Scaffolding.

1. *Introduction to the VPS Training Program*
2. *Vocational Recovery & Vocational Peer Support*
3. *Scaffolding Vocational Recovery*

Module 2: Partnering to Support Vocational Recovery. The skills of this module are brought in throughout the training program, with skill development in the basics of partnering from a peer support perspective, including ensuring that a person is oriented to any activity, utilizing active, empathic listening techniques, and sharing one's own vocational recovery story.

1. *Orienting*
2. *Listening*
3. *Sharing your vocational recovery story*

Module 3: Motivational Foundations of Vocational Change. This module explores the components that support a person's participation in choosing, getting, and keeping work or school. Participants learn about the building blocks of Need, Information, Support, and Beliefs, and how to develop any foundations that help the person to feel more confident and prepared.

1. *Foundational Building Blocks*
2. *Exploring Motivational Foundations*
3. *Building the Foundations for Vocational Recovery*

Module 4: Supporting Choice in Work and Career. The focus of this module is on choosing meaningful vocational options. By exploring preferences gleaned from past vocational experiences, gathering information about work options, and supporting vocational decisions, trainees learn how to support vocational recovery according to personal choice.

1. *Identifying Preferences*
2. *Gathering Information*
3. *Supporting Decision-making*

Module 5: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs and School. Module 5 explores supporting a person's achievement of an employment or educational goal, once chosen. Key to this module is the exploration of supports that a peer support may provide as the person goes through the process of "getting," with or without other employment services.

1. *Scaffolding Getting Jobs*

2. *Supporting Getting into School*
3. *Thinking Through Disclosure*

Module 6: Keeping Work and School. In this module, peers focus on how to support the retention of work or school, with an emphasis on figuring out which specific skills, resources, and accommodations the person needs and wants for success and satisfaction, and how to support a person to gather them as needed.

1. *Exploring Skills, Supports, and Accommodations*
2. *Developing Skills and Supports for Success and Satisfaction*

Module 7: Coordinating with Vocational and Employment Providers. In this module, participants are introduced to a variety of employment and vocational rehabilitation service models and approaches, and offers skill development in the areas of collaborating with, augmenting, and supporting the use of employment services.

1. *Getting to Know the Array of Vocational Service Options*
2. *Partnering with Service Providers*
3. *Negotiating for Success*

Module 8: Researching Information. This Module seeks to enhance the capacity of peers to support the gathering of information related to vocational recovery. At the core is the refrain, "Know the Basics, Know the Experts."

1. *Clarifying the Question*
2. *Brainstorming Sources*
3. *Gathering Information*
4. *Evaluating for Reliability*

Module 9: Social Security Work Incentives (Optional 1-day Module). This module is designed to offer basic information on the Social Security Work Incentives and integrates the cornerstones of informed decision-making and scaffolding a person's efforts to make informed decisions about a meaningful vocational life.

1. *Getting to Know the Basics*
2. *Using the Experts*
3. *The Role of Peers*

Module 10: Utilization Planning. We close the training with a plan for our own work. A review of training skill areas is followed by planning for participant practice with new skills and tools. Participants are invited to describe supports and scaffolds they will need to put VPS to work.

1. *VPS Skills in Practice*
2. *What's Next? Planning for Supporting Vocational Recovery*

Tips for Trainers

These Tips will give you information you may need as you consider, prepare for, teach, and follow up on VPS training. The Tips are organized loosely under the Consider-Choose-Get-Keep framework, this time for conducting a VPS training. Read and consider the following before starting a training in Vocational Peer Support.

Considering a Class in VPS

Think about the following in deciding whether and how to proceed with offering a Vocational Peer Support training:

- Do you have a group of peer specialists who want and need to be trained to support vocational aspirations?
- Is their role going to remain a peer role, i.e., with a focus on mutuality and shared experience?
- Do the people to be trained have a solid background in the basics of peer support, including peer support skills and ethics?
- Is the primary focus on a peer-provided role, or is there a move toward peers becoming practitioners? VPS maintains a focus on peer practice, and does not try to replicate practitioner roles for which there is other specialized training, such as Employment Specialist or Rehabilitation Counselor.

“Choosing” And Planning for a VPS Class

Use the following to “choose” a class and training environment that makes sense for you and the people to be trained.

The Class: Consider whether you have a ready group of trainees, or whether you are inviting applications. *Consider peer workers who are:*

- **Certified and/or trained peer support specialists.** VPS training does not teach the basic essentials of general peer support, and it is important that all VPS trainees have a solid understanding of peer support concepts, ethics, and skills.
- **Working.** This training is best received by peer specialists who are currently working. Those who are not working to support others will not be able to apply the material to their work, which is key to learning VPS skills.

- **Interested.** The best trainee is someone who wants the training. The best situation is one in which trainees are asking for or are open to the training. Forced training is less likely to be received well.
- **Supported.** People are more likely to be successful in following through with the training and using the skills they learned, if they are supported by their agencies. Consider the support of supervisors in your planning and how “ready” the agency is for peers to support vocational recovery. See the *VPS Implementation Guide* for more on agency readiness for VPS training.

Class Size: VPS is designed to be a highly interactive classroom experience, and we have found that it is wise to have a class of at least 8 people and not more than 20. Larger and smaller classes certainly are possible, but keep in mind that really small classes have less of an opportunity for a variety of ideas and will require more of each individual in terms of participation. In addition, if people leave the training, you are left with an even smaller class. Larger classes may give less opportunity for personal attention to each individual.

Trainers: We have found that it is important to have two trainers whenever possible, especially when the class is larger than 12 people. At least one of the trainers **MUST BE** a peer support specialist, and both must be heavily rooted in a recovery orientation, employment, and/or educational support, and lived and direct support experience. It is preferable for the trainers to have training and/or group leadership experience.

Schedule: Decide how often the class will be held and for how long each time. The Modules vary in terms of length: Some are an hour-long, others will take almost a day. The recommended length of time for each Module will be listed in the Lesson Plan of this Trainer's Guide. The original VPS trainings were held in 2-3 day training sessions, equaling 5 or 6 days total, but ½ day trainings, or even full-week trainings are possible. *A day of training is considered 6 hours of training time, excluding breaks.* Depending on the needs of the group or organization being trained, and your own schedule, plan out the following:

- How many trainings you will schedule.
- Number of hours that each training will last. Consider lunch break, morning and afternoon breaks, if applicable, usually adding up to 1.5 hours.
- Dates and times of trainings.

Space: Do you have a space that will comfortably accommodate your class? Consider that people will need to:

- *Spread out during class*, with a Trainee Handbook, personal items, coffee, etc.
- *Move about the room.* Ensure that people can move about easily in order to participate in group activities, run to the restroom, or take a break as needed.
- *Write.* Make sure participants have tables or desks to lean and write on.

- *See the board and/or screen.* Make sure to have a screen for PowerPoint presentations, and a blackboard, whiteboard, or easel with paper available.
- *Have snacks,* especially during a long training. Ensure that the space can accommodate drinks and snacks, either provided by the host agency, or as brought in by trainees.
- *Be comfortable.* Work to have a comfortable temperature, chairs, and general space for learning.

Getting Prepared for the Training Itself

Get to know the materials well before you get in front of the class. Familiarize yourself with the section you will be teaching, and review the slides relative to the Trainee Handbook. Work with the Tools yourself (with someone else or on your own situation), in order to understand the intent of the tool, how it works, and the kinds of questions that you are likely to encounter.

Decide who will do what. Get together with your training partner, plan out which content each of you will teach. Think about teaching content you are good at (or want to become good at), enjoy, and have a passion for. Consider timing, since some pieces are longer than others. It often is helpful for participants to hear more than one voice and see different styles throughout each day of training. Switching trainers changes the energy of the room and brings different perspectives into the training, so plan on switching trainers several times during a day. However, some pieces are longer than others, and there may be times that a long piece is better delivered by only one person, or you may decide to switch off to keep the energy and ideas going. Plan on supportive roles you can take on while not teaching, such as taking notes, writing on the board while the other person teaches, and attending to details and room issues. Sometimes it is helpful for both trainers to be attentive to participant questions, but decide this ahead of time.

Make a personal training plan, detailing the particular pages and slides that you want to spend time with in each Module or training session. Doing this may help you to consolidate the content and allow you to go into the training with a plan, which will help you to tailor the lesson for your particular training group and the time you have allotted for the class.

- **Make notes to yourself** on the Trainer’s Notes or Training Slides, indicating the questions you want to ask the class, any points you want to be sure to make, and any stories or examples you want to share. Indicate for yourself any content you do not intend to cover in order to tailor the content to the class’ interest, capacity, and/or current knowledge.
- **Create an outline** if that helps you to focus and stay on track. Outlines can help you summarize your intended teaching tasks and can serve as a “map” for the course of the lesson. Consider your audience when planning.

- **Think in advance about stories** that you can share that illuminate the content. Include snippets of your own Vocational Recovery story and/or stories from your work that give examples of the content's importance or relevance, how the process can work, and outcomes. "Place" the story in the lesson plan and note the name of the story (for example: "James – Need for Change") or in your personal training plan, to help you remember. Remember to preserve the confidentiality of people who may play a part in the story, using only common first names or changed names, if needed.
- **Create an agenda** – for you and for the class. The agenda will help everyone stay on task, keep to anticipated timelines, and accomplish training and learning goals. Print out the agenda for the class, so that everyone can share in the plan, and so that people can anticipate breaks and upcoming topics.
- **Practice.** Give yourself time to not only think through a training session, but to practice talking about the content, asking classroom questions, and running through instructions for exercises. Think about how much time you will leave for discussion, and for review of exercises. Notice where you get stuck, and look more deeply into the materials as needed.

Get the room, materials, and equipment ready. Make sure all materials, equipment, and supports you need to be successful in the class are available to you.

- **Schedule the room:** Schedule for extra time before the start of the training for set up and arrival of the class, usually about an hour before class is to begin. Schedule time after the training ends for cleanup and break-down of the room (cleaning the board, taking down equipment, moving tables), approximately ½ hour to 1 hour afterward.
- **Arrange for delivery** or pickup of equipment, supplies, and copies of materials; and anticipate any problems that could come up. Will the equipment room be open before 9:00 am? Do you have the key to the training room and/or extra projector lamp?
- **Be flexible!** Plan for things to go wrong: electronics, equipment, materials, room reservations, you name it! As one of the developers of this content might say, "The key to life is the willingness to go to Plan B." If you can, have extra materials and equipment on hand as backup, and bring with you the contact information of key people who can help, if needed. Check the room and equipment the day before the training if possible, to avoid any training day "nightmares." You can't avoid every mishap, but averting most of them will make for an easier training.
- **Organize the room.** Set up the tables, chairs, and equipment so that people can interact with each other and you, as well as see the board and/or screen. Having chairs that can be moved helps you stay flexible in your training because it allows the participants to turn to face you or each other as is needed. A "U" shape of tables often gives participants a way to see each other, and allows you to walk up and down as you teach. However, there are many

ways to set up a room for interaction and attention, so arrange the room to accommodate your training vision.

- **Accessibility:** Make sure that you have access to a room and setup that allows for people with a variety of accessibility needs to participate. As needed, provide materials presented in a variety of modalities, make sure that your slides have a high level of contrast (for people with low vision, for example, avoid muted colors and bad color combinations such as red on green, and go for black and white instead); and work to provide other accommodations, as needed. Ask participants ahead of time about any accommodations they may need.
- **Arrange for snacks:** People feel appreciated when they have access to freebies, like a cup of coffee and a muffin; and it is a way to tell participants that they are welcomed and valued. It also can lead to pre-training conversation between participants who do not know each other. So if you can, arrange to have coffee and/or snacks brought to the training room.

Once the Training Starts

As you begin the training, take a deep breath, relax, and picture yourself having a great class. Some nerves can help focus your energy, but work to manage excess anxieties that might get in the way of being present to the group. Do the following to make the training session a success.

- **Arrive early.** Plan to arrive an hour early to set up. Use that time to set up any equipment, screens, blackboards/easels, etc. Arrange your own materials so that you can easily access them. Distribute training materials to participants. Expect to see some participants early as well. Make sure you have water available for the trainers and trainees.
- **Greet trainees.** If you are not familiar with the group, registration of some kind may be indicated. A sign-in sheet may be enough to both document who is there and to make sure you have everyone's names. Introduce yourself to individuals coming in and find out a little bit about them. This will help you connect throughout the training.
- **Start on time.** The creator of Choose-Get-Keep used to say, "Let's not punish people who arrive on time." People have worked hard to get to the training, and starting on time honors that effort. You will set a good tone for the training if you start on time and keep to the schedule. This tells participants that not only are you serious about the training, but that you acknowledge that their time is valuable. Almost more importantly, plan to end on time because it is more than likely that people have other commitments.
- **Be trauma-informed.** Being trauma-informed is in part to set up the environment so that people are less likely to be re-traumatized. Ensure that people have easy, comfortable ways to leave the room to take a break. Give participants a map, through an agenda or timelines

on the board, so that they can plan for breaks, exercises, etc. Ensure that any classroom “rules” are set with the class, so that everyone gets to take part in setting those guidelines.

- **Eliminate Distractions:** Eliminate extraneous distractions both within and around you, so that you have room to do your work:

Internal Distractions can be minimized by doing things such as:

- Write a to-do list so that reports, grocery shopping, etc., do not take up brain space.
- Prepare for the training ahead of time, creating an agenda so that you do not have to worry about remembering what is coming next.

External Distractions can be minimized by doing things such as:

- Choose a quiet space, set apart from major “goings-on.”
- Place phones on silent or “do not disturb.”

Keeping the Training Going

Consider yourself facilitator, not speaker, in this skills-oriented training program. The difference between the two is that a speaker talks *to* or *at* the class, and a facilitator works to *support the learning* of the group. As facilitator, you are there to do what you can to help people learn how to use VPS in their work.

Create a learning space. Pay attention not only to the words and activities in the curriculum, but also to the dynamics (interactions, confusion, relationships) of the classroom. Creating a learning space in which people support one another, work together, and are curious is half the work of this training. We have found that using the following skills and techniques will help you foster a great training atmosphere.

- **Model good listening skills.** Using Partnering Skills will help you in your role as trainer. It also will demonstrate the skills of Partnering and show how it feels to have someone really listen. Demonstrating understanding and showing empathy for a person's words, feelings, and beliefs can open up conversation, bring deeper levels of sharing within the class, and help people feel heard, which can make it a safe place to ask questions, tell one's story, and take in essential concepts and skills. Use the skill judiciously, however, as there will be times when you need to close the conversation and move forward with the lesson. Feel free to point out the Partnering skills you are using to help participants “see” the skills used successfully right in front of their eyes. Point out this skill only after Module 2, though, or participants will not know what you are saying!
- **Know where you're heading.** Always have in mind the content and skills you are teaching, and where you want the class to go next. When people get confused, reorient. If *you* get confused, reorient (this will help everyone, trust us!). Consider the group's questions,

comments, and stories in the context of what you are teaching. It will help you link together the content that the class brings and the content you are teaching.

- **Encourage participation.** Support participants to be involved in discussions by using the following techniques:
 - **Memorize names.** It is helpful to address participants by name and to tie participants' contributions, questions, and stories to the training content. One VPS trainer creates a "Class Map" for herself during introductions on the first day, drawing a simple picture of the tables in the room, and noting names, roles, and/or organizations around each table, according to where each person is sitting. This has helped in remembering names quickly, and can engender trust and greater participation. Another trainer uses name placards in front of each participant so that not only she, but the participants, too, can start to get to know each other by name.
 - **Invite discussions** about everything from the definitions of content to how participants might use skills in their own work. Use discussion-promoting leads, such as, "What do you think about...", "How would you define...", and "Why should we..."
 - **Connect participant comments to the content** in order to facilitate learning and connection to concepts, skills, and tools. You might make the connections yourself by saying things, such as, "that's a good example of" or "like Mary said before, ..." Or you might ask students to connect a story, comment, or question to the content with questions, such as "can anyone identify what skill the person in Jacqueline's story might need?" or "is the person in Joe's example choosing, getting, or keeping?"
 - **Encourage class members to discuss** possible solutions to questions that come up. Get people to talk with each other, not only to you. Ask questions like, "How would you all approach Joe's situation, now that you know a bit about VPS?" and "How could you paraphrase what Lena is saying right now?"
 - **Get people to work together**, in dyads (groups of two), small groups (3-4), and even in a large group to practice new skills or understand new content. Large group discussions yield less participation by each member, but allow each person to hear everyone else. Smaller discussion groups allow each person to contribute more and for each small group to dive deeply into a discussion/activity; however, each group hears less from other groups. The type of group you pick may depend on time constraints, whether you as trainer need a quick break, and what kind of practice you think the class needs. No matter which grouping you use, be clear and concrete in your instructions so that participants feel confident in what they are supposed to do in their group.

Modify the training based on the pace of the class. Does the class need to process and/or work through examples? Are they picking up the material quickly, and want more time for the

exercises? Modify your approach to meet the class where they are. Add or modify practices, discussions, and exercises as needed, according to their needs.

Offer variety in your training strategy. Bring the energy of the room up (especially after lunch!) by getting people to work with someone new across the room. Exercises in which people are doing, talking, and/or moving can help people move through low-energy periods. Stand up and move around the classroom as you teach when you want to gently bring energy up. Do a large group stretch to get the blood moving. Give exercises as a way to give trainees a way to understand complicated information; and remember, we often learn best by doing! Balance talking with the use of slides, class discussion, small and large group exercises, and individual writing exercises as needed. Though the curriculum attempts to give you what you need, only you know the needs of your training group and strategies that work best for you.

Balance the needs of the individual and those of the class. There may be times when an individual needs additional support in order to understand a concept or to gain a skill. However, the needs of the class as an entity have to be weighed against those of the individual. You may want to offer to spend a few minutes after class to help someone who was struggling, if the rest of the class is ready to move on. It is not necessary that every person understand every detail by the end of the training, as they are responsible for reviewing materials on their own as well. You may recognize one person as a “barometer” of the class, someone who indicates when the class is confused or ready to move on.

Be fair and supportive. If you write items on the board, make sure to write something down for each person who participates. Recognize contributions verbally and in writing in order to help the class to feel safe, supported, and valued. Doing these things will encourage participation and will facilitate learning.

Focus on skills. They say that about 20% of people will remember something after hearing about it, and about 80% will remember after doing it. The primary focus of this course is to develop skills and help trainees feel comfortable using VPS tools, so it is key to engage people in learning by helping them to think it through and by trying it out. Focus on getting in enough information to get to the “DO” part of the curriculum: active exercises that help people try on the material, work together, and create more energy for the training. Try not to talk for more than 15 minutes before having people DO something, such as a discussion or breaking into pairs to brainstorm a definition. Be creative, and get people thinking, talking, and doing.

Support the development of skills. Walk around during exercises and listen in. Tell people that you will do this, and that you will offer support as they do the work. Don't be afraid to gently break in to the conversation, if necessary, to correct and support people as they use new skills.

Give breaks. We are not used to sitting as much as we do while we are in training! Balance the need for getting through the material against getting the blood flowing again so that the class can concentrate. Offer breaks in the schedule, at least 15 minutes in the morning, ½ hour to 1-

hour lunch, and a 15-minute break in the afternoon (if offering full-day training sessions). Invite people to take individual breaks as they need them, so that individuals can stretch, get water, etc., without fear of offending you or interrupting the training.

Relax and have fun. If you enjoy what you do, it's likely that the participants in your training will, too. Bring your passion, your stories, and your attention to the class. And know that the people in your training are rooting for you to do well, especially because if you do, it will be a great training for them, too!

After the Training

Evaluate your experience. Reflect on the training. Did you get as far as you had wanted to? Were there areas that participants still need work on? Were there stories you had planned to tell, but didn't? Were people engaged?

Gather participant experiences. Ask participants for their perceptions of the training. Ask verbally and perhaps with a written evaluation, what they liked the best, what they disliked the most, what pertained most and least to their work, and what changes they would suggest for future sessions or trainings. Doing this will help you design future sessions and will give you information about what participants need as they apply new information and skills. It also will allow participants to know that their opinions really do matter to you and the host organization.

Plan future trainings and follow-up. Use evaluation information (written or discussion) to plan next steps. Will there be more trainings? How will you follow up on homework assignments or practical application of new skills? Take a little time at the end of the training or afterward to communicate with the class about how you will continue the learning. Follow up with participants as agreed upon.

Provide Supervision/Support: VPS training itself is designed to introduce people to the concepts, skills, and tools of Vocational Peer Support. Participants get a chance to experience VPS a bit while in the classroom with you, using their own lives as examples. However, VPS is a peer-to-peer approach, and participants will need a chance to practice new skills with the people they serve. Plan with the class what kind of support they need from training staff. Examples might be monthly calls with the whole group after the training, or bi-weekly individual phone calls, to support people as they used the new tools and skills. Structure the calls or meetings around assignments, story-telling (stories from actual use of the material), questions, and challenges. Ask participants to identify where in the VPS framework (*considering, choosing, getting, keeping*) the person may be in, and ask them to brainstorm together what skills, tools, and discussion prompts they might use to scaffold the person.

Training Preparation

As you prepare for teaching VPS by reviewing the lesson plan and the other training materials, it is useful to understand some of the underlying conceptual frameworks of the teaching methodology.

ROPES is a framework originally developed by Carkhuff and Berenson (1987) and adapted by Boston University (Cohen, Danley & Nemec, 1985). ROPES is presented below.

R **eview:** Review the group's current knowledge or understanding of the content you are going to teach. This will help you assess where they are now, and how much information they need. Ask questions, such as: What do you know about...? What is your experience with ...? Why would it be important to...?

O **verview:** Orient people to what is coming: give a definition, discuss why it is important to do (the benefit of doing it), and show an example. Give the class the "big idea." This is your chance to tell people about the big picture. Engage people as much as possible. Talk about the content and use the opportunity to show what either the process looks like, or what the end result should be.

P **resentation:** Teach the "how to." The "presentation of the skill" is the section in which you can get into the nitty-gritty of the skill performance: Teach the steps the peer specialist needs to take; show and discuss the tools and discussion prompts that will help organize explorations and decision-making.

E **xercise:** Give people the opportunity to work with the material through practice. Offer real-life practices with each other, role plays, written scenarios to work with, or brainstorming. The more real, the better! Give directions, offer time to work together/be interactive/active, and offer support throughout. Invite people to share what they came up with. Process with the group what was successful and what still needs work.

S **ummary:** Sum up learnings. Help the group reflect on what they learned, and which skills they want to sharpen. Ask questions, such as: What did you learn? What's the one idea you will leave with? What skill do you think you were best at? What do you still want to work on? How will you work on it?

Overview of the Materials

Introduction to the Trainee Handbook and Toolkit:

The *Trainee Handbook and Toolkit* will be used while teaching participants VPS concepts and skills and to introduce participants to the tools useful in providing VPS. The *Trainee Handbook* includes the following parts:

- “What to Expect” sections – overviewing the Module
- Informational Sections – overviewing content for the Module
- Class Discussion Questions – to be asked of the class to get them thinking
- Small exercises – for discussion or as an exercise
- Examples - of the process and potential outcomes
- Discussion Prompts – to get exploration going, used with or instead of tool
- Exercises – which can be done individually, in small groups, or as large group
- Tools – for participants to use as pen-and-paper exercise in explorations

Materials you will need for the training: The following are materials you will need to have at the ready as you teach VPS skills.

- Trainee Handbook and Toolkit (for all participants and trainers)
- Trainer’s Guide (for trainers only)
- VPS Training Slides
- Laptop, projector, and cords
- Flipchart and paper or whiteboard/blackboard
- Markers (check whether permanent or dry-erase needed) or Chalk
- Extra copies of exercises and Tools you plan to use in exercises for students who do not wish to write in the Trainee Handbook
- Pens/pencils for you and trainees

Optional Materials: Optional materials are those that you may want to consider for your training. Feel free to add to this list.

- Extra paper for trainees
- Chime or other noisemaker to bring people back from exercises
- Extension cords
- Pipe cleaners and/or small hand-manipulation objects to engage creativity
- Water/coffee/tea/snacks for participants

Format of the Lesson Plan

The format uses both ROPES (see page 18) and a “Tell-Show-Do” format to give trainees direction and support. Tell, Show, and Do are all needed for skill training because people need to hear what it is that they need to do, understand why it would be helpful to learn, how it needs to be done, see what it should look like, and have time to actually do it.

The following offers you definitions of the “command words” that are in the Lesson Plan. These commands are suggestions for what can be said, pointed out, and discussed.

Command Words: You will see these commands throughout the Trainer's Guide. Use them to guide your teaching:

- **Tell:** a definition or make a major point.
- **Show:** an example or other reference in the Handbook, or create a live demonstration of the process in front of the class.
- **Do:** an exercise, individually, in a large group, in small groups, or in pairs.
- **Make the Point:** Offer a secondary point in the curriculum, additional thought, or perspective.
- **Ask:** questions to get class discussions going and to challenge participants to thinking through the content at hand.
- **Discuss:** Get the class talking!
- **Review:** Go over previously discussed content or the class' experience with an activity or exercise.
- **Orient:** Give an overview of the activity, purpose of the activity, and everyone's roles.
- **Sum Up:** Summarize learnings for an exercise, discussion, or Module.
- **Assign:** Give for “homework” or practice assignment.

Notes in Italics: means that it is a note for the trainer only, not to be read or said aloud.

Lesson Plan

In this Lesson Plan, you will see Commands to the left, such as “Tell,” Show,” or “Discuss,” that indicate what trainers are meant to do at that point in the lesson.

The Instructions/Script are either words to say in the moment, or indications of what to work on with the class. Content below that shows up in *ITALICS* are meant as directions to the trainer and are not meant to be spoken aloud. Wording without italics is designed as a script that you may use while teaching.

Anchors on the right, in the form of Slide numbers, PowerPoint slide images, and Trainee Handbook page titles and numbers, are there to keep you grounded in your location in the curriculum and slides. In addition, Trainee Handbook pages are listed to allow you to know instantly where to direct participants.

Introduction to VPS Training

Suggested schedule for VPS Training Introduction

This Introduction is designed as a 1-hour Module.

10 min Orient

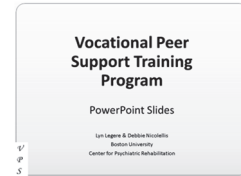
20 min Introduction Exercise

30 min Orient to overall Training

Command	Instructions/Script	Anchor
Orient	<p><i>WELCOME: Start with a welcome to the class. If someone from leadership is coming to say a few words, include that person in the welcome.</i></p> <p><i>Go over any pre-class business items, such as signing in, handouts, “house-keeping:” restrooms, coffee, etc.; go over the agenda of the week/training session.</i></p>	
Do	<p><i>Introduction Exercise: Ask people to pair up with someone in the class, preferably someone they don’t know well. If there</i></p>	Slides 1-3

is an odd number of people, a group of three is fine, or, alternatively, a trainer can pair up with the person.

Have them meet each other, with the goal of introducing the other person to the rest of the class (5-10 min). Remind people to share about themselves – about who they are, not about diagnosis. Guide the introductions with ideas, such as work role(s), dream job, or “what you do for fun.”



Ask

- Why did you come to the Vocational Peer Support Training?
- What are you hoping to get out of this training program?

Orient to the training

Orient to the goal of the program (skills-building in Vocational Peer Support).

Introduce the materials to the class.

Orient to how the class will be structured and training topics.

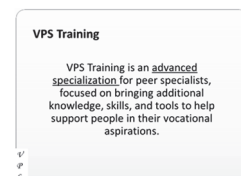
Introduce and discuss what people will walk away with as a result of the training.

Handbook p. 4-7
Review How to Use this Material, Course Intro, Training Topics, What will we walk away with?

Tell

Because this is a skills-building training, we'll be doing a lot of practice right in the class, and you also will do some “community learning;” working with the material in real life in your everyday work. There also will be ongoing support after the class. We'll talk more about this as we near the end of the class.

Slides 4-8



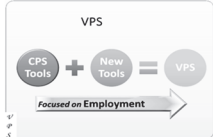
Module 1: Vocational Recovery and Vocational Peer Support

Suggested schedule for Module 1

Time allotments for all Modules are suggestions and may be modified to meet trainer or participant needs.

This Module is designed to be a 1.5 hour Module.

- 15 min Review and Review of Peer Support activity*
- 15 min Vocational Recovery and A/D List*
- 20 min Overview of VPS: Mission, Values, Activities*
- 10 min Scaffolding overview*
- 15 min Exercise*
- 15 min Summary and questions*

Orient	<i>Start Module 1. Review What to Expect in Module 1.</i>	Workbook p. 9 What to Expect in Module 1 and 1.1 Voc Recovery
Review	<i>What trainees already know about Vocational Peer Support, the role of work in recovery, and the peer support role in supporting work and school.</i>	Slides 9-14 
Do	<i>Review of Peer Support activity. Invite people to take a few minutes to write in answers to the questions, then review with the class.</i> <i>The focus should be on helping people to remember the core elements of peer support that will remain key to providing VPS.</i>	1.2 Review of Peer Support Principles
Tell	<i>Give and discuss Vocational Recovery definition.</i>	1.3 What is Vocational Recovery?
Discuss	<i>Discuss what Vocational Recovery is and what it is not.</i>	Slides 15-22

Invite people to think about what meaningful work is to them, and why.



Review *Slides regarding "D List" and "A List."
Focus on what happens to the person when confronted with a list of "D's" or "A's."*

1.4 So What Are People Up Against...

Discuss how trainees might relate to the deficit-based and asset-based experience.

Slides 23-38



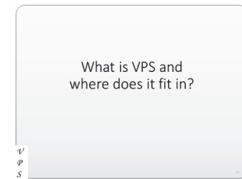
Discuss *The mission and foundations of Vocational Peer Support.*

1.5 VPS Mission

Show *The VPS "House" showing the major activities of VPS, which will provide an anchor throughout.*

Slides 39-41

Discuss how the Motivational Foundations provide a base of the House, that Consider, Choose, Get, Keep, and Leave are the major structures of the House, and that Skills and Supports for Success and Satisfaction hold the house together from another angle (the roof).



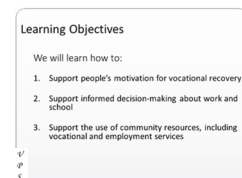
Make the Point *The "VPS House" provides us with a visual of the process of supporting someone in VPS and shows us where we are in the overall framework of VPS.*

Discuss *Values of VPS*

1.6 VPS Values

Ask trainees to add their thoughts about the individual values and to add any values that they think are important.

Slides 42-44



Show *Snapshot of VPS Activities* 1.7 Snapshot of VPS Activities

These activities are examples of how peer supporters operationalize the mission and values of VPS.

Discuss *Scaffolding is a term used widely in VPS. Discuss the idea of scaffolding in construction, e.g., around a steeple. Ask for ideas about what scaffolding’s purpose is.* 1.8 Scaffolding in Peer Support

Make the point that scaffolding does not create or build the building, rather, that scaffolding is a structure of support around the steeple, while the steeple is being built or strengthened.

Slides 45-60



Tell *The definition in Scaffolding in VPS.*

Do *Review potential VPS scaffolds, and invite students to add additional ideas. Alternatively, you could brainstorm and write ideas on the board.* 1.9 Tool: Scaffolding in Peer Support

Introduce the Tool on Scaffolding in Peer Support.

Do *Invite people to pair up, preferably with someone they do not work with every day. Invite them to discuss the questions on the Module 1 Summary Exercise. Discuss as a large group.* 1.10 Module 1 Summary Exercise

Sum up *Learnings, thoughts, feelings as you wrap up Module 1. Review major points, such as what is vocational peer support, vocational recovery, and scaffolding.* Slide 61



Module 2: Partnering To Support Vocational Recovery

Suggested schedule for Module 2

This Module is designed as a half-day Module.

- 10 min Review of existing participant knowledge*
- 30 min Overview of Partnering and initial exercise*
- 10 min Overview of Partnering skills*
- 30 min Orienting*
- 15 min Break*
- 45 min Listening: Attending, Paraphrasing, Questions*
- 30 min Sharing Your Vocational Recovery Stories*
- 10 min Summary*

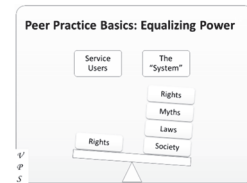
Review *Participants’ experience with partnering. Ask what they think about when they hear the word, “partnering,” and what they know about it already.* Handbook p. 20

Orient *To Module 2: Partnering to Support Vocational Recovery* Slide 62



Orient In this Module, we will focus on developing and strengthening relationships that foster vocational recovery. Slides 63-67

We will learn about what is meant by “partnering,” and then learn skills that will help us to enhance our own ability to partner.



Discuss *What to Expect from Module 2 and The Big Question* Handbook p. 21

- Ask**
- Why do you think that learning about Partnering could be important in VPS?
 - How do you think it could help you?



Do *Invite people to pair up with someone they have not worked with yet. Ask them to discuss the questions on Partnering to Support Vocational Recovery.*

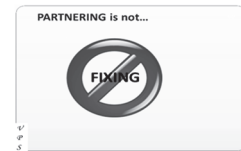
Facilitate a discussion afterward about their answers. Focus on what people think effective partnering is all about.

2.1 Partnering to Support Voc Recovery

Discuss *Discuss the ways in which our usual conversations with people are not intentional partnering to support vocational recovery.*

2.2 Partnering is NOT...

Slide 69

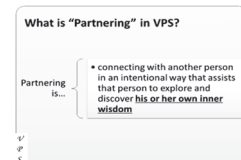


Tell *The definitions of partnering listed on Partnering: A Definition.*

2.3 Partnering: A Def...

Discuss the skills they will be learning on subsequent pages.

Slide 70



Show *An example of partnering, by reading the introduction to Reggie and Miguel.*

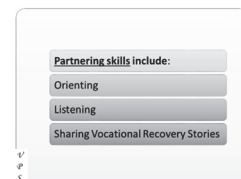
2.4 Example: Reggie and Miguel

Discuss what people notice about the example. Look for responses about specific things Miguel did or thought about in relation to partnering.

Tell There are three major skills of Partnering that we will focus on in VPS. We will learn them in order, and in detail.

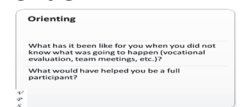
Slide 71

They include Orienting, Listening, and Sharing your Vocational Recovery Story.



Ask *Questions about what it's like to not be oriented.*

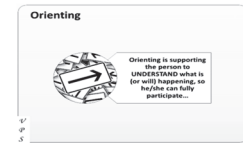
Slide 72



Tell *Discuss with participants the definition, benefits and steps to Orienting (1st skill of Partnering).* 2.5 Orienting

Focus on the “what, why, and how” of orienting.

Slides 73-75



Show *Example of Orienting. Invite people to read, either individually or out loud, one-by-one, about how Miguel supported Reggie to be oriented at a team meeting. Discuss the questions at the bottom of the page.* 2.6 Example of Orienting

Do *Partnering Exercise: Orienting.* 2.7 Partnering Exercise: Orienting

Note: *In this exercise, the trainers are expected to come up with an exercise to which participants can orient. This could be an exercise in the book that you have not had time for or that you saved for this moment, or something as simple as tying one's shoes.*

Either way, the point is for the person who is orienting to have the chance to explore the what, the why, and the how of the partner participating in an exercise. Participants can continue on to start doing the exercise. The better oriented the partner is, the easier this will be to do.

Invite the class to find a partner, again someone they haven't worked with yet. Read the instructions on the page. Orient the participants to the activity. Discuss learnings through the Questions for Class Discussion.

Show *Orienting Discussion Prompts* 2.8 Orienting Discussion Prompts

Orient to Discussion Prompts, which are a Tool to help the peer supporter to engage in conversations that support vocational recovery.

Show *Orienting Checklist Tool. This is to be used whenever people want to be sure that they are orienting correctly.* 2.9 Orienting Checklist Tool

Tell Next, we will be learning how to Listen in a way that supports vocational recovery. **2.10 Listening**

Listening is more than hearing: it involves not only the ears and brain; we have to engage our hearts, minds, and intention.

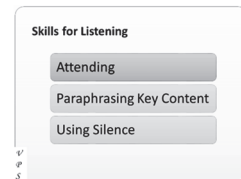
Slides 76-78



Discuss *The questions at the top of the page: How do you know someone is listening...? What are some of the things you to ensure you are listening?*

Tell *Talk about the three skill areas listed in Listening: Attending, Paraphrasing, and Using Silence.*

Slides 80-83



Show *Example of Listening: Reggie. Invite people to read, either silently, or out loud, one-by-one.*

2.11 Example of Listening: Reggie

Discuss what people notice about the example, focusing on what Miguel did to Listen.

Discuss *The skill of Attending, including what it is, why do it, and how to do it.*

2.12 Listening: Attending

Discuss SOLER and show people how to do the various items.

Show *Checklist: Clearing Distractions.*

2.13 Checklist: Clearing Distractions

Review with the class how to clear distractions, both external and internal. Get their ideas about other strategies.

Tell Now that we have learned about the skill of Attending, we will spend some time with the skill of Paraphrasing.

2.14 Listening: Paraphrasing

Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Listen for what participants already know and don't know about paraphrasing.

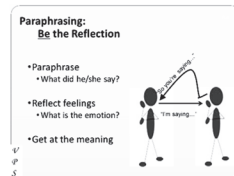
Tell *The definition, why paraphrasing is important, and "Paraphrasing is..." Discuss Leads.*

Make the Point *That leads can be overused, and must be used thoughtfully and comfortably.*

Note: *People sometimes articulate their fear that paraphrasing is "putting words in someone's mouth."*

Make the point when relevant that paraphrasing is demonstrating your understanding, rather than speaking for the person.

Slides 84-87



Show *Example of Paraphrasing*

Ask the class what they notice about what Miguel did in the example to listen to Reggie.

2.15 Example of Paraphrasing

Make the Point *Miguel offered Reggie the opportunity to get in touch with his inner wisdom, by listening more than talking during their conversation. When Miguel does talk, it is to show Reggie that he understands, by paraphrasing the main points that Reggie made. Miguel can tell he's reflected back the information well when Reggie says things like, "Yeah!" or "I am!," and then follows it up with more of his thoughts. Every once in a while, Miguel will summarize a whole segment of their conversation, just to make sure he's really "getting" what Reggie is saying.*

Do *Practice: Paraphrasing.*

Read the statements by Robbie and Kate, then the three paraphrase options. Ask the students to pick which they like best, and why.

2.16 Practice: Paraphrasing

Give them a minute to write an even better paraphrase, then invite them to share what they wrote.

Note: *Support the students to write a paraphrase that is brief, in different words, and gets at the meaning of what the person is communicating.*

Show *Paraphrasing Checklist Tool* 2.17 Paraphrasing Checklist Tool

Discuss the checklists, notes about paraphrasing, and leads one can use. Discuss how people might use this checklist in their work.

Tell We will continue to work on paraphrasing throughout this training, along with the other Partnering skills. 2.18 Sandwiching Questions

Now we will take a few minutes to learn about how to “Sandwich” our questions.

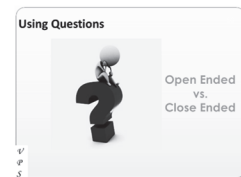
Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Tell Sandwiching questions is showing the person that you understand what is being said both before and after asking a question *(from the box in the center)*

Discuss the picture of “sandwiching questions,” possible benefits to sandwiching one’s questions instead of asking question after question, and when to use sandwiching as a partnering strategy.

Note: *Questions asked one after another in a conversation or even in an intake or other assessment can feel like an interrogation. Help people understand that paraphrasing around questions may eliminate the need for questions altogether.*

Slides 88-89



Show *Example of Sandwiching Questions* 2.19 Example of Sandwiching Questions

Invite the class to read through the example (out loud or individually, your choice).

Discuss *What the class noticed about Miguel's partnering, and how he used Sandwiching Questions.*

Show *Sandwiching Questions Checklist Tool* 2.20 Sandwiching Questions Checklist Tool

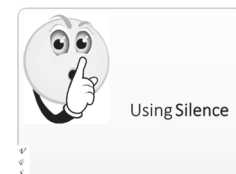
Review the tool and ask the class how they might use this tool in their own work.

Tell Now that we have discussed how to Listen through Paraphrasing and Sandwiching Questions, let's talk a bit about how to Use Silence as a partnering strategy. 2.21 Listening: Using Silence

Ask *Questions to Ponder*

In particular, discuss the difficulty of being silent. For many of us, our anxiety about "getting it right" and wanting to support others actually can get in the way of true partnership. Using silence as a partnering strategy can leave room for the other person to think and to express himself or herself.

Slide 90



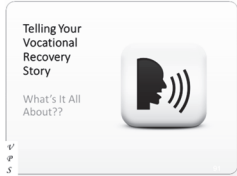
Do *Exercise*

This exercise is a "Real Play," in which the two partners will have a real conversation. The two must not play a role, rather be themselves, in the moment.

Read the instructions, give people about five minutes to do the exercise.

Discuss

- What did it feel like to be silent as the listener?
- What did it feel like to be listened to by someone who did not speak?

Show	<i>Using Silence Checklist Tool</i> <i>Discuss how people might use this tool in their work.</i>	2.22 Using Silence Checklist Tool
Tell	<p>The last skill we will learn in Partnering is Sharing Your Vocational Recovery Story.</p> <p>Sharing your Vocational Recovery story is a cornerstone of Vocational Peer Support practice.</p> <p>Your Vocational Recovery Story is a variation of your recovery story. Today, we will think about how we can tell stories of hope to inspire people in their recovery, reflect on our own Vocational Recovery Stories, and do some practice.</p>	2.23 Sharing Your Vocational Recovery Story
Review	<p><i>Sharing our perspective or our story.</i></p> <p><i>Ask people for other items they would add to the list.</i></p>	
Show	<i>Example of Sharing Part of a Vocational Recovery Story. Invite people to read the example of Miguel and Reggie (either to themselves, taking turns, or out loud).</i>	2.24 Example of Sharing Part of a Voc Rec Story
Ask	<p><i>Questions to Ponder</i></p> <p><i>Respond to participant answers and questions.</i></p>	
Make the Point	<p>Often, rather than sharing a full-length “vocational recovery story” that has a beginning, middle and end, we share a ‘snippet’ or single experience that most closely matches what the person is describing.</p> <p>When we can share about a time when we felt the same way, it strengthens the relationship and our own mutuality.</p>	<p>Slides 91-96</p> 
Do	<p><i>Exercise: Sharing our Vocational Recovery Stories</i></p> <p><i>You may invite people to do this as an individual exercise or a small group exercise, depending on the energy of the group. Ask</i></p>	2.25 Exercise: Sharing our Voc Recovery Stories

people to share their answers with the large group.

Look for answers such as: Miguel should listen to what Reggie's concern is; Potential paraphrase: "You feel frustrated because it's hard to keep hope alive when you don't get positive messages from the people around you!"

Do *Invite participants to individually write snippets of important moments in their own vocational recovery history. Ask about moments that stand out, that have potential for inspiring hope in others.* 2.26 Exercise: Your Vocational Recovery Story

Alternately, this might be assigned for "homework."

Show *Considering Sharing Vocational Recovery Stories Checklist Tool* 2.27 Considering Sharing Vocational...
Orient people to how they might use this tool, and ask how they picture using the tool in their work.

Do *One Last Partnering Exercise.* 2.28 One Last Partnering Exercise
If you are running out of time, this also might be given for "homework" and discussed in the next session.

Assign *Practical Assignment: Your Vocational Recovery Story* 2.29 Practical Assignment: Your Voc Recovery Story
This assignment may take the place of, or given in addition to, the "2.26 Exercise: Your Vocational Recovery Story."
The point of this exercise is to think through a snippet of one's own vocational recovery story in preparation of sharing it with another class member in the next session.

Module 3: Building Motivational Foundations

Suggested schedule for Module 3.

This Module is designed as a full-day Module.

- 30 min *Review of homework and exercise*
- 30 min *Overview of Motivational Foundations, example*
- 15 min *Overview of Need*
- 15 min *Break*
- 60 min *Exploring Need incl. examples and exercise(s)*
- 15 min *Building Need*
- 30 min *Overview of Beliefs, example*
- 60 min *Lunch break*
- 45 min *Exploring and Building Beliefs*
- 15 min *Break*
- 20 min *Overview of Information*
- 40 min *Exploring and Building Information*
- 20 min *Overview of Support*
- 20 min *Exploring and Building Support*
- 20 min *Summary and Assignment(s)*

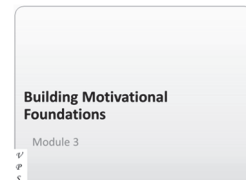
**Ask/
Review**

- What do you remember about Vocational Peer in general?
- What is Vocational Recovery?
- What are the skills of Partnering?

Handbook p. 51
Module 3: Building
Motivational
Foundations

Help students to review, remember, and process the content of the last two modules as a group. Celebrate their new-found knowledge.

Slide 97



Review

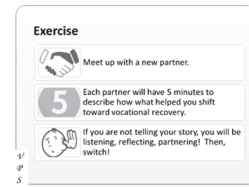
Any homework they have done.

Review written exercises as a large group, or alternatively, in small groups in which they share individual answers, and then have a quick large-group discussion to discuss learnings.

Invite students to sit with a partner they have not worked with yet, in order to share a snippet of their vocational recovery stories.

Alternately, if they have done this already, do exercise on Slide 98

Alternate: slide 98



Orient *What to Expect from Module 3.*

Handbook p. 52
What to Expect
from Module 3

Review *Participants' current understanding of Motivational Foundations:*

How do we tend to talk about motivation now in services?

When we talk about work or school as options for people labeled with psychiatric conditions, how is motivation talked about?

Slides 99-100



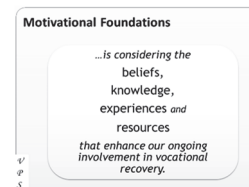
Overview *Motivational Foundations Overview*

Make note of the Foundations section of the VPS "House" picture.

Make the point that Motivational Foundations is not a "ready or not" process. In other words, that it is an inclusive, rather than an exclusive (i.e., excluding people from services), process.

3.1 Motivational
Foundations
Overview

Slides 101-104



Ask *Questions to Ponder*

Help participants to identify their own "Motivational Foundations" that support change in their own lives.

3.2 Foundations of
Vocational
Recovery

Tell Motivational Foundations are the Beliefs, Knowledge, Experience, and Resources that enhance or hinder our involvement in vocational recovery.

Motivational Foundations are those critical factors that help us to consider for ourselves, “Do I stay where I am, or do I move in a new direction?”

Show *Foundational Building Blocks*

Discuss the four Foundations and corresponding questions.

3.3 Foundational Building Blocks

Slide 105



Discuss *Motivational Foundations: Overall Process*

*Discuss the 3-step process
Show the Four Motivational Foundations Pyramid*

3.4 Motivational Foundations: Overall Process.

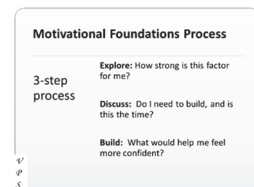
Show *Example: Exploring Motivational Foundations*

3.5 Example: Exploring Motivational Foundations

- Ask**
- What do you notice about this example of working with Motivational Foundations?
 - What do you see Miguel doing to support Reggie?

Orient Now that we have talked about and seen an example of the overall picture of Motivational Foundations, we will learn about the first Foundation, Need.

Slides 106-111



Ask *Foundation: Need
Questions to Ponder
Respond to participant answers and questions.*

3.6 Foundation: Need

Tell *Read to the class: “What is it” section.*

Discuss what makes Need: internal and external “push” to make a change.

Discuss the “How do we do it?” section.

Make the Point Need is a question of how satisfied am I with my current situation.

Need is not related to how much I liked or disliked my last job or school.

Need is about how satisfied or dissatisfied I am with my current job or school, or, alternatively, with NOT having a job or learning environment in my life now.

Show *Example: Exploring Need*

3.7 Example:
Exploring Need

Note: *New example pairs will be introduced throughout the training. We will hear from Reggie and Miguel later on.*

Discuss *Question: Do you agree with Ming's idea? Why or why not?*

Note: *This is not an individual's work example, rather an assessment by a peer in the group home. It makes the point that sometimes what looks like “satisfaction” with current circumstances sometimes can be resignation with what has become a seemingly unavoidable status quo.*

Show *Exploring Need Tool: Unemployed*

3.8 Exploring Need
Tool: Unemployed

Discuss use of this tool for people not working now.

Discuss process of using the tool – lead the person through series of questions, exploring what's behind the answer. The point of the Tool is not to fill out a piece of paper, rather to support the person to explore their Need or lack of Need to change their work or school situation. At the end of the document, the person can summarize his or her overall satisfaction.

Note: High satisfaction (“I like where I am!” indicates low Need, and vice-versa.

Show *Exploring Need Tool: Currently Employed* 3.9 Exploring Need Tool: Currently Employed

Discuss use of this Tool as for use with people who are working or going to school now.

Show *Discussion Prompts: Exploring Need* 3.10 Discussion Prompts: Exploring Need

Note: *These discussion prompts are available to support conversations about Need, and to enhance the use of the Exploring Need Tools.*

Make the point to participants that this list of Discussion Prompts includes questions or prompts you can use with people who are currently working or going to school, and with those who are not.

You may need to point out that if participants are working with folks who are looking at school, then they may need to “translate” the Tools and Discussion Prompts.

Do 15 min. *Invite participants to partner up with someone they have not worked with yet. Each pair will work together throughout Motivational Foundations.* 3.8–3.10 Exploring Need Tools and/or Discussion Prompts

They will have a chance to Explore Need about a current School or Learning situation. Point out that if they are not currently in a formal learning situation, they should explore how satisfied they are with that.

Ask students to decide who will Explore Need about their own situation and who will facilitate the exploration. The job of the facilitator is to orient, listen, and facilitate exploration. The person exploring his or her own situation is to do just that.

Have them take about 15 minutes for the exploration.

- Discuss** *Their learnings:*
- What did you learn about Need?
 - If you were exploring your own situation, what was it like to Explore your own Need for a change?
 - If you were facilitator, what did you learn about what it takes to facilitate that exploration?
 - What questions remain about Need?

Tell We learned earlier that the overall process of working with the Motivational Foundations is to Explore, Discuss, and Build.

Now that we've learned how to support someone to explore Need, we will discuss how to Build Need.

We might Build any of the Motivational Foundations if, after discussing it with the person, he or she wants to increase information, support, experience, or resources.

Tell Building Motivational Foundations is supporting the person to increase confidence about moving forward with choosing, getting, and keeping work or school.

Discuss *The dilemma of Building Need: that of building dissatisfaction so that the person has more need.*

Discuss the ethical dilemma inherent, i.e., that as peer supporters, we cannot work to make someone's life worse, rather if the person is interested (and only if), we can support the person to get more information, experience, etc.

Note: *Building Need is a lot like looking over the fence to see if the grass is greener on the other side. If it looks great, we may start to feel less comfortable with our current situation. This is a delicate balance! Many folks who have little Need will not want to work with us on this, and the peer worker may either engage (partner) or disengage (or work on other things).*

3.11 Building Need

Slide 112

**If Need for Change is low:
Building Need**

Building Need means the person is relatively satisfied with NOT working.

What can we do to support someone with low Need?

- Stop talking about work – connect with the person about other things until work becomes of interest.
- Continue inviting the person to activities, work opportunities, etc.
- Invite speakers & “alums” who can speak to vocational recovery

Orient We have learned about Need, the first Motivational Foundation, which is about dissatisfaction with the current circumstance.

Now we will learn more about Beliefs.

3.12 Foundation: Beliefs

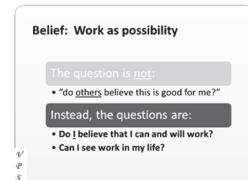
Slide 113



- Ask**
- What are some of the beliefs you hear people talk about when it comes to work and school?
 - What were some of your own beliefs about work before you became a peer supporter?
 - How did these beliefs help or hinder your vocational life?

Discuss *The four Beliefs that support a strong foundation, and why explore and build those Beliefs.*

Slides 114-116



Show *Example: Exploring Beliefs*

3.13 Example: Exploring Beliefs

- Ask**
- What do you notice about this example of Alicia and Elizabeth?
 - How did Elizabeth explore Beliefs with Alicia?

Show *Exploring Beliefs Tool*

3.14 Exploring Beliefs Tool

Show *Discussion Prompts: Beliefs*

3.15 Discussion Prompts: Beliefs

These Prompts are used in conversational explorations, and to facilitate use of the Tool.

Discuss *Informed decisions in the context of Information.
Knowledge and awareness of Options and Myself.*

Slides 119-121



Ask *Question to Ponder*

Show *Information Example: Jackson
Discuss scaffolds that would support Jackson.*

3.18 Information Example: Jackson

Show *Exploring Information Tool
Exploring Information: Discussion Prompts*

3.19–3.20 Exploring Info Tool & Discussion

Do *Exploring Information exercise.

Using the Exploring Information Tool, invite participants to partner up again, and explore Information.

The Facilitator will partner with the other person, who will explore their own level of Information.

Discuss learnings from the exercise.*

3.19 Exploring Information Tool

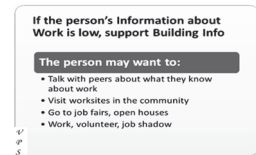
Tell *Building Information definition at top of page.*

3.21 Building Information

Do *Small Group Exercise. Invite people to get into groups of 4-5 people.

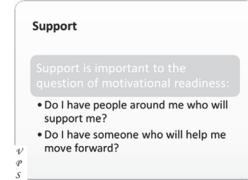
Ask them to brainstorm activities that might scaffold someone to Build Information about the categories listed.*

Slides 122-123



Orient We will next explore the last Motivational Foundation, that of Support. 3.22 Foundation: Support

Tell *Read the definition and list of forms that support comes in.* Slides 124-125



Ask *Questions to Ponder.
You may want to write the examples on the board.*

Discuss *People supports may come in forms of emotional and concrete supports.*

Show *Exploring Support Example: Sophia.
Explore questions at bottom of page.* 3.23 Exploring Support Example: Sophia

Do *If you have time, invite people to get back into their partner pairs to explore Supports.* 3.24 Exploring Supports Tool

Facilitators will use their partnering skills to support exploration, and partners will explore their own situations.

Discuss their learnings, especially about the different kinds of supports that foster vocational recovery.

Discuss *Building Supports* 3.25 Building Supports

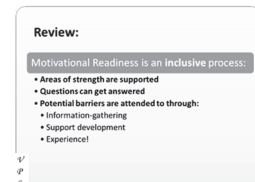
Write on the board different ideas people have for developing supports for vocational recovery.

Slides 126-127



Show *Discussion Prompts: Exploring Support.* 3.26 Discussion Prompts: Support

Do	<p><i>Summary Tool: My Overall Confidence.</i></p> <p><i>If there is time, invite partner pairs to review their exercises and summarize them on this Tool. They can connect the “dots” to see a graphic image of their summary on the table provided.</i></p> <p><i>Ask the pairs to discuss Highs and Lows, and the person’s confidence about moving forward with vocational change.</i></p>	3.27 Summary Tool: My Overall Confidence
Show	<p><i>Building Motivational Foundations Examples.</i></p> <p><i>This is more of a reference page, but can summarize Building all of the Motivational Foundations.</i></p>	3.28 Building Motivational Foundations Examples
Discuss	<p><i>Pitfalls to Watch Out For.</i></p>	3.29 Pitfalls to Watch out for
Do	<p><i>If there is time, do the Building Motivational Foundations exercise in class. It also can be assigned as a quick “homework” assignment.</i></p>	3.30 Small Group Exercise: Building Motiv. Found.
Sum Up	<p><i>Summarize learnings from Motivational Foundations, and answer any questions from Module 3.</i></p>	Slides 128-130



Module 4: Supporting Choice in Work and Career

Suggested schedule for Module 4.

This module is designed as a half-day module.

15 min Review and What to Expect

15 min Overview of Supporting Choice and Example

45 min Identifying Preferences

15 min Break

45 min Gathering Information content

30 min Supporting Decision-Making

15 min Wrap-up

Review *Last Module and any assignments given.*

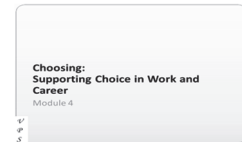
Orient Today we will be learning how to Support Choice in Work and Career.

Handbook p. 83
Supporting
Choice in Work &
Career

Ask

- What do those words bring to mind for you?
- How have you worked with people who were making choices about work, careers, and schools?

Slide 131



Orient *What to Expect from Module 4.*

Review the Big Question of Module 4 and upcoming activities.

Handbook p. 84
What to Expect
from Module 4

Discuss *Choosing Work*

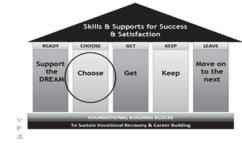
Point out that Supporting Choice is the "Choosing" part of Choose-Get-Keep. Discuss the peer role in Choosing.

4.1 Choosing
Work

Slides 132-133

Note: *You may choose to go over this in detail or offer it for*

reference for reading at participants' leisure.



Orient *Supporting Choice: The How-To*

4.2 Supporting Choice: The How-To

Slides 134-135



Tell The three skills we will be working on in this Module are Identifying preferences, Gathering information, and Supporting Decision-making.

Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Show *Overall Example of Supporting Choice: Reggie's story.*

Invite students to read on their own, or invite individual students to read out loud to the group.

Discuss Question at bottom of page.

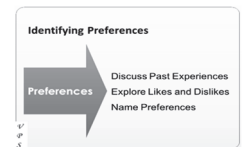
4.3 Overall Example of Supporting Choice

Orient Now that we have heard about Supporting Choice overall, we will start working with each of the three skills, one at a time.

4.4 Identifying Preferences

We will start with Identifying Preferences.

Slides 136-138



Ask What comes to mind when I say, "Identifying Preferences?"
Summarize answers.

Discuss *What it is, Why do it, and How do we do it sections.*

Show *Example of Identifying Preferences: Mariana.* 4.5 Example of Identifying Preferences...

Ask people to read to themselves, or out loud, taking turns reading to the class.

Discuss *The Question at the bottom of the page.*

Alternatively, you could break people into small groups and invite people to discuss.

Show *Identifying Preferences Tool* 4.6–4.7 Identifying Preferences Tool & Discussion Prompts

Identifying Preferences Discussion Prompts

Discuss Mariana's example: how she Identified Preferences out of her experience in data entry.

Do *An example on the board: Ask a participant to discuss one experience he or she has had, and work with that student, using the Tool, to come up with two-word names for Preferences related to that experience.*

Note: *All Preferences should be listed as "positive." Preferences should be aspects of the environment that people are looking for in their next work experience.*

Do *Identifying Preferences exercise.*

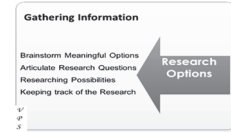
Invite people to gather in new pairs, to partner with someone new. The last person to have facilitated should be a participant in this exercise and vice versa.

Ask people to work on Identifying Preferences from two to three work experiences.

Discuss their learnings and questions after 15 minutes.

Orient Now we will learn how to support people how to Gather Information.

4.8 Gathering Information
Slide 139



Discuss *What is it? Why do it? How do we do it?*

Ask *Questions to Ponder
Respond to participant answers and questions.*

Show *Example of Gathering Information: Mariana

Discuss what participants notice about the Example, especially about Gathering Information.*

4.9 Example of Gathering Information: Mariana

Discuss *Questions at bottom of page.
Alternatively, you could break the class into small groups for discussion.*

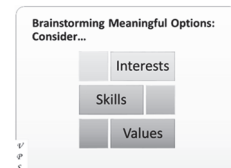
Show *Brainstorming Meaningful Options Tool.

Go over Mariana’s example.

Show Brainstorming Meaningful Options Discussion Prompts.*

4.10–4.11 Brainstorming Meaningful Options Tool & Discussion

Slide 140



Do *Brainstorming Meaningful Options partnering exercise.
Invite participants to partner with someone for the Choosing exercises.*

Discuss learnings and examples after the class has had a chance to do the exercise.

Orient The second step of Gathering Information is Articulating Research Questions.

4.12 Articulating Research Questions

In what situations have you had the opportunity to Articulate Research Questions? What was that like?

Discuss *What is it? Why do it? How do we do it?*

Slides 141-142



Show *Mariana's Example*

Ask what people notice about how Mariana and Hugh came up with her research question.

Show *Articulating Research Questions Tool and Discussion Prompts*

4.13–4.14
Articulating Research Questions Tool & Discussion

Point out Mariana's example as listed in the Tool.

Do *An example on the board. The most difficult part of the exercise is creating a definition that includes an observable part (what you would see) and a measurable part (how much you would want to see).*

Work with a student's situation, or your own, to demonstrate how to move from a preference to a definition to a research question.

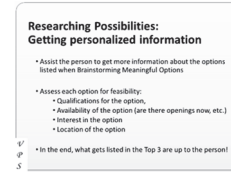
Do 15-20 min. *Invite students to get back into their partner pairs and work on Articulating Research Questions. The goal of the exercise is to come up with at least two or three questions based on their preferences.*

Review their experiences with the exercise when they are done.

Orient The third step of Gathering Information is Researching Possibilities. 4.15 Researching Possibilities

Discuss *What is it? Why do it? How do we do it?*

Slide 143



Ask *Questions to Ponder
Respond to participant answers and questions.*

Show *Researching Possibilities Tool and Discussion Prompts
Keeping Track of the Research Tool
Review with the class Mariana’s example.*

4.16 Researching Possibilities Tool
4.17 Keeping Track of the Research Tool

Show *Discuss how this tool could be useful in the work people are doing.*

4.18 Discussion Prompts

Slide 144



Do *In the Choosing partner pairs, invite people to work through the Researching Possibilities Tool to come up with two or three “Top Options.”*

4.16 & 4.18 Researching Possibilities Tool & Discussion Prompts

Recognize that they may be doing this without researching. This information will be useful in the next exercise. People can use the environment they are in now as a Top Option.

Orient The third Skill of Supporting Choice in Work and School is Supporting Decision-Making.

4.19 Supporting Decision-Making

Ask How have you made important decisions about work and school in your life?
What are some different ways to make career decisions?

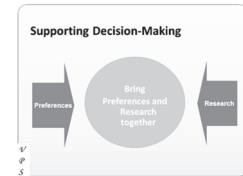
Discuss *What is it? Why do it? How do we do it?*

Make the Point The process we are about to see is a particular style of decision-making, sometimes called, “systematic” decision-making, using a step-by-step process.

Systematic, or rational, fact-based decision-making is not the only way to make a decision. As peer specialists, we need to make sure to honor the decision-making style and preferences of the person in front of us.

This kind of process is one way of making what can be an overwhelming process into a concrete, shareable process you both can participate in.

Slides 145-146



Show *Example: Supporting Decision-Making*

Discuss how Mariana used research on her preferences to come up with a set of scores that she may base her decision-making upon.

Make sure to point out that the scores are based on her ratings of each Option according to the Scale, shown below the table.

4.20 Example:
Supporting
Decision-Making

Do *Ask students to get back into their Choosing partner pairs to do a Supporting Decision-Making exercise.*

One person will facilitate, and the other will work on his or her own situation, preferably one they have been discussing throughout this Module.

Walk around the room to support people to both do the exercise, and to coach the facilitators who should be using partnering skills.

4.21 Supporting
Decision-Making
Tool

Review their experiences with this Tool, and with this method of decision-making.

Note: *People can modify this Tool to meet the person at his or her level, i.e., if the person is intimidated by numbers, use another symbol. If the person wants more detail, they can star some preferences and add weight to them.*

Show

Discussion Prompts: Supporting Decision-Making And Supporting Decision-Making Tool

4.22–4.23
Support Tool &
Discussion
Prompts

If you have time, demonstrate for the participants how to use the scale and researched (or in this instance, guesstimated) information in the Tool.

Show

Support for my best option: Tool

Support for my
best option: Tool
Slide 147

Discuss how this might be used to support people to think about what their goal or Choice might be, and the Supports they need in place to attain it.



Sum Up

Summarize learnings for Module 4. Answer any questions about the Module, and help participants think about how they will use the information.

Module 5: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs and School

Suggested schedule for Module 5.

This Module is designed as a half-day session.

15 min Review and Orient to Scaffolding Getting

15 min Example

20 min Overview of Scaffolding Getting into Jobs & School

20 min Scaffolding Exercise

20 min Getting Plan

15 min Break

20 min Overview of Scaffolding Decisions about Disclosure

20 min Pros and Cons of Disclosure

30 min Disclosure Thinking

05 min Summary

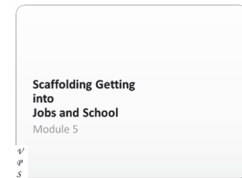
Review *Learnings from last Module, and any assignments given.*

Orient We have focused so far on scaffolding people's vocational aspirations through Partnering with them, supporting people who are considering work by Exploring and Building Motivational Foundations, and offering chances to explore the aspects of Choice that others may not be able to offer.

Handbook p. 108
Module 5:
Scaffolding
Getting into Jobs
and School

Now we will be talking about the next piece of Choose-Get-Keep: Getting.

Slide 148



Ask

- What is your experience with Getting Jobs and Getting into School?
- What do you hear about Getting from the people you work with?
- What do you hope to learn from this Module?

Orient *What to Expect from Module 5: Scaffolding Getting*

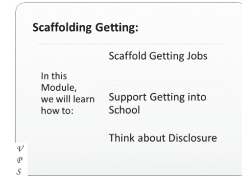
Handbook p. 109

Review the Big Question of Module 5, and point out the upcoming activities.

Note: This Module is designed to be delivered in a ¾ to full-day session.

What to Expect from Module 5:

Slide 149

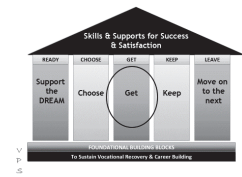


5.1 Overview of Module 5

Ask Questions to Ponder
(any that are still relevant after last discussion)
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Make the Point Where Getting is on the VPS “House.”

Slide 150



Slides 151-152

Tell In this Module, we will learn how to: Scaffold getting jobs and schools, Create a getting plan, Think about disclosure.



5.2 Overview Example: Scaffolding Getting

Show Overview Example: Scaffolding Getting

Discuss what people notice about the example, in particular how Tanisha used her own experience to support Aaron, and how they used a Getting Plan.

Ask Question at the bottom of page.

Orient We will look at how to scaffold Getting into Jobs and Getting into School slightly differently. First, we will look at Scaffolding Getting into Jobs.

5.3 Scaffolding Getting Jobs

Ask Questions to Ponder
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Tell Scaffolding Getting into Jobs is supporting people as they go through a process of applying to, interviewing for, and negotiating offers for employment.

Discuss *Pitfalls to watch out for!*

Orient Next, we will look at Supporting Getting into School.

Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

5.4 Supporting Getting into School

Discuss *What is it? Why do it? How to do it?*

Remind people to stay peer and to learn with people; they do not need to know everything to scaffold!

Do *Small Group Exercise: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs and Scaffolding Getting into School*

5.5–5.6 Exercise: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs (and School)

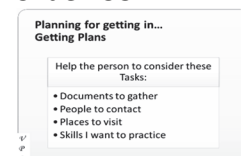
Break the class into two groups (or four, depending on the size of the class). Assign one half of the class the exercise related to Getting Jobs, and one half the exercise related to Getting into School.

Instruct the class to first brainstorm tasks involved with Getting and potential scaffolds that could support doing the tasks. These are general tasks, not specific to one person.

After 15 minutes, review their responses as a class. Point out similarities and differences between the two. Review their learnings about what it might take to scaffold the tasks of getting into work and school.

Orient Next we will look at a Getting Plan, a tool designed to support the person to think through the tasks, steps, and supports needed to get into a job or school.

Slide 153



Show *Getting Plan Tool and Discussion Prompts* 5.7–5.8 Getting Plan Tool and Discussion Prompts

*Review the elements of the Getting Plan.
Review the example in gray.*

Do *Optional Exercise: Getting Plan. Invite students to get into pairs, preferably with someone they have not worked with yet.*

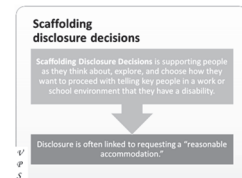
Instruct them to use the Getting Tool to plan out Getting into a future job or school environment. The person does not need to have a goal of Getting anytime soon. The other partner will facilitate exploration of Getting tasks, steps, and supports.

Review learnings for facilitators and participants.

Orient The last skill we will address in Getting is Scaffolding Decisions about Disclosure. 5.9 Scaffolding Decisions about Disclosure

***Note:** Some knowledge about the Americans with Disabilities Act and Reasonable Accommodations is required for this Module. Get to know the ADA information at the back of the Module in addition to other materials on disclosure, the ADA, and accommodations.*

Slides 154-157



Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Discuss *What is it? Why do it?*

Point out the ADA Definitions. You may need these later!

Show *Example Disclosure: Pros and Cons* 5.10 Example Disclosure: Pros and Cons

Discuss the example.

***Note:** This section can bring up strong emotions. The role of peer supporter (or any provider) is not to advise, but to support the person in making a very personal decision.*

Encourage the class to adopt a "Let's learn together" attitude.

Show *The Pros and Cons of Disclosure Tool and Discussion Prompts* 5.11–5.12 Pros & Cons Tool and Discussion Prompts

Do *Invite the class to divide into new pairs. Rather than a partnering exercise, engage those pairs in discussion together about what they see as pros and cons for themselves. Remind them that they do not need to change each other's minds, rather they should write down all the pros and cons that come up.*

Give them about 10 minutes for this exercise. Facilitate a discussion at the end, highlighting how very personal these decisions are.

Orient Now that we have gone over the Pros and Cons of Disclosure, we will take a look at how to support someone to think through disclosure.

This does not presume that everyone will want to disclose. In fact, many people may choose not to disclose unless they need a reasonable accommodation in order to do the job or be successful in school.

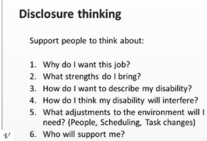
However, it may be wise for people to have a plan for how they want to disclose, or at least to think it through, before there is an issue at work.

Remember, the ADA is an anti-discrimination law, not an anti-firing law; and disclosure of a disability is required as part of requesting an accommodation.

Show *Disclosure Example: Disclosure Thinking*

Point out that Aaron is not quite at the Disclosure point yet, but he is starting to think this through, making sure he uses wording he feels comfortable with. He would likely update this for a specific job.

Slide 158

- 
- Disclosure thinking**
- Support people to think about:
1. Why do I want this job?
 2. What strengths do I bring?
 3. How do I want to describe my disability?
 4. How do I think my disability will interfere?
 5. What adjustments to the environment will I need? (People, Scheduling, Task changes)
 6. Who will support me?

5.13 Example: Disclosure Thinking

- Show** *Disclosure Thinking Tool and Discussion Prompts* 5.14 – 5.15
Disclosure
Thinking Tool and
Discussion
Prompts
- Do** *In pairs, ask students to do a Partnering exercise in Disclosure Thinking. Most people in the class will have disclosed being in recovery for a peer position. However, invite people to participate in the exercise in a way that feels meaningful to them. Facilitators will support the partner to do the exercise, using Partnering skills.* 5.14 Disclosure
Thinking Tool
- Walk around and support folks to Partner skillfully.
Review their experience with the exercise.*
- Sum Up** *Summarize learnings about Module 5, Scaffolding Getting. Invite students to say what they learned, and how they hope to use the material in their work.* Slide 159



Module 6: Keeping Work and School

Suggested schedule for Module 6.

This Module is designed as a half-day to ¾ –day session.

- 20 min Review and Orient to Keeping Work and School*
- 20 min Job and School Expectations*
- 20 min Listing Expectations exercise*
- 30 min Skills overview and class exercises.*
- 15 min Break*
- 30 min Breaking down Skills exercise(s)*
- 30 min Overview of Supports*
- 20 min Supports exercise*
- 10 min Break (or lunch break for up to 60 min)*
- 30 min Job and Educational Accommodations*
- 20 min Accommodations exercise(s)*
- 30 min Developing Skills and Supports*
- 30 min Developing Skills and Supports exercise(s)*
- 10 min Summary*

Review *Learnings from the last Module and any assignments.*

Orient By now, we have learned how to Partner, support people to Consider work through Motivational Foundations, Support Choice, and Scaffolding Getting into Work and School.

Now, in Module 6, we will focus on Keeping Work and School.

Handbook p. 125
Module 6:
Keeping Work
and School

Slide 160



- Ask**
- Why should we focus on Keeping?
 - What are the barriers to Keeping Jobs?
 - What can some of the barriers be to Keeping School?

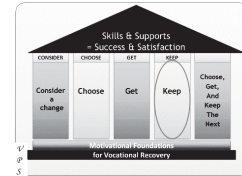
Discuss *What to expect in Module 6*

Handbook p. 126

Review the Big Question of Module 6, and overview the Table of Contents.

What to Expect in Module 6

Slides 161-162



Ask Questions to Ponder
Respond to participant answers and questions.

6.1 What does it take to Keep a Job?

Discuss The role of VPS; What helps us be successful

Slides 163-168



Show Keeping Example: Reggie

Ask what people see in the Example, especially in regard to skills, supports, and accommodations.

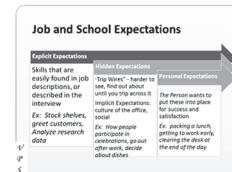
6.2 Keeping Example: Reggie

Discuss Job and School Expectations

6.3 Job and School Expectations

Make the Point Expectations come generally from the environment – what the setting expects of us in order to be successful. However, some expectations are personal ones, what we expect and do for ourselves in order to be both successful and satisfied.

Slide 169



Ask Questions to Ponder
Write answers on the board.

Show Listing Expectations Tool and Discussion Prompts
Review examples.

6.4–6.5 Listing Expectations Tool

and Discussion Prompts

Do *Listing Expectations exercise.*

Break the class into small groups. Ask each of the small groups to brainstorm expectations by Type, using the Tool.

Have them choose an environment to use as a context, such as a workplace they all know well, or even the VPS training environment.

Orient Now that we have learned how to identify expectations, we will be getting even more specific.

We will next learn how to identify and break down from expectations, specific skills.

Ask Why do you think it’s important to learn about skills in relation to Keeping jobs and school environments?

Make the Point It’s not helpful for people to get feedback that they need to “be a better worker,” or to “get along better with people.”

More often than not, it is a particular skill, or several specific skills that are getting in the way.

We also cannot learn a whole category of skills at once, so it will support people’s success (and satisfaction!) if we can work with people to figure out specific skills.

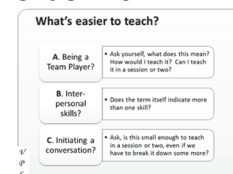
Discuss *Skills: What’s the Deal?*

Review the content of this page. Pay special attention to how skills are different from broad expectations.

Show *Example: Getting Specific about Skills*

Show how the “Skill Funnel” can help people conceptualize

Slide 170



6.6 Skills: What’s the Deal?

6.7 Example: Getting Specific about Skills

moving from broad expectations to specific skills. Go over the pointers along the side, and review the Reggie example.

Do *Exercise: Breaking Skill Categories Down into Skills*

Get the entire class involved in brainstorming the individual skills involved with Time Management. Make the point that Time Management is a category of skills, and the titles in the triangles are examples of skills that are part of Time Management.

Then break the class into small groups to break broad expectations down into skills. Note: You may need to do one on the board, in order to show the progression from Broad Expectation (i.e., “Do all your work on time”) to Category of Skills (i.e., “Time Management”) to Skill (i.e., Estimating time).

People may use the “Common Skills” list to help them identify possibilities.

This reference may help you and the people you work with to come up with names for skills that might be commonly needed in a variety of work and school situations.

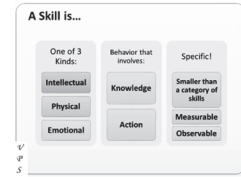
Review their answers, and respond to questions.

Show *Tool: Skill Funnel*

If the class needs more practice, you could use this tool for additional practice, either in class, or for homework.

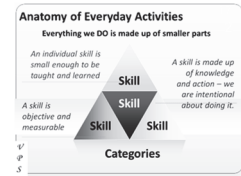
Show *Tool: Turning Expectations into Skills*

Slide 171



6.8 Exercise: Breaking Skills

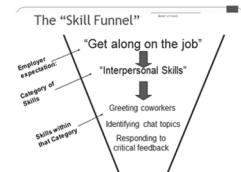
Slides 172-176
You may also do exercise on slides



6.13 Common Skills

6.9 Tool: Skill Funnel

Slide 177



6.10 Tool: Turning Expectations

Make the Point *This Tool helps if you are working with more than one vague expectation at the same time, and/or if a more linear format is desired.*

There are several Tools that may be used with people to identify skills required by a work or school environment.

Convey that participants do not need to use them all at all times, rather use whichever one(s) are useful to the person and situation.

Show *Tool: General Expectations to Specific Skills* 6.11 Tool: General Expectations

Use this Tool if the person does not have information specific to the job or training environment, but wants to start to identify the overall skills he or she may need for success.

Show *Discussion Prompts: Breaking down Expectations into Skills* 6.12 Discussion Prompts

Note: *These Discussion Prompts may be used with any of the above Tools.*

Orient We just learned about how to break down general expectations of workers and students into specific skills.

Now we will take a look at getting specific about supports as well.

Ask Why do you think we should look at Supports in Keeping?

Make the Point We took a look at Supports in Motivational Foundations as well, so some of this material will look familiar. 6.14 Supports

In Motivational Foundations, we look at Supports in order to ask the question, "How supported do I feel as I consider choosing, getting, and keeping work?"



In Keeping, we look at Supports in a different context: What Supports could scaffold the person to Keep this job or training program?

Review Supports are the People, Places, Things, and Activities that support our participation in vocational environments.

Slide 179



Show *Example of Reggie and Miguel.
Ask people what they notice about the example.*

6.14 Reggie's Example of Supports

Do *Exercise: Supporting Challenging Situations*

Read the directions to the class, and support them by walking around and help them to brainstorm.

6.15 Small Group Exercise

Show *Supports I Have Now Tool
Tool: Brainstorming Supports I Still Need
Overcoming Challenges with Supports*

Review the examples and discuss the potential use of the Tools.

6.16 Supports I Have Now Tool

Do *Optional Exercise – it may be helpful for people to have the experience of working with a partner to identify Supports in-hand and/or needed Supports.*

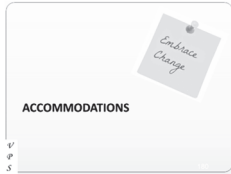
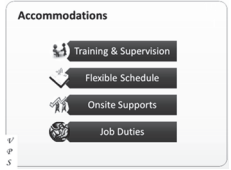
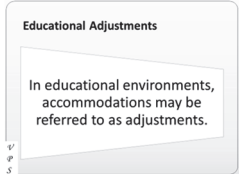
Get people into partner pairs. They should choose who will explore their own situations, and who will facilitate the exploration.

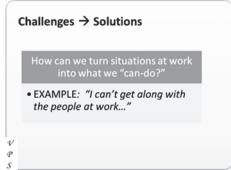
6.16 Supports I Have Now Tool or 6.17 Brainstorming Supports I Need

Show *Discussion Prompts: Brainstorming Supports, Overcoming Challenges with Supports*

Discuss use of Discussion Prompts in their work.

6.18 Discussion Prompts: Brainstorming

Show	<i>Tool: Overcoming Challenges with Supports</i>	6.19 Tool: Overcoming Challenges
Discuss	Discussion Prompts: Overcoming Challenges with Supports	6.20 Discussion Prompts: Overcoming
Orient	The third element of Keeping is Accommodations.	6.21 Accommodation: Employment
Ask	What do you remember about Accommodations from our work in Getting?	Slide 180 
Tell	<i>What is it? material</i>	
Show	<i>Examples of Accommodations related to Employment</i>	Slides 181-185 
Make the Point	<p>Accommodations in Education are related to employment accommodations, but sometimes are called “adjustments” and are tailored to the training environment.</p> <p>Many educational environments are accustomed to serving people with physical and/or learning disabilities, and they may need some help with understanding how to accommodate psychiatric disabilities.</p>	6.22 Accommodation: Education Slide 186 
Show	Examples of Educational Accommodations	
Show	<p><i>Example: Reggie and Miguel</i></p> <p><i>Ask what people notice about the example, related to Accommodations.</i></p>	6.23 Example: Reggie & Miguel

Discuss	<i>The Questions related to the example.</i>	
Do	<p><i>Exercise: Turning “Can’ts” into “Can-Do’s”</i></p> <p><i>This can be done in small groups or individually, depending on class needs.</i></p> <p><i>People may use the Discussion Prompts as needed.</i></p> <p><i>Review answers and support their learning.</i></p>	6.24 Exercise: Turning “Can’ts” into “Can-Do’s”
Do	<p><i>Optional exercises. Read instructions and support the exploration of partner pairs to come up with skills, supports, and accommodations.</i></p> <p><i>Review the experience of the exploration at the end.</i></p>	6.25 Exercise: What helps You?
Show	<i>Tool and Discussion Prompts: Turning Can’ts into Can-Do’s.</i>	6.26–6.27 Tool and Discussion Prompts: Turning Can’ts
		<p>Slide 187</p> 
Review	You have just learned how to work with someone who is focusing on Keeping to get a sense of needed skills, supports, and accommodations.	
Ask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the element that you think will be most important to your work? • Do you know of people now who might need these tools? 	
Orient	We will now look at how to scaffold people who need to Build Skills and Supports, including accommodations.	6.28 Building Skills & Supports

Discuss *Learning new skills and developing new supports
Strengthening skills and supports*

Discuss the difference: strengthening is used when people have the skill or support, but they aren’t using it where, when, or with whom they are needed. New skills are learned and new supports are developed when the person does not have it at all.

Slide 188



Do *Exercise: Developing Skills and Supports*

Read instructions to the class and support partners in their work.

Review responses as a whole class.

6.29 Exercise:
Developing Skills
and Supports

Show *Tool and Discussion Prompts: Learning Skills
Review the Example at the top of the Tool.*

6.30–6.31 Tool
and Discussion
Prompts:
Learning Skills

Do *Optional exercise: If it’s useful to the class, direct them to
work with the Tool: Learning Skills.*

6.30 Tool:
Learning Skills

*You may have them do this individually on one or two skills,
or they may work in partner pairs.*

Show *Tool: My Keeping Summary*

6.32 Tool: My
Keeping
Summary

Discuss *Potential uses for My Keeping Summary*

Show *Helpful Links
Information about the American’s with Disabilities Act and
Reasonable Accommodations*

6.33 Helpful Links
6.34 ADA
6.35 Reasonable
Accommodations

Sum Up *Summarize learnings from Module 6.
Review with students how they will use the material in their
own work, and their own lives.*

Module 7: Coordinating with Employment Service Providers

Suggested schedule for Module 7.

This Module is designed as a ¼ to ½ day Module.

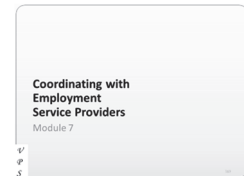
- 30 min *Review and Orient to Module 7, Exercise*
- 30 min *Overview of Employment Service Providers*
- 10 min *Break*
- 20 min *Connecting with Service Providers*
- 30 min *Case scenario class exercise*
- 30 min *Negotiating with Service Providers*
- 15 min *Summary of Module 7; optional assignment*

Review *Learnings from last Module and any assignments.*

Orient Now that we have learned how to partner with people to scaffold them as they consider, choose, get, and keep work, we will add to our knowledge and skill base that of supporting people to get the most out of vocational rehabilitation and employment support services.

Handbook p. 167
Module 7:
Coordinating
with...

Slide 189

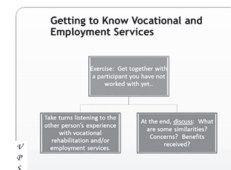


- Ask**
- What do you know already about coordinating with employment support providers?
 - What do you hope to get out of this Module?

Discuss *What to Expect from Module 7*
Discuss the Big Question, and overall upcoming material.

Handout p. 168

Alt. Exercise:
Slide 190



Orient We will first learn about different kinds of vocational services that exist, and then we will move into some skills you can use when supporting someone in their relationship with those services.

Note: You may need to do some additional research on some of these services if you are not familiar with them, and in addition, it is a good idea to know a bit about local resources.

Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

7.1 Why Connect with Employment Service Providers?

Slides 191-192



Do *Exercise – Benefits and Risks. Give partners 5-10 minutes to brainstorm both vocational tasks and benefits and risks of involving vocational providers.*

Show *Example of Coordinating with Employment Providers: Rafik.*
Discuss what people see in the example relative to Coordinating with employment service providers.

7.2 Example of Coordinating with Employment

Ask the Question and discuss participant answers.

Discuss *The Array of Vocational Services*
Discuss the kinds of vocational services that participants have experience with. Point out which services are more integrated or less integrated. Discuss the benefits and risks of each.

7.3 The Array of Vocational Services

Slide 193



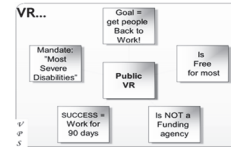
Tell *Mission of Public Vocational Rehabilitation, top of page.*

7.4 Public Vocational Rehabilitation

Ask *Questions to Ponder.
Discuss responses to the questions, correct any misinformation you hear about VR, but validate participant experiences.*

Discuss *Mandate of Public VR, bottom of page.*

Slide 194



Ask

- What do you know about how to access VR in this area?
- How many of you have heard of, and/or used Supported Employment?
- What do you know about it?

Tell *Definition of Supported Employment (SE) at top of page.*

7.5 Supported Employment

Discuss *Competitive Employment facts*

Discuss how Competitive Employment is related to Supported Employment, i.e., that SE is a model that supports people to get into “competitive employment.”

Make the Point Supported Employment is a general term for supporting people to get into competitive work and then helping the person to get the skills and supports they need to stay there. There is one model of Supported Employment that has done a lot of studies and is very prominent today, and it’s called Individual Placement and Support (IPS), or the Evidence-Based SE Program Model.

Discuss *Tenets of the SE Program Model*

Slide 195



Ask What do you know about how to access and best utilize SE in this area?

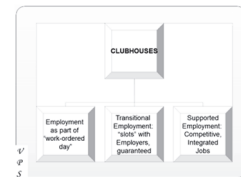
Tell There are various employment support models that offer different kinds of services. Some of those models are described in Other Employment Support Program Models.

7.6 Other Employment Support Program Models

Ask • What do you know about Psychosocial Clubhouses?
• What are the benefits of using a Clubhouse for employment purposes? The risks?

Discuss *Information about Clubhouse and Transitional Employment*

Slide 196



Ask • What do you know about employment services and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)?
• What are the benefits to using an ACT team? Risks?

Slide 197




Discuss *Information on Assertive Community Treatment or ACT*

Ask • What do you know about One-Stop Career Centers, now also called, American Job Centers?
• What are the benefits of using One-Stops? Risks?

Discuss *Information on One-Stop Career Centers*

Ask • What do you know about less-integrated models such as Mobile Crews or Sheltered Workshops?
• What are the benefits to using them? The risks?

After approximately 15 minutes, review their responses. Ask each group to quickly describe their scenario for the rest of the class, and list five possible scaffolds.

Show	<i>Discussion Prompts: Partnering with Service Providers</i>	7.10 Discussion Prompts: Partnering with...
Orient	Next we will talk a bit about how to Negotiate with Providers.	7.11 Negotiating for Success with Voc Services
Ask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your experience with Negotiating with Providers, or with negotiating overall? • What is easy about negotiating? What is hard? 	Slide 200 
Tell	<i>Definition and related material at top of page.</i>	
Show	<p><i>Example: Mary</i></p> <p><i>Discuss reactions to the example. Ask how participants think they might use the Give-Get-Merge framework for negotiating.</i></p>	
Do	<p><i>Exercise: Negotiating for Success</i></p> <p><i>Read instructions. Support people to brainstorm scaffolds within the Give-Get-Merge framework. Encourage people to “stay peer” throughout.</i></p>	7.12 Exercise: Negotiating for Success
Show	<p><i>Tool: Negotiating for Success</i></p> <p><i>Helpful Links</i></p>	7.13 Tool: Negotiating for Success 7.14 Helpful Links
Assign	<i>Practice Assignment: Researching Vocational Services.</i>	7.15 Practice Assignment:

The goal of the assignment is to give participants the opportunity to explore new or “new-to-them” vocational resources; and to make those resources available to the class.

Researching
Vocational
Services

Discuss details and help students make plans for presenting the information in the next session.

Sum Up

What people learned about Coordinating with Employment Service Providers.

Answer any questions that come up.

Module 8: Researching Information

Suggested schedule for Module 8.

Note: This training is designed to be a ¼ day Module.

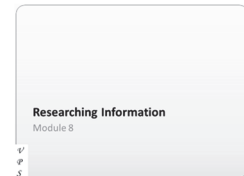
- 15 min Review and Orient to Module 8*
- 15 min Know the Basics, Go to the Experts*
- 15-30 min Clarifying the Question; optional exercise*
- 15-30 min Brainstorming Information Sources; exercise*
- 15-30 min Gathering Information; exercise*
- 15 min Evaluating Information*
- 15 min Summary*

Review *Learnings from the last Module and any assignments.*

Orient Given that much of the work we have been doing is related to gathering information, it is important that we think a little bit about Researching Information.

Handbook p. 186
Module 8:
Researching
Information

Slide 201



- Ask**
- How do you Research Information now?
 - What challenges do the people we serve face when Researching Information?
 - How has Researching Information changed over time?

Discuss *What to Expect from Module 8*

Discuss the Big Question of Module 8, and upcoming activities in general.

Handbook p. 187
What to Expect
from Module 8.

Discuss *Knowledge is Power...*

8.1 Scaffolding in

Discuss the peer role(s) in scaffolding researching information related to career, work, and school.

the Community Slides 202-203



Make the Point In our work as Peer Specialists supporting vocational aspirations, we may be inclined to “know it all” and be the experts. However, we are not expected to know everything, and in fact, we are most “peer” when we go with, learn with, and do with!

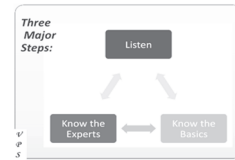
Slides 204-206



Discuss Listen, Know the basics, don't have to be an Einstein

Discuss *Partner with the Experts; Know the Basics*

Slide 207

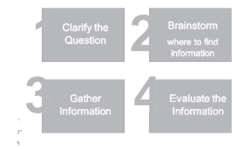


Show *Researching the Basics*

8.2 Researching the Basics

Go over the four steps in general of Researching Information.

Slide 208

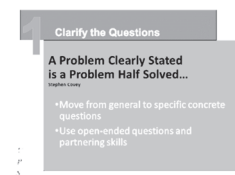


Orient First, let's talk about Clarifying the Question.

8.3 Clarifying the Question

Discuss *“Questions” at the top of the page.*

Slides 209-211



Show *Example 1: Mario and Example 2: Sasha*

Discuss what participants see in these examples of Clarifying Information.

Discuss *"Keep in Mind" content, bottom of page.*

Show *Tool: Clarifying the Question*

8.4 Tool:
Clarifying the
Question

Do *Optional Exercise: Break the class into partner pairs to work on a situation one of the partners can think of for which he or she needs more information. Ask them to work on Clarifying the Questions that they come up with.*

Review their responses.

Orient Second, we will discuss Brainstorming Information Sources.

8.5 Brainstorming
Information
Sources

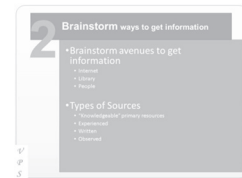
Ask

- How do you find your information sources?
- How do you know where to go to get information?
- What challenges do the people you work with have with finding information?

Discuss *Different ways to get information.*

Discuss *Steps to Brainstorming Information.*

Slides 212-215



Show *Tool: Brainstorming Information Sources*

8.6 Tool:
Brainstorming
Info Sources

Do *Optional Exercise: Brainstorming Information Sources.*

In partner pairs, participants will brainstorm three ideas for getting more information relative to making a change (if possible, a vocational change). They should rate accessibility, etc. for each, and then discuss their responses with the class.

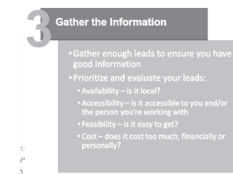
Orient Our third skill of Researching Information is Gathering the Information. 8.7 Gathering Information

Ask What do you think are the challenges for people in Gathering Information?

Discuss *Gathering Information involves three steps.*

Show *Examples of Scaffolding Gathering Information*

Slide 216



Show *Tool: Gather the Information Orient to the use of the Tool.*

8.8 Tool: Gather Information

Ask How could you use this Tool in your work?

Do *Example and Exercise*

8.9 Example and Exercise

Break people into small groups or pairs. Participants should read the example, and with a partner or small group, consider the questions following.

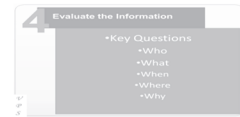
Orient Finally, we may need to support people to Evaluate the Information. Evaluating the Information has a lot to do with the trustworthiness of the information gathered.

8.10 Evaluate the Information

- Ask**
- Why do you think it's important to look at Evaluating Information?
 - What challenges do people face in the trustworthiness of information?

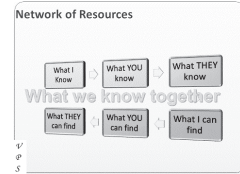
Discuss *The Who, What, When, Where, Why of Evaluating Information*

Slides 217-219



Sum Up *Summarize the Module, and participant learnings.*

Slide 220



Module 9: Supporting People to Work While on Benefits

Note: This is an *OPTIONAL* Module, to be taught directly, or you may opt to engage benefits specialists or other speaker(s) to deliver this information.

Module 9 focuses more heavily on information than on skills and competency development, unlike previous Modules. The information included may help peer supporters to understand have hope about how Social Security makes its decisions when a person has disability benefits and is working. However, particularly because it is an informational Module, it requires that the presenter knows the material well.

If engaging others to make the presentation, ensure that the speaker(s) present the information in such a way as to inspire hope for employment. Ensure that it is oriented toward supporting others who are dealing with the impact of work on their benefits and overall financial health.

What follows is a basic outline of how one might present the information so that students can participate, voice questions and experiences, and process the information. Students are not expected to become skilled, or to become an expert in the information. Rather, it is anticipated that participants will have an understanding of expert resources and a renewed sense of hope that one can work while receiving disability benefits.

Suggested Schedule for Module 9.

This Module is designed as a ¾ day training.

- 20 min Review and Orient to Module 9*
 - 20 min Your Experience exercise*
 - 20 min Myths and Facts*
 - 30 min Differences between SSDI and SSI*
 - 15 min Break*
 - 15 min SSWI and SGA*
 - 45 min SSDI timelines: TWP, EPE*
 - 30 min Countable Income, IRWE, Subsidy*
 - 60 min Lunch Break*
 - 45 min SSI Incentives, incl. exercise*
 - 15 min PASS*
 - 30 min Incentives for Both: EXR, EMC, 1619b*
 - 15 min Break*
 - 30 min Scaffolding discussion and exercise*
 - 15 min National and Local resources discussion*
 - 15 min Summary and wrap-up*
-

Review *Learnings from the last Module and any assignments.*

Orient Today we will be working on Module 9: Supporting People to Work while on Benefits.

Handbook p. 198

Slide 221



- Ask**
- *What comes to mind when you think about supporting people with their benefits?*
 - *Do you feel that this is a possible or an impossible task?*

Discuss *What to Expect in Module 9*

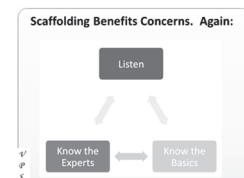
Handbook p. 199
What to Expect in
Module 9

Discuss the Big Question of Module 9, and upcoming activities.

Discuss the NOTE: This training is not designed to turn people into experts, rather people who know enough of the basics to ask the experts.

Make the Point Like in the previous module, we will focus on listening to people's concerns and knowing the basics well enough to be able to support people to access and use the experts on Social Security benefits and work.

Slide 222



Do *A Review: Your Experience with Disability Benefits and Work*

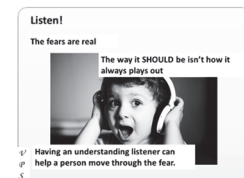
9.1 A Review:
Your Experience
with Disability
Benefits and
Work

Ask people to get into partner pairs and decide who will listen, and who will explore their own situation.

Invite people to review their partnering skills according to the exercise (conclusion).

Invite the pairs to consider the questions listed, and then after about 10 minutes, to share what they feel comfortable sharing with the class.

Slide 223



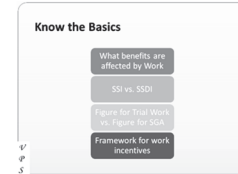
Discuss *Myths and Facts about Social Security Benefits*
Answer any questions that come up.

9.2 Myths and Facts about Social Security Benefits

Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Orient We will now learn about some of the Basics of Social Security benefits, so that we know enough to ask questions, and so that when people say, “I can’t work!” we know enough to know there may be more to the story.

Slide 224



Ask *What’s the Difference between SSI and SSDI?*
Questions to Ponder
Respond to participant answers and questions.

9.3 What’s the Difference between SSI, SSDI

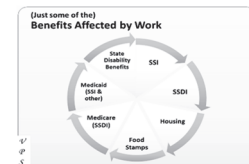
Discuss *Similarities and Differences.*
Answer any questions that come up.

Note: *Do not entertain specific benefit situations – refer people to the experts in your area.*

Orient Now that we know a bit about the differences between the benefits, we will talk quite a bit about how work impacts a person’s benefits.

9.4 How does Work Impact a Person’s Benefits

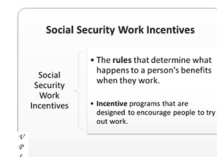
Slide 225-228



Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Tell *The SSWI definitions*

Slides 229



Discuss *Key Concept: SGA information*

Orient First, we will talk specifics about SSDI.
There's more to discuss in SSDI than with SSI.

9.5 SSDI Work
Incentives:
Timelines

Slide 230



Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Discuss *Trial Work Period*
Write information on board as is useful.

Discuss *Extended Period of Eligibility*
Write information on board as is useful.

Do *Questions.*
Invite people to consider the questions with a partner. This is not a Partnering exercise.

Orient Timelines are not the only Work Incentive for SSDI. Even if a person is working and has income over SGA, he or she may still be eligible for a check. In this section, we will talk about how.

9.6 SSDI
Incentives to
Keep Working

Ask What do you know about other Incentives for SSDI?

Discuss *Countable Income Key Concept*

Slide 231



Discuss *Impairment-Related Work Expenses*

Show *Example: John*

Show on the board, if necessary. Answer any questions that come up.

Ask *Question to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

9.7 SSDI
 Incentives...
 Subsidies

Discuss *Subsidies*

Show *Job Coach Subsidy Example*
Employer Subsidy Example

Do an example on the board if necessary.
Answer any questions that come up.

Sum Up *Learnings about SSDI Work Incentives.*

Orient *Let's spend a little while learning about SSI Work Incentives.*

9.8 SSI Work
 Incentives:
 Exclusions

Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

Make the Point *There are no timelines to consider with SSI, like there are with SSDI.*

Slide 232

INCOME EXCLUSIONS		Your Income, minus:
GENERAL		\$20
EARNED INCOME (WORK)		\$65
IRWE's (can be used for both)	(your own monthly amount)	
"12" Responder Exclusion*	% of the total	
Plan for Achieved Self Support	(enter own monthly amt)	
SSI amt (may vary by state)		
-Total		
= New SSI amt		

Discuss *Key Concept of SSI Exclusions*

Discuss *Income Exclusions (1619a)*

Show *Example: Phil*
Show on board if necessary, and answer questions.

Do *Question about Phil (text box).*

Break people into small groups, and have them discuss the questions.

After five minutes, discuss as large group. Point out that financially, we may think it makes sense for Phil to work. However, Phil may have feelings about his check being “cut” when he works, or about not making dollar-for-dollar earnings overall. Whether Phil thinks it is worth it to him to work is the most important question.

Orient The Exclusions are the bulk of the figuring that SSA does around SSI. However, there are more incentives for SSI, and we’ll discuss some of them here. We’ll start with PASS (Plan to Achieve Self-Support).

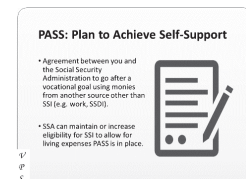
9.9 SSI Work
Incentives: PASS

Ask

- What do you know now about PASS?
- How have you used PASS to achieve vocational goals?

Discuss *What is a PASS? And following information*

Slide 233



Show *Example: Juana*

Discuss with the class: Is it worth it for Juana to have a PASS? Why or why not?

Sum Up *Learnings about Work Incentives for SSI*

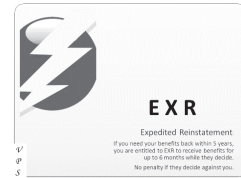
Orient Now we will spend a few minutes looking at Work Incentives that apply to both. Keep in mind that there are many more rules, and more Incentives than what we can teach today. Always consult with local and national resources for assistance and confirmation.

Ask *Questions to Ponder*
Respond to participant answers and questions.

9.10 Expedited Reinstatement (EXR)

Discuss *Expedited Reinstatement (EXR)*

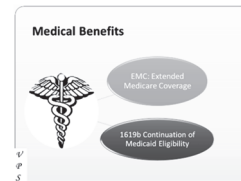
Slide 234



Discuss *Extended Medicare Coverage (EMC)*

9.11 Medical Benefits and Work Incentives

Slide 235



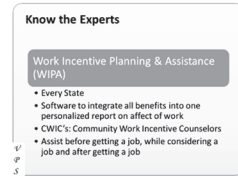
Discuss *Continued Medicaid Eligibility (1619b)*
Demonstrate timeline on board if useful.

Do *Questions. Break class into small groups and invite them to discuss the questions, first with each other, and then with the whole class.*

Tell Now that we know a bit about how Social Security makes its decisions about what happens to someone's check when they go back to work, we need to talk about your role.

9.12 Now that you Know the Basics,...

Slide 237



- Ask**
- How do you see your role with people who have questions about their benefits?
 - What do you think peers do best when it comes to supporting people with their benefits and work?
 - How do you hope to be your best peer self in this work?

Discuss *How can we scaffold?*

Do *What would you add?
Have people individually add what they would do to scaffold someone, and then discuss as a large group.*

Ask *Questions to Ponder
Respond to participant answers and questions.*

9.13 Resources and Experts

Show *National Resources*

Do *Add Local Resources, as applicable*

Sum Up *Review learnings from Module 9.*

Module 10: Using the Scaffolding: How Do We Keep This Going?

Note: Module 10 incorporates a summary of the entire course, evaluation, and celebration of participation. In preparation for this Module, you may elect to prepare certificates of participation. If using, prepare them in advance of this Module and personalize them to include participant names. See Example Certificate for the VPS Training on page 94 of this Guide.

In addition, decide in advance if and how you will ask participants to evaluate the training. If in discussion form, be prepared with questions (examples are given below) and a surface upon which to write answers (white/blackboard, easel with paper). If you wish to use a more anonymous written form, prepare an evaluation form and make copies for all in advance. See Example Evaluation for the VPS Training on page 93 of this Guide.

Celebration of participation can take many forms, from a formal presentation of certificates to cake and/or healthy snacks. Plan to spend a little time celebrating accomplishments along the way, relationships that have developed, and communities built.

Suggested schedule for Module 10.

This training is designed as a ¼ day Module

10 min Review and Orient to Module 10

15 min Skill Areas exercise

15 min Start-Stop-Continue exercise

15 min Your Plan exercise

10 min Summary

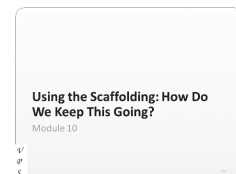
15 min Evaluation (if using)

10 min Celebration and certificates (if using)

Orient In Module 10, we will take a little time to review our learnings from all the other Modules, think about how we will use the material, and make plans for supporting people in their vocational recovery.

Handbook p. 213
Module 10: Using the Scaffolding...

Slide 237



Ask What are you hoping to do in this wrap-up Module?

Handbook p. 215
What to Expect in Module 10

Do *What Skill Areas do I think I will use most?*

Break class into small groups of three or four people, this time, with others with whom they work or collaborate. Instruct participants to discuss the skill areas and their "fit" into the work they do, and to note for themselves, individually, how they expect the Modules fit for them.

Discuss responses as a large group after about 15 minutes.

10.1 What Skill Areas...

Slide 238



Orient One piece of our planning for how we will use VPS in our work is the material. Another is our general learnings from this training. The next exercise we will do together is called, "Start-Stop-Continue."

Do *Exercise: Start-Stop-Continue*

Read instructions to the class, break the class up into small groups (a different three or four people), and give them about 15 minutes to do the exercise.

Discuss as a large group when they are done.

10.2 Exercise: Start-Stop-Continue

Tell Lastly, we will take a few minutes to do a personal plan for how you want to integrate VPS into your work.

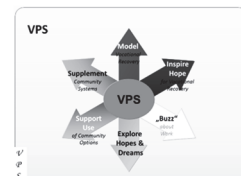
10.3 Your Plan: What's Next?

Do *Your Plan: What's Next?*

Invite people to do this exercise individually, for about 10 minutes, and then discuss as a class.

Alternatively, you could have people discuss their individual plans in small groups, and then those groups could talk about themes with the large group.

Slide 239



Sum Up *Summarize learning from Module 10. This summary will incorporate learnings from entire course.*

Supervising VPS
Use Page 92

Lead verbal evaluation and/or hand out written evaluations, if using. Give people a few minutes to think about their feedback. Acknowledge that all constructive feedback is welcome and will be used to further strengthen the training for others.

Evaluation
example
Page 93

Celebrate participant accomplishments and completion of the VPS course. Chat with the class about individual and group accomplishments, relationships gained, community-building efforts, barriers broken through.

Certificate
example
Page 94

Issue certificates, if using.

Show

Questions Map

10.4 Questions
Map

Review the Questions Map. Instruct the students to use this Questions Map as a way to “find their way” when working with people in VPS.

The Questions Map gives indicators to know “where a person is” in VPS, whether engaging in a Partnership, Considering Work (Motivational Foundations), Choosing Work (Supporting Choice), Getting Work, or Keeping. Participants may share any of the content of this training with the people they serve, including the Questions Map.

Vocational Peer Support: Supervising VPS Skill Use

After the training is completed, trainees may want and/or need support and supervision as they use the skills in their everyday work. Use the following as examples of "HW Assignments" that may be given in anticipation of meetings or calls with participants post-training. Expect that each participant will work on different things with their peers, but that the whole group may want to work on each of these as a continued learning experience.

Explore Motivational Foundations

1. Explore Need **or** Beliefs **or** Information **or** Support

Build Motivational Foundations

1. Scaffold the gathering of information
2. Support the planning for getting more experience
3. Scaffold the gathering of more support
4. Think through how to get supports "on board"

Choosing

1. Scaffold Exploring Preferences: Review past experiences, brainstorm preferences
2. Scaffold researching options
3. Support person to keep track of research information

Getting

1. Support person to list activities
2. Brainstorm possible supports needed
3. Scaffold efforts in getting jobs/education

Keeping

1. Support person to brainstorm possible skill areas of strength
2. List skill areas that may be getting in the way of success and satisfaction
3. Brainstorm supports that will increase success and satisfaction

Coordinate with Employment Providers

1. Brainstorm possible vocational supports
2. "Go with" people to learn about providers: call, visit, orientations
3. Advocate with or for the person
4. Support relationship and negotiations for needed/wanted services

Example Evaluation for the VPS Training

Item: To what extent are you satisfied with the:	Very Satisfied 5	Satisfied 4	Neutral 3	Dissatisfied 2	Very Dissatisfied 1
Trainers' knowledge					
Trainers' teaching skill					
Layout of the materials					
Registration/Attendance					
Flow of the class					
Knowledge I gained					
Skills I gained					
Training matched my expectations					
Comfort during training					

1. What did you like the most about the training?

2. What did you like least about the training?

3. What is the most important thing you learned?

4. Other comments:

[ADD NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

Presents this

Certificate of Participation

to

[Add name of participant]

in recognition of your participation in [X] days of training in

Vocational Peer Support

[add date]

Trainer

Trainer

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Related Products Published by
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Vocational Empowerment Photovoice:

Leader's Guide
Workbook

Vocational Illness Management & Recovery: Wellness for Work:

Provider's Guide
Participant Workbook
Implementation Guide

**Career Planning Curriculum
for People with Psychiatric Disabilities:**

Instructor's Guide
Reference Handbook

**Technical Assistance Process Guide
Enhancing Workplace Inclusion
for Employees with Psychiatric Disabilities**

Group Process Guidelines for Leading Groups and Classes



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Vocational Peer Support

Trainee Handbook and Toolkit

money recovery
success choose
VPS job satisfaction esteem keep career
future get dreams support

Debbie Nicolellis
and Lyn Legere



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We cannot thank the Transformation Center in Boston, MA, and its Executive Director, Deborah Delman, enough for their generous and instrumental support of the development and piloting of this curriculum. We celebrate the collaboration between peer and academic organizations, and we are grateful to have had the opportunity to bring to fruition an aspiration of ours, that of joining employment support and peer support to better serve people in recovery.

Our working advisory group has had a great impact on us and on this curriculum. We are moved by Shery Mead’s reminders in Intentional Peer Support to “learn with,” “scaffold,” and to “stay peer,” and we appreciate her support to echo those sentiments throughout this curriculum. Larry Fricks of the Appalachian Training Group helped us to find our center by encouraging us to concentrate on the beauty and power of Choose-Get-Keep. The encouragement of Peggy Swarbrick of Community Support Programs of New Jersey to add in a Social Security Work Incentives component has transformed the final training package. Lori Ashcraft of Recovery Innovations taught us much about the role that genuine caring and wellbeing plays in peer support and vocational recovery. Lastly, we thank Lori DiGalbo for her thoughts on ways that we could join vocational peer support and vocational rehabilitation systems.

We could not have gotten this curriculum off the ground without the generous commitment of time, energy, and feedback by the many peers who have allowed us to learn with them about vocational peer support. Our pre-pilot group from around Massachusetts helped us to initially think about the intersection of employment and peer support, the Pioneer Class in Boston, MA, helped us to work on our first drafts, and the Recovery Academy class in Grand Rapids, MI, helped us to understand the role of current work for peers learning about VPS; and to all of you, we are ever grateful.

And to those who worked with us for several years while utilizing VPS skills and tools in their practice every day, we tip our hats to you. The Peer Specialist Team at Advocates, Inc., under the direction of Keith Scott, the Recovery Coaches of Recovery Innovations in Phoenix, AZ, under the leadership of Lori Ashcraft, Gene Johnson, and Christopher Magee; and finally, the staff at Promise Recovery Network under the guidance of Cherene Allen-Caraco have made more than a substantive contribution. By using VPS in your work, and talking to us month after month, you have offered us the kind of guidance that only the true experts can extend.

Finally, we wish to thank those who provided funding, the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) and the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). We are grateful for your vision of, and unfaltering commitment to, improving employment outcomes for people diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities.

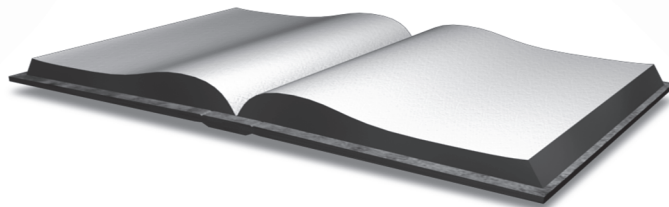
Debbie Nicolellis, Lyn Legere

How To Use This Material

The material within these pages are designed to be utilized within a classroom-training environment, but may be used for independent study as desired.

Here is what you will find within the Modules in this workbook:

1. Each Module has a different content focus
2. For ease, each Module has a “Content Guide” with a list of what is contained within
3. Overviews of each content area
4. Classroom Discussion Questions
5. Information about skills you will need to work with Vocational Peer Support
6. Examples of the process
7. Classroom Practice Exercises
8. Discussion Prompts for use in conversations with peers or to facilitate use of Tools
9. Tools to support explorations and decision-making in your work with peers
10. Tips and Pitfalls to Watch out for



Feel free to write in this book, to take notes, mark down answers for exercises and discussions, and even to doodle. This workbook is yours. You will receive a clean copy of the Tools, Discussion Prompts, and even some of the main points from each of the Modules in the VPS Toolkit. Once you start using the VPS Toolkit, make copies of the Tools to work with each person.

Course Introduction: VPS Training Program: The Basic Facts

VPS Training Program: An advanced specialization for peer specialists.

Goal of the VPS Training: To support peer specialists who wish to add information, skills, and tools needed to support vocational recovery.



VPS Teaching Methods

In the VPS Training, you might expect the following:

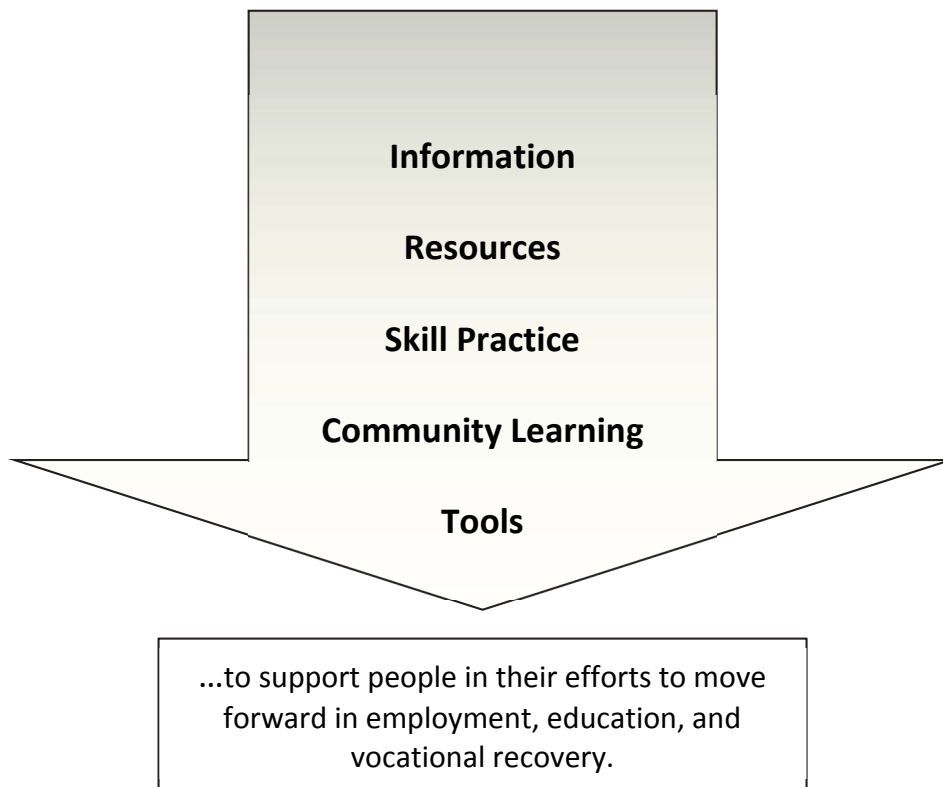
- Interactive teaching
- Lots of discussion
- A focus on skills
- Exercises to enhance experience with new tools
- Community Learning outside of class, to hone new skills in your work

VPS Training Topics

The table below lists the training topics covered in the VPS Training, by each Module.

Module 1	Overview of the Training Program Vocational Recovery & Vocational Peer Support
Module 2	Partnering to Support Vocational Recovery
Module 3	Building Motivational Foundations
Module 4	Supporting Choice in Work and Career
Module 5	Scaffolding Getting Into Jobs and School
Module 6	Keeping Work and School
Module 7	Coordinating with Employment Service Providers
Module 8	Researching Information
Module 9	Supporting People to Work While on Benefits (Optional 1-day Module)
Module 10	Using the Scaffolding: How do we keep this going?

What we will we walk away with?



Discussion:

What are you hoping to get out of this program?

What do the people you work with say about employment and educational goals?

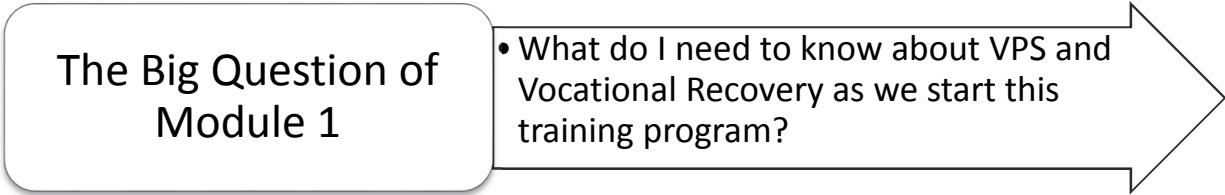
Module 1

Vocational Recovery and Vocational Peer Support

What to Expect in Module 1

**The Big Question of
Module 1**

- What do I need to know about VPS and Vocational Recovery as we start this training program?



Module 1 will introduce you to the concepts and general practice of Vocational Peer Support (VPS), and the context of Vocational Recovery. You will find in Module 1 descriptions of concepts, examples to illustrate processes, classroom exercises, and tools for your ongoing reference.

	Module 1 Table of Contents	Page
1.1	Vocational Recovery and Vocational Peer Support	10
1.2	Review of Peer Support Principles	11
1.3	What is Vocational Recovery?	12
1.4	So what are people up against when thinking about work?	13
1.5	Vocational Peer Support: Mission	14
1.6	Vocational Peer Support: Values	15
1.7	A Snapshot of VPS Activities	16
1.8	“Scaffolding” in Vocational Peer Support	17
1.9	Tool: “Scaffolding” in Peer Support	18
1.10	Module 1 Summary Exercise	19

1.1 Vocational Recovery and Vocational Peer Support

In Module 1: we will learn Information about:

- What is Vocational Recovery?
- What is Vocational Peer Support?
- What is Scaffolding in VPS?

Why look at work?

- Studies report that only 15% - 33% of people with psychiatric disabilities are working.
- Under-employment is a big problem: People with disabilities may work fewer hours, and even get paid less, than people without disabilities.
- HOWEVER: Research shows that most people with lived experience want to work – about 70% say they want to work!

What is the peer support role in supporting vocational recovery?

Assist people to decide IF they want to work,

Support people to figure out what they want to do for work or career,

Aid in the gathering of resources,

Support people to use their strengths,

And help people to get into and keep the kind of work they really want.

1.2 Review of Peer Support Principles



Vocational Peer Support is based in Peer Support principles and practice.

Pair up with a classmate to discuss the following, and write down your answers to discuss with the large group:

1. What main ideas do you remember from peer support training?

2. What peer support values guide your work today?

3. Which of these are the easiest to uphold?

4. Which of these are the hardest to uphold?

1.3 What is Vocational Recovery?

Vocational Recovery is an individualized journey of claiming or reclaiming one's right and capacity to choose, get, and keep vocational paths.

Vocational Recovery: Not just a job.

Vocational Recovery is the journey of self-discovery as someone who can have meaningful activity in one's life, who has something to offer to the world, and/or who has a future as a worker/student.

- More than a job: Recovery!
- Vocational trajectory
- Long term focus
- Career, jobs, and education
- Jobs as learning labs

Meaningful work can mean different things to different people:

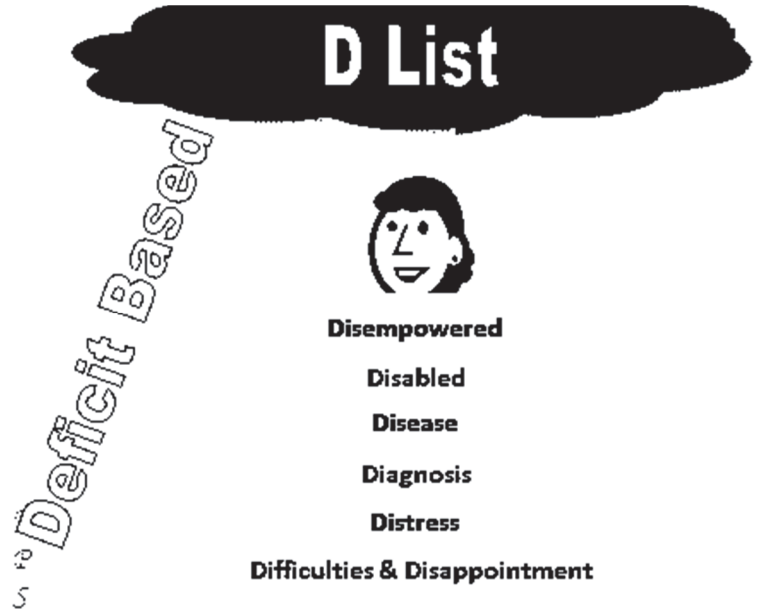
- A "stepping stone" job leading to career
- A job that "makes sense" for right now
- Work in a desired career or direction
- Learning Lab: what do I want to learn at this job?



Think about your own vocational recovery: What did it mean to you to find work that was meaningful to you?

1.4 So What Are People Up Against When Thinking About Work?

People are often up against lots of D's: Disadvantage, Disability, Distress, etc. What happens to the person when all these "D's" are surrounding the person?



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A List

Asset Based

- Advocacy & Agency
- Authentic
- Achievements
- Abilities
- Assets
- A person



And the person comes back and gets stronger and stronger!

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On the other hand, when the person has the chance to rack up assets, such as abilities, achievements, agency (as in, the sense that "I can"), what happens?

1'
2'
3'

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1.5 Vocational Peer Support: Mission

Mission of VPS: The mission of Vocational Peer Support is to assist people as they choose, get into, and maintain their vocational recovery.

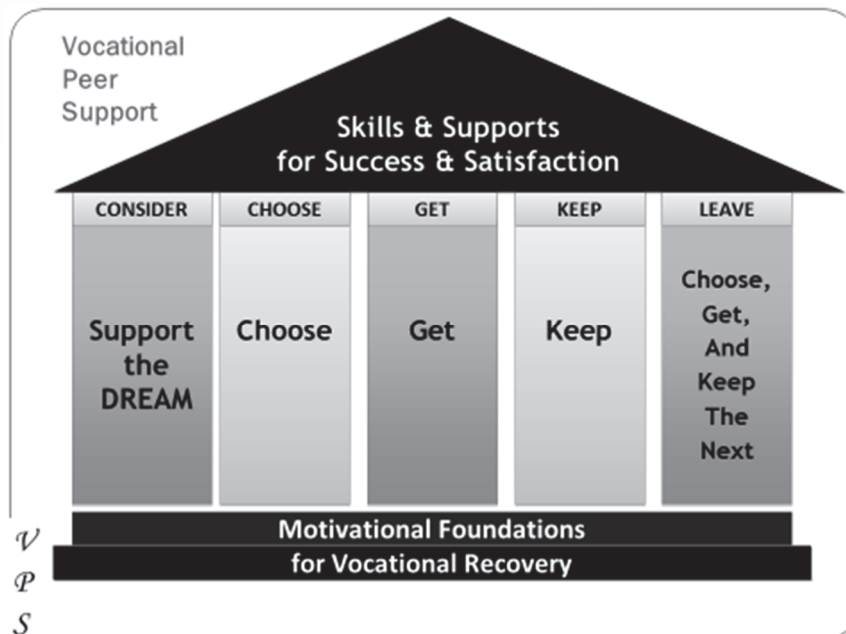
The foundations for Vocational Peer Support include the essentials of Peer Support:

MUTUAL SUPPORT
SHARED EXPERIENCE
SHARED POWER

...as well as those of Psychiatric Vocational Rehabilitation: People participating in PVR:

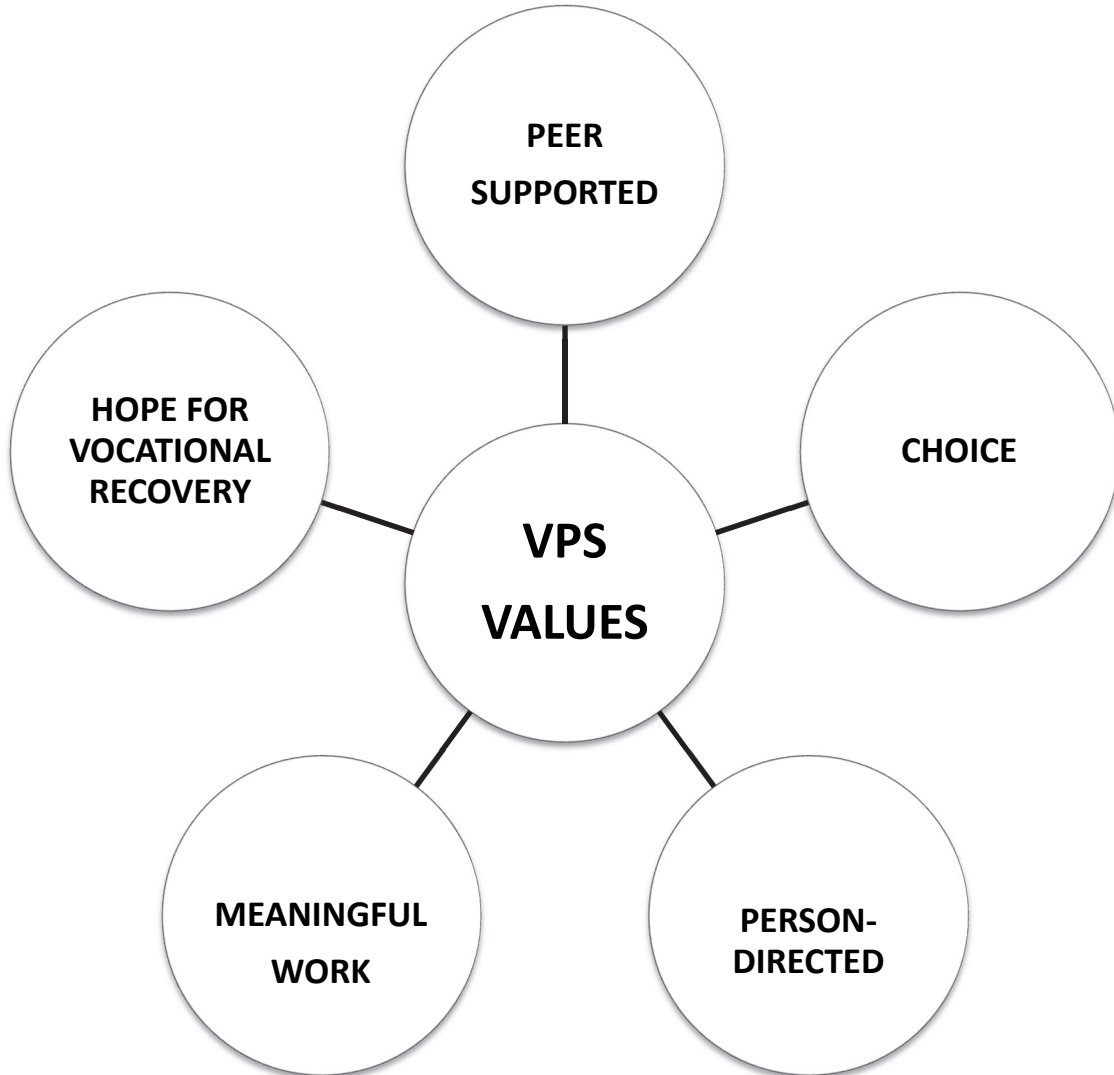
CONSIDER
CHOOSE
GET
KEEP

The following graphic will be utilized throughout this training, as an anchor for where we are. This image guides our thinking about Vocational Peer Support:



1.6 Vocational Peer Support: Values

VPS is based on values that guide our work. Here are a few:



What would you add to this list?

1.7 A Snapshot of VPS Activities

VPS Activities

Inspiring hope for Vocational Recovery

Modeling Vocational Recovery

Sharing Lived Experience & Recovery
Strategies

Supporting Exploration about Work

Helping people make *informed* decisions
about work

Providing supports as people choose, get
and keep work

Supporting the use of vocational services

Supporting the use of community resources

1.8 “Scaffolding” in Peer Support

In VPS, scaffolding is supporting someone’s learning and building up of one’s self, as the person takes on more and more of the tasks themselves.

The question then is, “What is our role in “scaffolding” the person who is interested in work and/or vocational recovery?”

What would you add? Some of what peer supports might do to scaffold vocational recovery are below. Add your own!

Accompany	Explore ideas	Explore beliefs	Have fun!	Negotiate
“Sit with”	Support decision-making	Help identify strengths	Get to know the person	Advocate
Listen!	Find resources	Explore experiences	Hear the despair	Coordinate with supports
Share experiences	Support to research	Help to remember	Understand the questions	Learn with!
Encourage	Connect	Explore what’s out there	Hold out hope	Support person to do
Help providers hear the person	Translate between person and system	Support person to use services if desired	Share your vocational recovery story	

1.9 Tool: “Scaffolding” in Peer Support

In VPS, we think of scaffolding as methods of co-learning, exploring, discovering, and gaining experience, and supporting the person as he or she takes on more and more of those tasks over time.

VPS complements other vocational services, providing opportunities for exploration, decision-making and experiencing that traditional vocational services may not be able to provide.

Use the table below to brainstorm and create a list of the kinds of things you may do to scaffold the efforts of the person you are now serving, or you may do this on your own. Pay attention to the kinds of scaffolds the person **wants**. The examples below may get you started:

Listening to me!	Go with me so I'm not alone	Help me find good info	Tell me how you did it	Understand how hard this is...

1.10 Module 1 Summary Exercise

Pair up with a partner, and discuss the following:

1. In your own words, how do you see vocational recovery?

2. How would you describe vocational peer support?

3. What were the most important moments in your own vocational recovery?

4. What are some of the ways you hope to use VPS in your work?

Module 2

Partnering to Support Vocational Recovery

What to Expect from Module 2

The Big Question of Module 2

- How do I engage with people in ways that facilitate their involvement in VPS?

Module 2 will teach you how to partner effectively with peers, so that they can engage with you, engage with the VPS process, and move forward with work and/or education.

	Module 2 Table of Contents	Page
2.1	Partnering to Support Vocational Recovery	22
2.2	Partnering is NOT...	23
2.3	Partnering: A definition	24
2.4	Example: Introduction to Reggie and Miguel	25
2.5	Orienting	26
2.6	Example of Orienting: Reggie	27
2.7	Partnering Exercise: Orienting	28
2.8	Orienting Discussion Prompts	29
2.9	Orienting Checklist Tool	30
2.10	Listening	31
2.11	Example of Listening: Reggie	32
2.12	Listening: Attending	33
2.13	Checklist: Clearing Distractions	34
2.14	Listening: Paraphrasing	35
2.15	Example of Paraphrasing	36
2.16	Practice: Paraphrasing	37
2.17	Paraphrasing Checklist Tool	38
2.18	Sandwiching Questions	39
2.19	Example of Sandwiching Questions	40
2.20	“Sandwiching” Questions Checklist Tool	41
2.21	Listening: Using Silence	42
2.22	Using Silence Checklist Tool	43
2.23	Sharing Your Vocational Recovery Story	44
2.24	Example of Sharing Part of a Vocational Recovery Story	45
2.25	Exercise: Sharing Our Vocational Recovery Stories	46
2.26	Exercise: Your Vocational Recovery Story	47
2.27	Considering Sharing Vocational Recovery Stories Checklist Tool	48
2.28	One Last Partnering Exercise	49
2.29	Practical Assignment: Your Vocational Recovery Story	50

2.1 Partnering to Support Vocational Recovery

*“Remember that you don’t lack all the power, nor do you have all the power.”
--Shery Mead*

Discuss the following questions with a classmate:

Who are some of the partners in your life? What makes someone a partner?

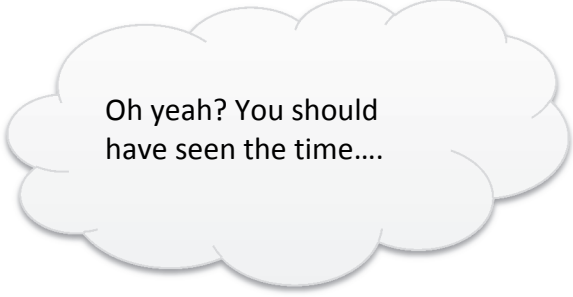
What makes someone a particularly **good partner**?

What makes someone a particularly **unhelpful** partner?

What **skills** do you think it takes to be a solid partner?

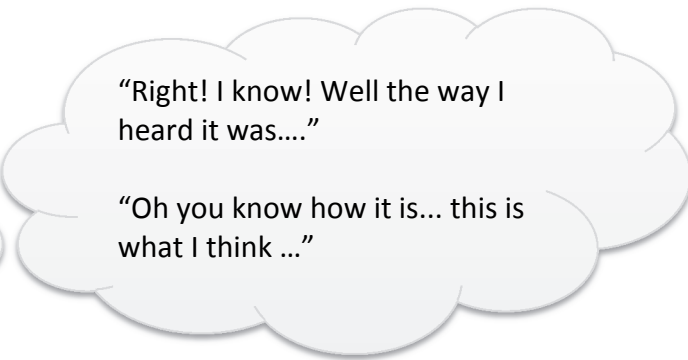
2.2 Partnering is NOT....

1) One-upping each other...



Oh yeah? You should have seen the time....

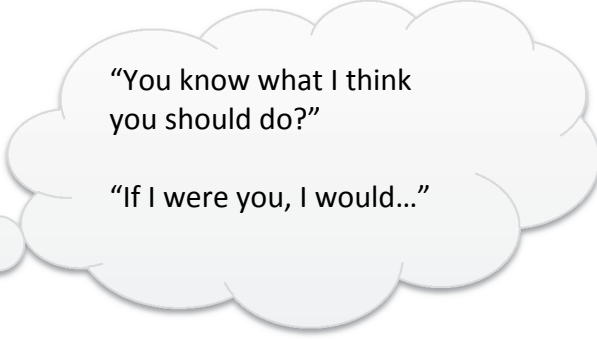
2) A tennis match...



“Right! I know! Well the way I heard it was....”

“Oh you know how it is... this is what I think ...”

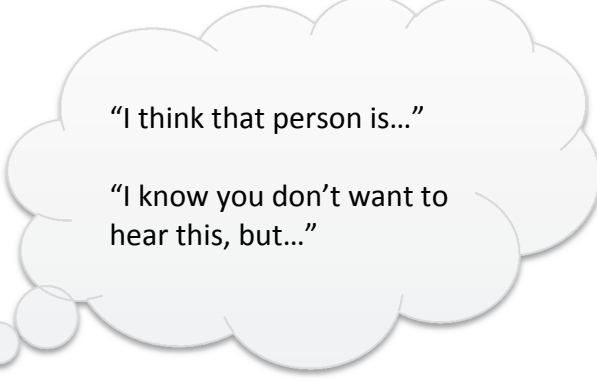
3) Giving advice or “fixing” ...



“You know what I think you should do?”

“If I were you, I would...”

4) Giving unsolicited opinions...



“I think that person is...”

“I know you don’t want to hear this, but...”

2.3 Partnering: A Definition

Partnering
is...

- connecting with another person in an intentional way that assists that person to explore and discover his or her own inner wisdom

Partnering is working with people to support them to be included in every process and activity, support their vocational recovery by listening and engaging their experiences, thoughts, and feelings, and inspiring hope for vocational recovery by sharing our own experiences with the ups and downs of reclaiming a meaningful vocational life.

- Orienting
- Listening
- Sharing your Vocational Recovery Story

In the next pages, you will see:

- Examples of the process
- Information about each skill
- Discussions to help us think through each piece
- Practice opportunities related to these Partnering skills

As you move through the next pages, keep in mind your current partnerships, especially those with peers with whom you work. Think about how these skills might apply to your work.

2.4 Example: Introduction to Reggie and Miguel

Peer Support Specialist Miguel had noticed that Reggie had gotten frustrated with the advice he had been getting from all sides: his family, treatment providers, even some of his friends, who had been weighing in on what they thought Reggie should do. Reggie often felt that his service providers were doing things around him and about him, but certainly not with him.

Miguel knew personally what that was like, and so he decided to focus on strengthening their partnership. This made sense because other partnerships had been problematic for Reggie. Miguel listened hard as Reggie recounted how excluded and controlled he felt by some of the people in his life.

Miguel listened hard for Reggie's perspective, and found it difficult sometimes to stop himself from trying to change Reggie's perspective. He wanted to say things like, "Want me to tell 'em?," but he knew that doing that wouldn't be listening per se, but rather, trying to fix the situation. Instead, Miguel focused on paraphrasing Reggie's perspective, to find out more about what Reggie thought and felt.

Because of this, Reggie had the room to decide for himself what to do. He decided that if he knew more about what his service providers were thinking, had a chance to have his voice heard, and heard more about what was possible for his work life; it would be easier for him to get the most out of vocational services. He really wanted to get moving with his goal of working within the next few months.

2.5 Orienting

What is Orienting?

Orienting is facilitating understanding of **any** new or ongoing activity.

Why Orient?

When we orient, we work to be “on the same page.” Orienting can help everyone to know what’s going on.

When should we Orient?

Orienting can be used any time the person could benefit from knowing **WHAT** is happening, **WHY**, and **HOW**.



Where can we Orient?

Orienting is a tool that can be used in a group meeting, class, or in a one-on-one conversation in which you want to support the person to have a more full understanding of a process, activity, or discussion.

Orienting is..

- Assisting the person to UNDERSTAND:
 - WHAT is happening
 - WHY
 - HOW
 - ROLES: yours, his/hers/ anyone else's!



V
P
S

2.6 Example of Orienting: Reggie

Reggie has not felt very engaged with his treatment team. Because of this, Miguel decided to support Reggie to get oriented to new activities. Because he knew Reggie doesn't like it when people "sneak things in," he took a minute to describe orienting to Reggie, including what orienting is and what Reggie might get from it. They talked about how getting oriented to new vocational activities might support Reggie and his vocational recovery. Reggie was excited to learn more about employment activities, and asked how he could get more involved.

Reggie invited Miguel to his team meeting, since it is a meeting in which he often feels lost. They discussed what Miguel's role might be, and decided that Miguel would help Reggie to be more involved in the discussion, and another "listening ear" in the meeting.

Miguel attended the meeting with Reggie, and he quickly noticed that the discussion was going forward without attention to whether Reggie understood or not. Miguel asked the leader of the meeting to describe the goal of the meeting, and what they hoped it would do for Reggie. He also asked Reggie what he was hoping for from the meeting, soliciting Reggie's thoughts and questions before they got started.

Question: What kind of impact do you think Miguel's actions here had on Reggie? On the team?

2.7 Partnering Exercise: Orienting

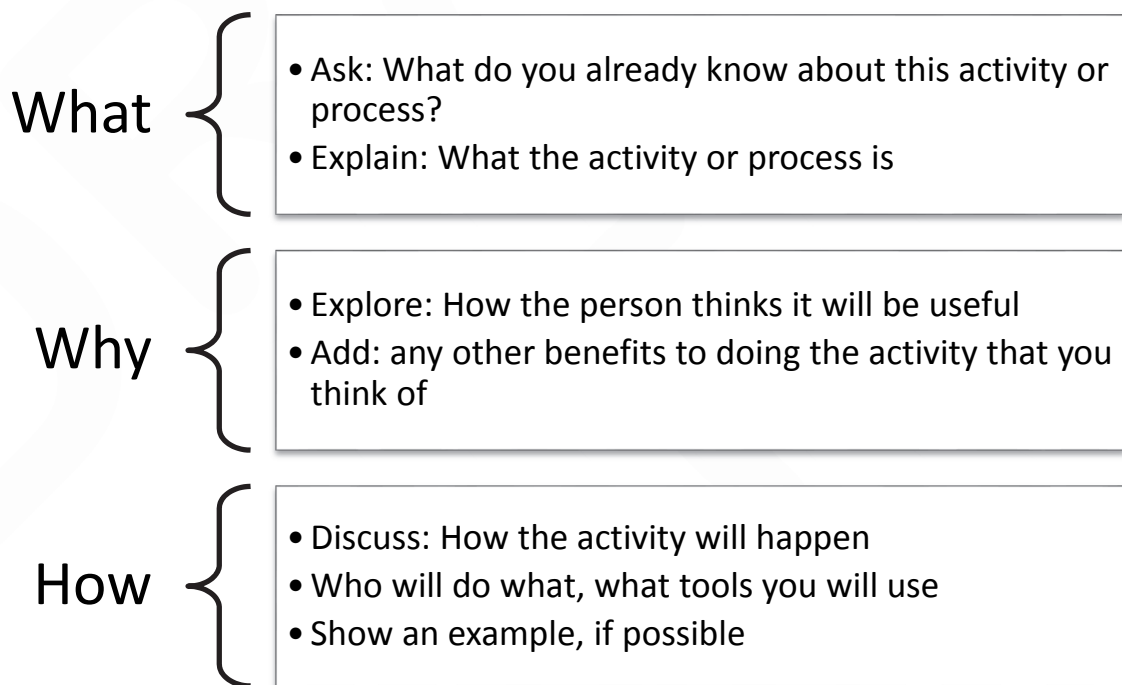
Team up with a classmate. Choose who will practice orienting and follow these directions and the instructions from your trainer(s):

If you are **orienting**, orient your partner to an activity as directed by the instructor, using the GUIDE below. Be yourself: Do not play a role, i.e., a “counselor.”

If you are working as the partner, participate in the orientation. Be yourself: Do not play the role of someone else!

If you are a third partner, just observe, and listen – Do not add to the conversation. Think about what you are hearing: What’s working?

Use this **GUIDE** to help you to ORIENT to:



Questions for Class Discussion:

1. What was easy to do? Hard to do?
2. What did you learn about Orienting?
3. How are you hoping to add Orienting to your own practice?

2.8 Orienting Discussion Prompts

Orienting involves both asking for the person's perspectives as well as giving information:

- THE WHAT
- THE WHY
- THE HOW

Use prompts such as these to help orient to any new or ongoing activity:

1. What do you already know about... (what we're about to do, this process, etc.)
2. What do you want to know about... (what we're about to do, this process, etc.)?
3. Let me share with you what I know about...
4. I remember when I was...or I felt like... (shared experience)
5. Does this seem like something that you would find helpful? How?
6. Here are some benefits I've seen/experienced...
7. What role would you like? How do you want to be a part of this?
8. Here's what you might see (me/other people doing) during...
9. What do you know about how (this activity) might happen?
10. Let me show you an example of...
11. Here's what we can expect of...

2.9 Orienting Checklist Tool

Instructions: Use this checklist anytime the person could use an orientation to what is happening, for example:

- You are suggesting an activity to do together
- Others are starting an activity or meeting with the person
- At the start of an activity that you've agreed to do together
- If you or the person "gets lost"
- If you are coming back to an activity you started previously

CHECKLIST FOR ORIENTING:

- Ask: What do you know already about this activity?
- Tell: WHAT the activity is
- Ask: How this activity could be useful to the person (WHY do it)
- Suggest: Any added benefits to doing the activity you can think of
- Ask: If the person knows HOW this activity will occur
- Describe: HOW the activity will happen (who will do what?)
- Show: An example, if possible
- Other things you would add:

2.10 Listening

Listening SOUNDS easy enough... But is it?

How do you know someone is really listening to you?

As a peer specialist, what are some of the things you do to ensure that you are listening?

Listening is more than hearing: It involves not only the ears and brain; we have to engage our hearts, minds, and intention.

How do we Listen?

We will focus on three skill areas that will help us to listen in a way that engages people in Vocational Peer Support and vocational recovery.

Listening	Attending
	Paraphrasing key content
	Using silence

2.11 Example of Listening: Reggie

What do you notice about what Miguel's Listening?

Miguel prepared himself to listen at Reggie's team meeting by doing a few things. First, because he often gets distracted by all the paperwork he has to do; he cleared his space of extraneous papers so that his focus could be on Reggie and the meeting at hand. Miguel also wrote a note to himself to work on his report, so that it would not distract him while trying to listen.

Miguel reminded himself to use "SOLER" to make sure his body communicated his interest in what was being said –to make sure that he squared his shoulders so that his body was facing the person, to be open with his posture, to lean forward when someone was saying something important, and to make eye contact and relax.

At the team meeting, Miguel was ready to listen and was primed for talking about work. But he decided to listen first, without responding right away, and without asking a lot of questions. He wanted to make sure that Reggie had a chance to get his thoughts out completely, without a lot of other people deciding on the direction of the conversation.

When it seemed like a good time to jump in, Miguel reflected back his understanding of what Reggie had said because 1) he wanted Reggie to know that he was being heard, and 2) he wanted the staff and other supporters to understand what Reggie was telling them. This seemed to get Reggie talking even more, and Miguel noticed that the staff did not need to ask so many questions. Reggie had become a full participant in the conversation.

2.12 Listening: Attending

What is Attending? Attending is focusing on the person with our bodies and minds.

Why do it? Attending is showing, with body language, that we are listening to another person.

How do we do it?

Attending involves:	Clearing distractions
	Opening our minds
	Attending physically

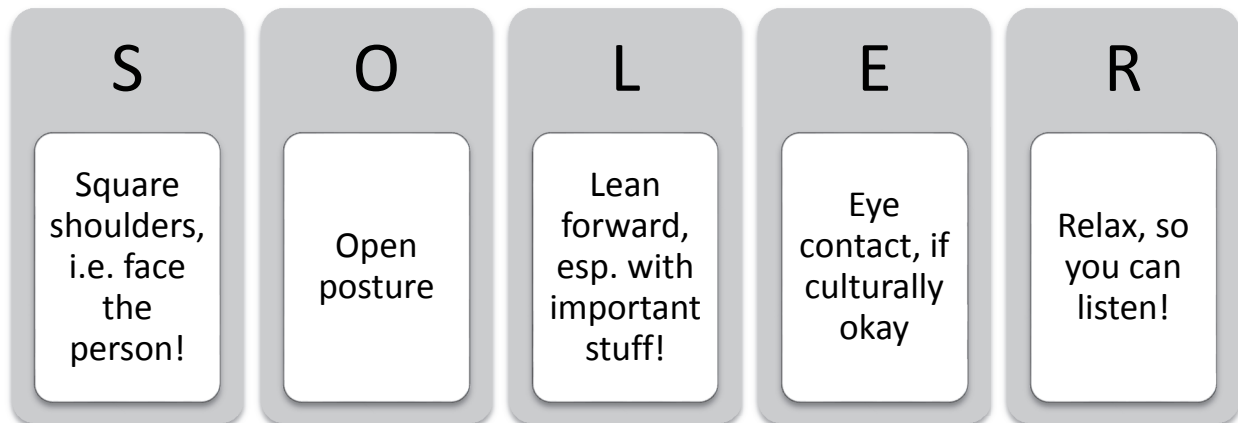
When **clearing distractions**, consider:

- phones ringing,
- open door,
- paperwork everywhere!

When **opening your mind**, become aware of any internal distractions

- to-do lists,
- wandering thoughts,
- preconceived notions about the person

Attending physically: Here's a mnemonic to help you remember how to attend to someone with your body:



2.13 Checklist: Clearing Distractions

When clearing distractions, think both about::

1) The space around you: Ask yourself:

- Is the space around me cluttered?
- Am I focusing on something in front of me or around me?
- Are there interruptions and disruptions in this space?
- Are we likely to be able to focus here?



2) The space inside you: Ask yourself:

- Is my head cluttered with other things to do or other worries?
- Do I have the willingness to listen to this person?
- Do I have the “space” in my head to listen?

How to Clear Distractions. Try...

- Clearing the papers on your desk
- Finding a new space that is quiet
- Putting a sign on the door
- Putting your phone “on silent” (and out of sight)
- Texting yourself a “to do” list for later
- Taking care of details beforehand that could get in the way
- Other: _____
- _____

2.14 Listening: Paraphrasing

Questions to Ponder:

- Have you ever listened through paraphrasing?
- Has anyone used paraphrasing to listen to you? What was that like?
- Who does paraphrasing support?
- When should we paraphrase?

Paraphrasing is stating in different words what we hear another person saying.

Why do it? Paraphrasing can help us to check out what we are hearing, and show that we understand.

Paraphrasing is...

Summarizing words, feelings, beliefs

Using different words

Sandwiching your questions

How do we do it? Sometimes it is helpful to use “leads.” The following leads can remind us to paraphrase. How could you use these in your work?

Paraphrases might look like this:

So you're saying...

You want people to know that...

So you...

You wish that....



2.15 Example of Paraphrasing

Throughout the team meeting, Miguel invited Reggie to give his perspective. Miguel listened and paraphrased to ensure that Reggie’s perspective was heard, and that it was heard correctly.

Afterwards, they talked about the meeting:

Miguel: So, what did you think about the meeting?

Reggie: It was okay – I was glad you asked me what I wanted out of the meeting. For once, I was actually a part of it.

Miguel: So you were glad to have a voice in the meeting.

Reggie: Yeah! It was great...(pause)...but I wish that people were more interested in what I have to say. I could tell that most people felt like my talking in the meeting was a bother to them.

Miguel: So you feel disappointed that everyone is not as excited as you are that you finally have a voice in the process.

Reggie: I am! Everybody here keeps talking about “recovery,” but then I don’t get any love as somebody who is going after my own recovery. It’s not going to stop me though.

Miguel: You’re bummed out that you aren’t seen for the strong, resilient person that you are. But you’re not swayed. You’re on the path!

Q. What did you notice in this example?

2.16 Practice: Paraphrasing

Instructions: Read the statements below, then answer the questions. Lastly, write in a paraphrase that is even better than those listed as options.

Robbie: “I really wish my counselor would just stop asking me so many questions, so we can get on with it. She asks me everything from how much money I have to when my last dentist visit was... why can’t she just help me get a job?”



Q. What would the best paraphrase be?

1. “I totally understand. Have I ever told you about the time that happened to me?”
2. “So you just wish your counselor would just stop asking you so many questions and get on with it. You don’t see why she just can’t help you get a job!”
3. “You’re ready to get started with the job search!”

What would be an even better paraphrase?

Kate: “I’m really hopeful about my future – I’ve always thought I would be a good worker. I just have no idea what I should be doing – I mean, how do people figure this “work thing” out? How will I know what’s right for me?”



Q. What would the best paraphrase be?

1. “You know what I think you would be good at? Accounting!”
2. “What if we did a test to assess what you’re good at?”
3. “You’re not sure how to decide what the best direction is, but you definitely know there is a job for you out there.”

What would be an even better paraphrase?

2.17 Paraphrasing Checklist Tool

Paraphrasing Preparation Checklist:

- Have I prepared for Listening?
- Have I listened for the most important points the person is making?
- What do I think is being communicated here, in words, tone, emotion, and in body language?
- How can I use different words to acknowledge what the person is saying?
- How can I state those points, in different words, to demonstrate my understanding of the person's point of view?

Keep your Paraphrases:

- Brief!
- Focused on the main point(s)
- Oriented to the person
- In different words
- Free of judgment

Paraphrasing is not telling people what they think, feel or believe. It is affirming that we hear what people say to us.

Trying out new skills can be uncomfortable and awkward. Just like riding a bike was awkward until we "got the hang of it." In our experience, the same thing happens with paraphrasing. Give yourself a chance to get your balance – it WILL happen!

"Leads" you can use to state your paraphrases:

"You think that _____"

"So you're saying _____"

"You feel _____ because _____"

"You believe _____"

2.18 “Sandwiching” Questions

Questions to Ponder:

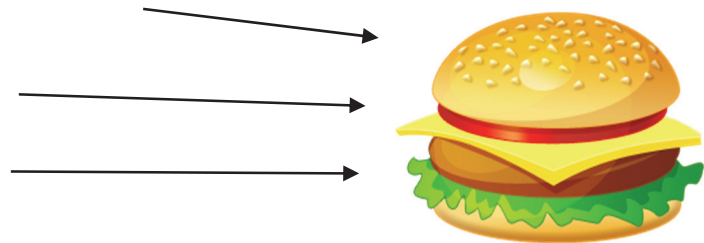
- When can questions be helpful? When are they NOT helpful?
- What’s the difference between an open-ended question and direct question?
- Who is in control when questions are asked?

Sometimes questions get in the way of connecting in an intentional way. When they do, we might want to “sandwich” our questions between reflective responses:

Paraphrase the person’s statement

Your Question

Paraphrase the person’s answer



Sandwiching questions is showing the person that you understand what is being said both before and after asking a question.

You’ll be amazed at how few questions you actually need to ask in order to get to know the person’s perspective!

What are some benefits to Sandwiching Questions?

When would you Sandwich Questions?

2.19 Example of Sandwiching Questions

Miguel: What would have helped to make you feel more welcome in the meeting?

Reggie: Well, for one, they could have looked at me in the eye when I was talking instead of writing notes.

Miguel: So, acknowledging that you were speaking instead of looking away would have helped.

Reggie: Yeah. There's nothing worse than feeling like you're all alone in a room full of people who are writing furiously. What are they even writing? Are they writing stuff about me?

Miguel: It's disconcerting to not know what they're doing. But putting down their pens and paper would have helped. Did anyone do anything during the meeting that led you to think that they were listening?

Reggie: Well, I noticed that Sarah nodded her head, and even asked me a question about something I said. That was good.

Miguel: So you knew that at least one person was listening, because she acknowledged you. Twice!

Reggie: Exactly. I would love it if the rest of the people would start listening like that. It made me feel good.

Q. What do you notice about Miguel's partnering here?

How did Miguel Sandwich his question?

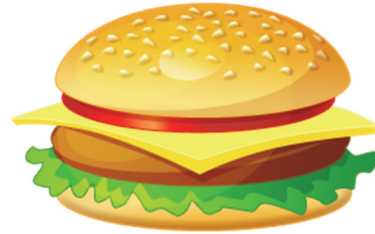
2.20 “Sandwiching” Questions Checklist Tool

Sometimes when we are interested in what someone is saying, we bombard the person with questions. We may intend for this to show our interest, but sometimes our interest can be received as a barrage of questions, and that actually creates a situation in which WE are controlling the conversation. When this happens, the person actually may feel left out, unimportant, or unheard.

With too many questions, we also may *start to control the direction of the conversation*. When we partner, we work to make sure that the **person** is driving the process. One partnering strategy is to “sandwich” our questions between reflective responses:

CHECKLIST FOR SANDWICHING:

- Has the person just said something that I can paraphrase BEFORE I ask a question?
- Have I heard the person completely before I ask a question?
- Is there another paraphrase or summary that I can offer instead of a question?
- Can I use silence here instead of a question?
- If I ask a question, is this question relevant to the conversation?
- Will this question support the person to move forward, or will it just satisfy my own curiosity?
- After I ask the question, have I listened to the answer?
- Have I paraphrased the person’s answer to my question?



2.21 Listening: Using Silence

“There are times when silence has the loudest voice.”

--LeRoy Brownlow

Questions to Ponder:

- What is the benefit of silence when connecting?
- What is it like for you when someone listens without talking?
- What is hard about being silent when listening to someone?



Exercise: Work with a partner from class. One person should talk about a topic important to him or her. The other will listen: without talking. The person listening should not ask any questions, make any comments, or offer advice.

Do this for five minutes, then discuss your experience with the larger group.

2.22 Using Silence Checklist Tool

Silence can feel very scary to us, and we may be tempted to jump in to avoid the discomfort of silence. Usually, silence means the person is doing further exploration and can't put his or her thoughts or feelings into words yet. Being patient, and allowing the person the space he or she needs, can be a wonderful gift.

During silences, attend to the person by paying attention to the person's body language and facial expressions, and ask yourself, "What is the person communicating to me?" This will distract *you* from your discomfort, as well as prepare you for a meaningful reflective response later.

The truth is, talking about vocational recovery can bring up some intense experiences and feelings. As supporters of recovery, we may be tempted to try and fix things, or to fill up the silence with our own experiences, questions, or simply change the topic. It is harder, but much more meaningful, to us and to the person, to simply sit with our discomfort and listen.

CHECKLIST FOR USING SILENCE:

- Ask yourself if this moment needs a response
- Ask yourself if it would be helpful to give a verbal response right now, or would silence be more respectful?
- If you feel uncomfortable, consider why. Is it your own internal pressure to do or say something? If so, work to lessen the discomfort, but allow the person room to talk.
- Breathe.
- Relax into the moment – you don't need to fix anything. Just be there with the person!
- Focus on the person.
- Consider a paraphrase: What is the person communicating to you?

2.23 Sharing your Vocational Recovery Story

Sharing Your Vocational Recovery Story is a cornerstone of peer practice. When you were trained as a peer supporter, you learned how to tell your own recovery story in a way that offered hope.

Questions to Ponder:

- What do you remember from peer support training about telling your story?
- What are elements of a helpful telling of your recovery story?
- What pitfalls do we need to watch out for?

Sharing is part of co-learning, another cornerstone of peer practice!



Sharing our perspective or our story involves first considering:

1. Have I listened to the person's perspective first?
2. Have I demonstrated understanding of that perspective?
3. Will the person benefit from hearing this perspective or story?
4. Will I hinder or hurt by sharing now?
5. Is this story for me, or for the other person?
6. Am I inspiring possibility, connection, and hope through sharing?
7. What part or snippet of my story is relevant right now?

What would you add to this list? _____

2.24 Example of Sharing Part of a Vocational Recovery Story

Miguel didn't hesitate to share part of his vocational recovery story because he had heard Reggie talk about feeling discouraged. Reggie had been worried about whether he would ever be able to work in a great job, and had been disappointed that his team still seemed to be disinterested in his ideas.

Miguel shared with Reggie that he remembered what it was like to feel hopeless about ever having a meaningful vocational life. He shared his memories of what it was like to see that everyone seemed to think something different about what he should do for work. He remembered feeling bummed out, wondering why he should bother trying. But he didn't stay there. Miguel also told Reggie about the person in his life who had believed in him, the person who had encouraged him. He told Reggie how he got to the point in his life that he started to use employment services. He told him about his first job, and how he lost it, but that he learned that it might take a minute to get his "working legs under him." He ended this snippet of his story with hope for Reggie's vocational life, saying, "If I did it, I know you can, too."

What did you notice in this example?

Questions to Ponder:

- How are vocational recovery stories different from recovery stories?
- Have you ever told part of your vocational recovery story before?
- What is the benefit of telling snippets of your vocational recovery story?

2.25 Exercise: Sharing our Vocational Recovery Stories

Instructions: Read the introduction and example statement by Reggie and answer the questions below. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the group.

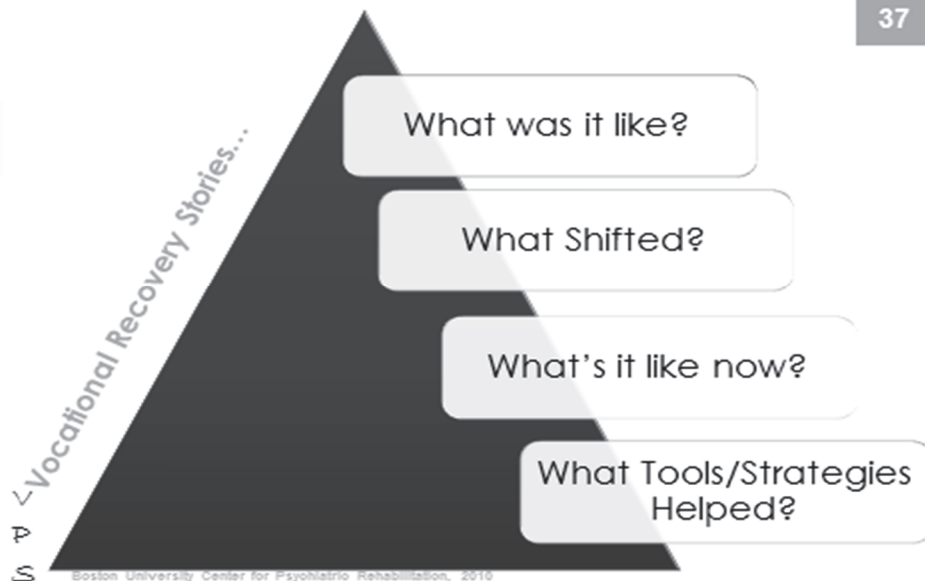
Reggie:

“Everyone around me has a different idea of what I SHOULD be doing. And most people don’t have very high expectations for me. If the people in my life don’t think I can do it, how can I think that I can do it?”

What should Miguel do first?

How can Miguel paraphrase what he’s heard?

What snippet of your own story would you share with Reggie?



2.26 Exercise: Your Vocational Recovery Story

Sharing your recovery story has been elemental to supporting people in their own recovery. You may never have thought through your Vocational Recovery Story: how work and school have been a part of your overall experience of recovery.

As you get ready to support someone’s vocational journey, think through snippets of your own vocational story. Think about how you got to where you are now. Be aware of the times that entering into work or school was scary, or presented challenges, because your peers also may be going through similar things.

Significant Moments in my Vocational Recovery Story

	<p>Tips for a successful story:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell a vocational recovery story, not a vocational struggle story! • Fill your story with hope, even as you acknowledge the times that you felt scared or hopeless. • Consider who you are talking to: Will the person benefit from this part of your story? • Ask yourself: Is this story-telling for me or for the person? • Be genuine!

2.27 Considering Sharing Vocational Recovery Stories Checklist Tool

Sharing how we got to where we are now may inspire hope for those who are asking themselves similar questions to the ones we once asked ourselves.

Consider the person: Will sharing at this time help or hurt?

- Have I listened to the person's perspective first?
- Have I demonstrated understanding of that perspective?
- Have I considered why this story might be useful?
- Will the person benefit from hearing this perspective or story?
- Will I help or hurt by sharing this story now?
- Can the person hear this story now?

Consider the timing: Is this the right time to tell this story?

- Is this story for me or the other person?

Consider the story: What part of my story is relevant here?

- Can I relate to the person's experience, and do I have a story that communicates that?
- Am I inspiring possibility, connection, and hope through sharing?

Consider yourself:

- Do I feel comfortable telling this part of my story?

2.28 One Last Partnering Exercise



Partnering is...

- Orienting
- Listening
- Sharing Vocational Recovery Stories

Let's take a look at this scenario. How might you begin to partner with Ken?

Ken: “I KNOW that there are other people who are working and figuring out their careers. I just don't know that I can do it – and believe, me, I've tried! I've worked before, and I failed. It just didn't work out. So I appreciate your wanting to help, but I just don't think that I can work.”

- What are the MOST important thoughts, feelings, experiences or beliefs you hear?

- How would you paraphrase what Ken said? Be brief, use different words than Ken did, and accurately capture the most important point(s).

- Is there an activity that you might orient Ken to? How would you orient?

- What part of your own story would you share with this person to inspire hope for vocational recovery?

2.29 Practical Assignment: Your Vocational Recovery Story

Instructions: *This assignment will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Have it ready for the beginning of the second day of class. Use this worksheet to prepare. You will be directed by your instructor about how and when to discuss this assignment.*

Brainstorm the following. In the next class session, you will be asked to share a snippet of your vocational recovery story with a partner in the class, and then to discuss the experience of both sharing and hearing vocational recovery stories.

- **What was it like** to have challenges with working and/or going to school?
- **What shifted** in your life that made it possible to work or study again?
- **What's it like now** to be working and/or going to school?
- **What tools and/or strategies did you use** to get over obstacles along the way?
- **What gave you hope?** What gives you hope now?

Module 3

**Building Motivational
Foundations**

What to Expect from Module 3

The Big Question of Module 3

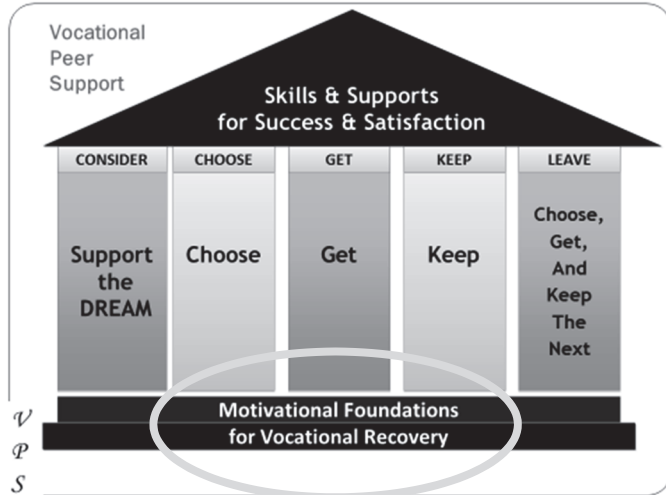
- How can I support people who are considering work, but haven't fully decided to move forward?

	Module 3 Table of Contents	Page
3.1	Motivational Foundations Overview	53
3.2	Foundations of Vocational Recovery	54
3.3	Foundational Building Blocks	55
3.4	Motivational Foundations: Overall Process	56
3.5	Example: Exploring Motivational Foundations	57
3.6	Foundation: Need	58
3.7	Example: Exploring Need	59
3.8	Exploring Need Tool: UNEMPLOYED	60
3.9	Exploring Need Tool: EMPLOYED	61
3.10	Discussion Prompts: Exploring Need	62
3.11	Building Need	63
3.12	Foundation: Beliefs	64
3.13	Example: Exploring Beliefs	65
3.14	Exploring Beliefs Tool	66
3.15	Discussion Prompts: Exploring Beliefs	67
3.16	Building Belief: Small Group Exercise	68
3.17	Foundation: Information	69
3.18	Information Example: Jackson	70
3.19	Exploring Information Tool	71
3.20	Discussion Prompts: Exploring Information	72
3.21	Building Information	73
3.22	Foundation: Support	74
3.23	Exploring Support Example: Sophia	75
3.24	Exploring Supports Tool	76
3.25	Building Supports	77
3.26	Discussion Prompts: Exploring Support	78
3.27	Summary of my Overall Confidence	79
3.28	Building Motivational Foundations Exercise	80
3.29	Pitfalls to Watch Out For	81
3.30	Small Group Exercise: Building Motivational Foundations	82

3.1 Motivational Foundations Overview

In this Module, we will learn how to support people to build the Foundational Building Blocks of Vocational Recovery.

Building Motivational Foundations is exploring and building the need, beliefs, information, and supports that sustain our efforts to make changes in our vocational lives.



In this Module, you will be able to:

- Look at each Factor separately
- See examples of the process
- Look at and experience tools and discussion prompts to help explore and build Motivational Foundations

Remember that a review of each Motivational Foundations factor, with tools and discussion prompts, will be available in the Toolkit for your everyday use.

At this point in the training, you will be expected to demonstrate skills you learned in past modules, so use your partnering skills in

Building Motivational Foundations is NOT a “Ready or Not” process. This process gives people the opportunity to decide for themselves HOW ready they are for making a major life change like engaging in work, school, or career.

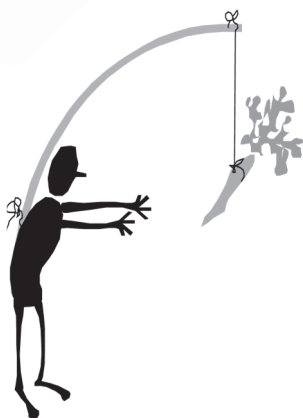
3.2 Foundations of Vocational Recovery

Or... what helps me feel ready

Motivational Foundations are the:

- Beliefs
- Knowledge
- Experience
- Resources that enhance or hinder our involvement in vocational recovery

Motivational Foundations are those critical factors that help us to consider for ourselves, “Do I stay where I am, or do I move in a new direction?”

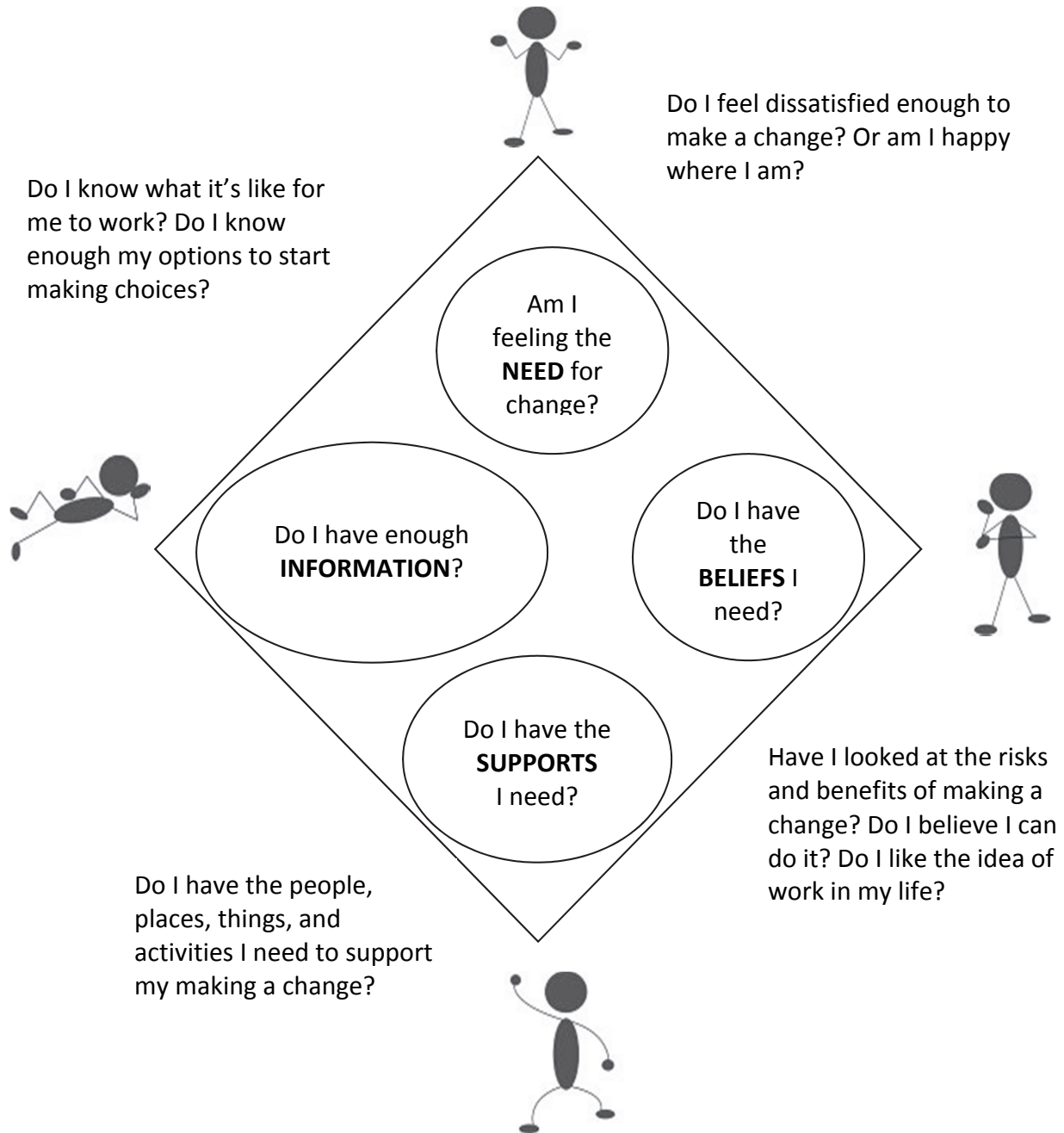


Questions to Ponder:

- How do we change?
- How do we know that it's time to start a journey of change?
- How do we keep going along the way?
- What helps us?
- What hinders our movement forward?
- How are these things similar or different from what we hear from our peers?

3.3 Foundational Building Blocks

Factors that impact change, and specifically change around work, include:



3.4 Motivational Foundations: Overall Process

Feeling ready, willing, and able to be on the journey of vocational recovery strongly impacts our success and satisfaction along the road.

3-step process for the person

Explore: How strong is this factor for me?

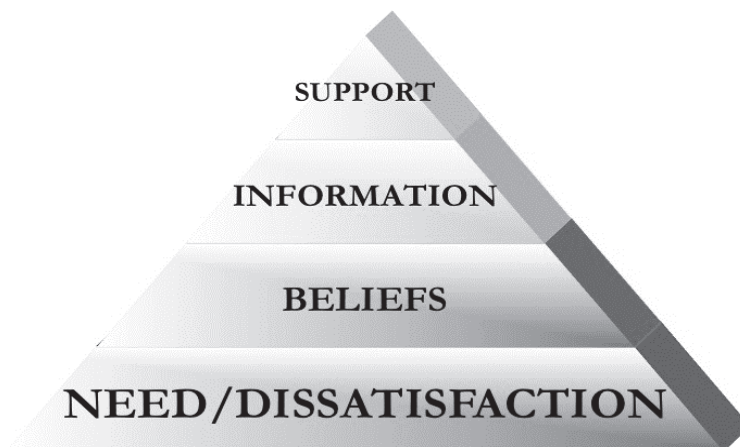
Discuss: Do I need to build, and is this the time?

Build: What would help me feel more confident?

The Four Motivational Foundations:

The Motivational Foundations include Need, Beliefs, Information, and Support.

We will start with an overall example, and then learn about each one separately in Module 3.



3.5 Example: Exploring Motivational Foundations

Miguel knew that Reggie had wanted to consider work for some time. He'd been working on having a voice in his team meetings, and had made it known that he is interested in work.

Miguel also has heard Reggie say that he was unsure about whether now is the time. Given that Reggie is probably "considering" work right now, Miguel invited Reggie to explore Motivational Foundations with him. He and Reggie went to grab a cup of coffee to talk about what the Foundations are and what kinds of things they might do together. Because Reggie likes to look back at what they've talked about in previous meetings, he indicated that he'd rather work with concrete tools so they can write down stuff along the way.

They started with Need. Exploring not only how he felt about not working right now, but also how he felt about his current living, learning, and social situations revealed that work is the area for which he felt the most Need. So they moved on to Beliefs.

Exploring Beliefs gave both Reggie and Miguel more information about Reggie's feelings about work overall. Reggie had been worrying, saying, "maybe work is not for me" because he hadn't worked a lot of jobs. Concerned about his benefits, he had heard that he could completely lose his monthly check if he went back to work. He said that he was hopeful that work could make his day-to-day life better, but at the same time, the risks worry him.

Reggie rated his Information medium-high, because he knows what he likes and dislikes. However, he hasn't had enough work experience to know what kinds of environments are out there, and what kinds of work would suit him.

And when they looked at Supports, Reggie revealed that though they've been working on it, he doesn't feel that his team is behind him enough to feel confident about moving forward. He doesn't know if people would help with things like getting to job fairs or getting enough bus fare together to meet with an employment counselor.

They decided to work together to think about how Reggie could start to build the beliefs, experience and information he needed, and to educate his supports. Reggie told Miguel, "I want to 'get my ducks in a row,' as my granddad used to say."

3.6 Foundation: Need

“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”

And so it goes.



Questions to Ponder:

- How do YOU know you have a need for change?
- What indicators let you know that “it’s time?”

What is it?

A “**need**” for change is an *internal or external push* that says, “it’s time to make this change.....”

- An example of an **external “push”** to get work might be finding out that your benefits have been cut off.
- An **internal “push”** might be a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with your current situation. For example, “I just can’t deal with all these agencies that make me feel horrible about myself anymore. I need to get a job.”

How do we do it?

In order to decide if we have need for a change now, we must ask ourselves this question about our CURRENT situation:

“Am I satisfied where I am now, or do I feel a need to change?”

Should I stay?

Or...

Should I go?



3.7 Example: Exploring Need

Ming, a peer support specialist, began working in a group home about a year ago. When she started her work, she was surprised to see that the people living there hadn't heard much about recovery and, in some ways, may have been afraid that all her talk about recovery was really just a front for cutting off services.

When Ming would ask people about their satisfaction with their current situations, people universally said that they were very satisfied. They loved the group home, and were OK with not working, with their social connections, and with their educational status.

Ming realized pretty early in her work that the satisfaction that people were indicating may have been related to their beliefs about the possibility of change. What if they were just resigned to their fate instead of feeling happy with it? She and some of her colleagues wanted to introduce the possibilities of change by refocusing and talking about vocational recovery, including inviting other people in recovery to the group home to talk about their experiences out in the world.

She knew that this would be a process of discovery, but hoped to open up the possibility of vocational recovery for those who wanted it.

Q. Do you agree with Ming's idea? Why or why not?

3.8 Exploring Need Tool: UNEMPLOYED

Exploring Need involves deciding how *dissatisfied* you are with your CURRENT vocational situation. Use this tool if you are **unemployed**.

People

1. Who are the people who are usually in your workplace? (supervisors, customers, coworkers)

2. How satisfied are you with NOT having these people in your life right now?

Activities

1. What do you usually do while working?

2. How satisfied are you with NOT doing these activities right now?

Place

1. What are some of the places and spaces that you associate with work? (office, construction site, parking lot, etc.)

2. How satisfied are you with not having a place to work right now?

Total Satisfaction: How satisfied are you with not working?

Satisfied (Low Need) Neutral (Medium Need) Dissatisfied (High Need)

3.9 Exploring Need Tool: EMPLOYED

Exploring Need involves deciding how dissatisfied you are with your CURRENT vocational situation. Use this tool if you are **currently working**.

People

1. Who are the people who are in your current work situation? (supervisors, customers, coworkers, etc.)

2. How satisfied are you with these people in your current job?

Activities

1. What are some of the activities that you do in your current job?

2. How satisfied are you with your current work activities?

Place

1. What does your workplace look like?

2. How satisfied are you with your current workplace?

Total Satisfaction: How satisfied are you with your job overall?

- Satisfied (Low Need) Neutral (Medium Need) Dissatisfied (High Need)

3.10 Discussion Prompts: Exploring Need

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

If the person is unemployed:

People

- Who would usually be in a workplace with you? What roles would they have (for example: supervisors, customers, etc.)?
- How happy or unhappy are you about NOT having these people in your life now?
- How would you feel about having these people in your life again?

Activities

- What kinds of activities do you associate with working?
- How satisfied are you with not doing work activities right now?
- How would you feel about doing work activities at this point in your life?

Place

- What places do you associate with work?
- How satisfied are you with not having a workplace right now?
- How would you feel about being in a workplace again?

If person is working right now:

People

- Who are the people in your current job? What roles do they have?
- What relationships do you have with the people in your current job? Why?
- How satisfied are you with the people at your job overall?

Activities

- What do you do at work now?
- How satisfied are you with your work activities/tasks now? Why?

Place

- What is your workplace and other spaces associated with your job (parking lot, lunchroom, etc.) like?
- How satisfied do you feel with your workplace?

Finally, given all of this, how dissatisfied are you with your current situation?

- Satisfied (Low Need) Neutral (Medium Need) Dissatisfied (High Need)

3.11 Building Need



Building Motivational Foundations

is supporting the person to increase confidence about moving forward with choosing, getting, and keeping work or school.

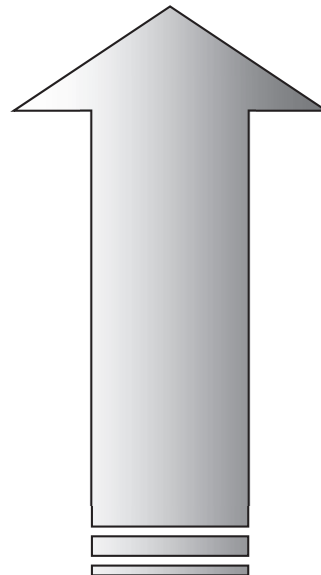
Building NEED creates a dilemma: Building Need is increasing, well, dissatisfaction...

We do not want to help create dissatisfaction in someone's life by helping to make the person more uncomfortable or unsuccessful. This would be unethical and not in sync with the peer value of mutuality.

So... How can we support a person to Build Need? How do we support a person to build dissatisfaction with the way things are now, if the person wants to?

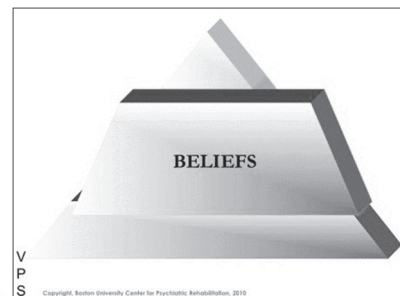
Building Need is supporting a person to:

- Find out more...
- Learn more...
- Experience more...
- Gather more support
- Educate supporters about needs
- Build awareness of recovery
- Talk with other peers
- Try out work and school
- See new possibilities

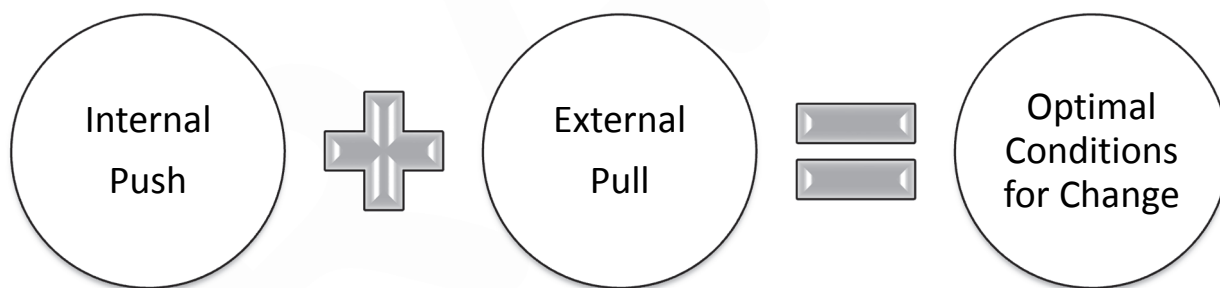


3.12 Foundation: Beliefs

*“If you believe you can...
or you believe you can’t...
You’re Right”*
--Henry Ford



Our beliefs about ourselves, our abilities, and our potential have a huge role in what we actually can do. Beliefs may provide some “pull” toward change.



Beliefs that support a strong foundation include:

1. **Change is Possible:** “I think work or school is in the cards for me.”
2. **Positive Outcome:** I think that the hard work will be “Worth It.”
3. **Self-Efficacy:** Self-confidence and a belief that “I can do it.”
4. **Desire to make the change:** “I want this.”

Why explore these beliefs? Exploring these beliefs with someone provides an opportunity for the person to really think about whether or not making a change makes sense, that the pros outweigh the cons, and that it’s worth doing the work over the long run.

Building Beliefs can develop the person’s sense of excitement, confidence, and competence regarding work. Without these essential beliefs, it is often hard for people to make the move to work.

3.13 Example: Exploring Beliefs

Alicia has been working with Elizabeth, a peer specialist with VPS training, exploring what vocational recovery might look like for her. Alicia has worked as a janitor for several years at her clubhouse, but would like to think about a career instead of just having a job. They've been talking in general about careers and vocational recovery, and Alicia has been excited about what the future might hold.

Elizabeth tells Alicia about Motivational Foundations and asked if Alicia would like to explore them. Alicia thought that it sounded like a good idea, so using the discussion prompts, Elizabeth and Alicia discussed the different Factors.

Alicia described some of the benefits to having a career, including “being someone” and having more money. She said, “I’m a fighter and a hard worker, and she felt confident that she would be able to do the work needed to get moving on a career. But as they continued to discuss whether working on a career would be “worth it,” Alicia said she realized that she would have to give up her benefits. “While I’d love to do that someday, I know that the rules would require me to give up my disability benefits as soon as I start getting paid.”

Elizabeth sees the sparkle about her future start to leave Alicia’s eyes. Elizabeth asked, “Are you sure about the benefits? I’m pretty sure that I’ve heard that there are different rules that apply to people who are working. I think it’s worth looking into to be absolutely sure before making any big decisions.” Alicia told Elizabeth that she was pretty sure that her information was correct, but that “it probably makes sense to double check anyway.”

3.14 Exploring Beliefs Tool

Instructions: Consider the following statements. Write in your thoughts on the lines provided. Then, rate your beliefs and overall level of Beliefs as High (H), Medium (M), or Low (L). Circle the letter that best matches how you feel about that belief. How you rate your beliefs is up to you!

1. How much do I believe that a vocational change in my life is...

Possible? _____

A good idea? _____

Overall my belief that Change is Possible is: H M L

2. What are the benefits and risks of making a vocational change now?

Benefits: _____

Risks: _____

More benefits or more risks? _____

Overall my belief that Change is Worth It is: H M L

3. To what extent do I believe that I CAN make change happen?

What I'm good at: _____

What I'm not good at: _____

Overall, my Belief in Myself is: H M L

4. How much DESIRE do I have for a vocational change now?

Do I want a vocational change? _____

Do I want it enough to work hard? _____

Overall, my Desire for Change is: H M L

My Overall Beliefs are: High Medium Low

3.15 Discussion Prompts: Beliefs

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Belief that Change is Possible:

- To what extent do you believe that work is possible for you?
- To what extent do you believe that work will be a good thing in your life?

Belief that Change is Worth It (Positive Outcome):

- What are the benefits of working at this point in your life?
- What are the risks to getting involved with choosing, getting, or keeping work?
- Do the benefits outweigh the risks? Or do the risks outweigh the benefits?

Belief in Myself (Self-Efficacy = “I believe I can do this”)

- Do you believe you have what it takes to do the work to make a vocational change happen?
- How have you made changes in the past?
- What are your strengths in making changes happen?
- What information or skills do you think you will need to learn?

Desire for Change:

- Is the “grass greener on the other side”? Do you want to work?
- Is the desire for a change in your vocational life pulling at you?
- To what extent is your heart in this change?
- Do you want this change enough to work hard for it?

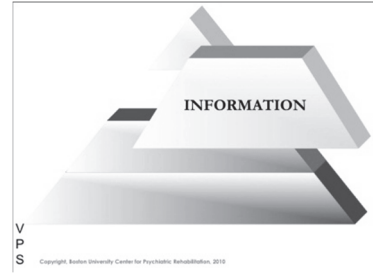
3.16 Building Belief: Small Group Exercise

Instructions: Get together with a group of 3-4 people, and consider the following questions. Be prepared to discuss with the class.

- Q.** How would you scaffold someone who didn't believe that working was **possible** for him or her?
- Q.** What kinds of things could you do with someone who did not believe that work would be **"worth it?"**
- Q.** What kinds of activities might support someone who is unsure that he or she can **make a change** happen in her work world?
- Q.** What kinds of scaffolds would you work on with someone who thinks that work is **too risky** because:
- a. "Work will cause me to lose my benefits."
 - b. "Work will mean I will lose time with my friends."
 - c. "Work will confirm that 'I'm no good at anything.' "

3.17 Foundation: Information

Information refers to knowledge about ourselves and the world of work that allows us to make *informed choices* about work and vocational recovery.



Information
is knowledge about ourselves and work settings
needed to make *informed choices*.

Informed choice is ...a person’s thoughtful decision based on an accurate understanding *of the full range of options and their possible results*.

Information can include knowledge or awareness of:

OPTIONS:

What I know or need to know about my OPTIONS in order to feel confident about choosing, getting, and keeping work or school.

- Career Options
- Jobs
- Educational Opportunities

MYSELF:

What I know or need to know about MYSELF in order to feel confident about choosing, getting and/or keeping work or school.

- My values
- My interests
- My preferences about work and/or school
- My strengths, or “what I’m good at”

Question to Ponder:

- What is your experience with the impact of information in making vocational choices?

3.18 Information Example: Jackson

Jackson is a 48-year-old peer mentor volunteer at a local peer-run recovery center, who has been considering taking the next step in his vocational recovery journey. He describes this step as getting a job that pays and one that he feels good about at the end of the day. He often discusses his thoughts and ideas about his vocational recovery journey with Geraldo, another peer who works at the recovery center.

Geraldo has noticed that Jackson has seemed a little lost in terms of a vocational direction. He also knows that Jackson hasn't been in the work world for at least 20 years, and he wonders how this might be affecting Jackson.

As they were sitting around talking about work one day, Geraldo asked Jackson if he might want to explore Information, oriented him to what that would look like, and shared how it had been helpful for him in his own vocational recovery.

Together, they decided to explore Information. Geraldo asked Jackson about jobs that he had worked in previously, as well as what he liked and didn't like about them. Jackson told him, "Look, man, it's been so long since I've worked, I see myself as a totally different person now."

As they continued to talk, Jackson shared that he's realized lately that he doesn't think he knows anymore what he truly likes or doesn't like. He said, "Every time I start to think about what I want to do for work, or even if I really want to consider work, I get all confused." Geraldo and he decided to try Building Information.

What scaffolds would assist Jackson to explore Information?

3.19 Exploring Information Tool

Information about Myself:

1. Some of my interests are: _____

2. Some of my values that impact my vocational life are: _____

3. Some of the things I'm good at are: _____

Information about the World of Work: Brainstorm below:

<p>I know about these kinds of jobs and careers:</p>	
<p>I've always wanted to know more about these kinds of jobs:</p>	

Overall:

I want more information about myself as a worker and my options.

Comments:

I have enough information to choose, get, and keep work or school.

Comments:

3.20 Exploring Information: Discussion Prompts

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

There are several types of knowledge that support our vocational recovery:

Knowledge about Personal Interests and Values (General)

- What kinds of things do you like to do?
- What do you do when you want to go have some fun?
- What's important to you?
- What would you say you value most?

Knowledge about Work Environments

- What kinds of jobs have you had in the past?
- What kinds of jobs (volunteer or paid) do you have now?
- What do you know about other possibilities?

Knowledge about Personal Interests and Values in Relation to Work

- What jobs have you liked? Why?
- What kinds of jobs can you picture yourself doing? Why?
- What kinds of jobs look interesting to you? Why?
- What part of that job seems most interesting?
- What kinds of jobs do you definitely NOT want to do?
- When you think about working at a job, what is most attractive about working?
- When you think about working any job, what is least exciting about it?

Knowledge about Abilities

- What kinds of things are you really good at?
- What kinds of things are you really bad at?

3.21 Building Information

“Building Information” is creating strategies to discover knowledge about our personal values, wants, interests, preferences and/or about work and school settings so that we can make informed choices about work and school.

SMALL GROUP EXERCISE: Consider the kinds of scaffolds that could be put into place if you wanted to support someone to **Build Information** about:

- The kinds of JOBS that exist today:

- The kinds of SCHOOL options out there:

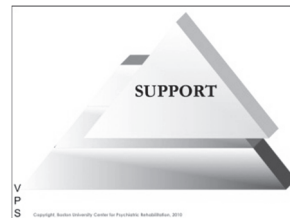
- What JOB TASKS are like today:

- What WORKPLACES are like today:

- The person’s vocational VALUES:

- The person’s INTERESTS AND PREFERENCES related to work or school:

3.22 Foundation: Support



Support: Supports are the people, places, things, and activities that can reinforce the vocational recovery journey.

Support comes in a variety of forms.



Questions to Ponder:

- Who and what are the people, places, things, and activities that support your pursuit of vocational recovery now?
- How could your vocational recovery story come into play while supporting a person to explore supports for vocational recovery?

Keep in mind that People supports may come in several forms. For example:

- Emotional Supports: cheerleading, believing in, talking with
- Concrete Supports: rides, bus fare, leads, child care

3.23 Exploring Support Example: Sophia

Ana works as a peer specialist on an ACT team. Richard is an Employment Specialist and has been trained in IPS Supported Employment. Ana and Richard often work in partnership to support people who want to work.

Sophia has been using the services of the ACT team for two years, and she has been working with Richard and Ana for one year. At times, she is very excited and has a personal sense of being on a “vocational recovery” path; but at other times, she seems to have lost her vision. Over the past year, she has gotten several jobs. She’s always done well in starting the job. But each time, seemingly out of the blue, she has quit within the first few weeks and hasn’t wanted to talk about what happened.

Ana suspects that there’s more going on here, and over coffee one day, invites Sophia to explore supports. Sophia states that the ACT team is a wonderful support, that she has friends that support her, and that she even has people who offer hands-on practical help. But as they explore further, Ana learns that Sophia’s mother, with whom she lives, is very worried about what will happen if Sophia works.

Sophia explains how her mother “watches me like I’m under a microscope” every time she starts working. “My mother starts pointing out all these ‘symptoms’ and ‘signs’ that things are starting to fall apart because I’m working.” Sophia explained to Ana that it gets confusing because she feels fine, but then starts questioning herself, her own perceptions, her health, and her wellbeing. Over time, she explains, she figures her mother must be right and quits the job, so she doesn’t lose her wellness.

What supports does Sophia have? _____

What supports might Sophia need to build up? _____

3.24 Exploring Supports Tool

Instructions: This worksheet is a tool to help you think about the supports in your life that can help or hinder you make choices to choose, get, or keep work or school roles.

1. Who are the people who will encourage me and my choices? _____

2. Who will give me concrete supports? What kinds?

- Who: _____
 - How They Can Help: _____
- _____

3. Who in my life is either *against* or not very enthusiastic about my work decisions?

- Who: _____
 - Their concerns: _____
- _____

4. What places could support me in my vocational recovery? _____

5. What activities could support my vocational recovery? _____

6. What things will support my vocational recovery? _____

OVERALL, how supported do I feel as I start to choose, get, and keep work or school?

- Very supported (High) Somewhat supported (Medium) Not supported (Low)

3.25 Building Supports

Building supports means gathering, educating, pulling together, or increasing supports you need as you consider work or school. Below are some ideas for Building or developing Supports.

Developing New Supports – Peer & Recovery Community

- Connect with local peer-run organizations
- Connect with peer support groups
- Connect with 12-Step programs
- Create a peer support group
- Your ideas: _____

Developing New Supports – Community at Large

- Interests – hobbies, etc. (e.g., photography class)
- Values – religious, political, or philanthropic organizations
- Cultural – shared culture or history groups (e.g., genealogy society, history society, cultural associations, etc.)
- Vision – shared hope about single issue (e.g., National Organization of Women)
- Your ideas: _____

Strengthening Supports

- Educate your supporters about recovery in general
- Educate supporters about Vocational Recovery
- Collaborate with supports: bring them together to be on the same page
- Learn skills to better partner with supporters
- Learn skills to better negotiate with supporters
- Coordinate supports so supporters feel more useful and can work together
- Learn self-advocacy skills to strengthen your voice
- Your ideas: _____

3.26 Discussion Prompts: Exploring Support

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Support in general:

- Who supports you in your life?
- What helps you when things are really difficult?
- Who or what supports your recovery and wellness?

Emotional supports:

- Who do you turn to when you need a friend?
- Are there people who can listen to you when you're frustrated or down?
- Is there at least one person with whom you have a trusting relationship to share the ups and downs of vocational recovery?

Concrete, practical supports:

- Are there people in your life who can offer you practical supports? Who are they? What types of support?
- Are there people who can offer some financial support if you need it?
- Do you have anyone in your life who can accompany you if you're doing something new or something challenging?

People who may not agree:

- As you think about going to work, is there anyone in your life who is not excited about your decision?
- Is there anyone in your life who is working against your vocational plans?
- Are you picking up on any ambivalence by people close to you as you've been considering and talking about vocational recovery?

Overall Sense of Support:

- Do you think you have the kinds of supports you need to see you through a change?
- Do you have enough people in your life who believe in you as you work to make a change happen?
- Do you believe you have more supporters than detractors?
- How supported do you feel? Well supported? Somewhat supported? Not supported?

3.27 Summary Tool: My Overall Confidence

Instructions: In the table below, chart your Motivational Foundations “Overall” results from the previous pages. Make a “dot” (•) where you would place your Need, Beliefs, Information, and Support (High, Medium, or Low). Then, connect the dots, starting at Need, ending with Support.

Note: The descriptors for each of the Foundations may vary. It’s okay to “translate” them for your purposes here. For example,

- If you chose “very satisfied” or “well-supported,” for example, choose “High” here.
- If you chose “I need more information,” you may want to choose either “Low” or “Medium” here, depending on how much information you think you need.

Summary of my Motivational Foundations:

High				
Medium				
Low				
	Need	Beliefs	Information	Support

What areas are High or Medium? _____

What areas are Low? _____

How confident do you feel about moving forward with Choosing, Getting, and Keeping?

3.28 Building Motivational Foundations Examples

For Supporting People through VPS. Add additional ideas in the boxes below!

Factor	Strategy Examples	Peer Specialist scaffolds
If the person has <u>little desire</u> for a vocational change (but wants to talk with you about it)...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance exposure: talk to people who have done it Visit work sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accompany Help person learn to research Find possibilities
If the person has <u>little belief</u> that “I can” make change happen....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit changes made Volunteer Try out jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore past changes Connect with resources
If change seems <u>too risky</u> ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get information! Talk to people who have done it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share your story Seek out workers Help person gather info
If there are <u>not enough benefits</u> to make change “worth it”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to come up with some! Experience with work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go with person to seek information
If the person <u>doesn’t have information</u> about what it’s like to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try out working! Volunteer! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scaffold use of resources Visit workplace
If the person has <u>little information</u> on career/work options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go see different workplaces Research online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accompany to career center Explore O*NET
If the person has <u>little or no support</u> for making a vocational change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate supports Gather supports Educate supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm possibilities Educate Support person to be heard
Or has <u>few concrete resources</u> to help in making the change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research possibilities Request concrete supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach how to research Support to create request
Or <u>no Need</u> for change, is satisfied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hear stories of people who have made changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate talks, people to talk to Share story

3.29 Pitfalls to Watch Out For

We get pretty excited about the possibilities for work, school, and overall vocational recovery, and that can be very important to people who need someone to be excited with them.

However, there may be times when we get ahead of the person with our excitement about his or her vocational future. We may want to move before the person has really had the time to consider Motivational Foundations, or has decided what he or she wants to do to build confidence about moving forward.

Here are some common pitfalls we may run into in Building Motivational Foundations:



Assuming we know

- ...what the person needs, wants, and will do.

Trying to "fix" the situation

- ...before we even really know what the situation really is.



Taking over for the person

- ...when what the person really needs is mutual support, scaffolding, hearing your story, and a partner in the process.

Remember to always use your Partnering skills throughout the journey with the person.

No matter which part of the VPS process that you are using, the greatest support may be your relationship with the person, and your listening for what the person is communicating to you.

3.30 Small Group Exercise: Building Motivational Foundations

Optional homework assignment

Instructions: Read about Akeelah's situation. Consider the questions below, and be ready to discuss your responses with the class.

Akeelah is not working right now, but thinks she may want to try working again. She gets worried about work because she has lost jobs when times got tough. Akeelah also is not exactly sure if work would be a good idea for her right now, since she likes her free time, and she loves getting together with friends whenever she wants to. She likes her freedom, but also wishes she had more to do during the day. She's talked about wanting to do something she could feel good about. She's scared because she has heard that if you go to work, she could lose her benefits and her health insurance.

Q. If she wanted to Explore Motivational Foundations, which Foundation(s) would you suggest looking at?

Q. What strengths does she have? What kinds of questions does she have?

Q. What scaffolds could you offer to help her gather the information, experiences, and resources she needs to answer those questions?

Q. What parts of your vocational recovery story relate to your process of building your own motivations for vocational recovery? How did you "get ready" to start planning for work and career?

Module 4

Supporting Choice in Work and Career

What to Expect from Module 4

The Big Question of Module 4

- How can I support people who are choosing a direction for their vocational lives?

Offering to work with the person closely to explore preferences, options, and a best match are key to Module 4: Supporting Choice in Work and Career.

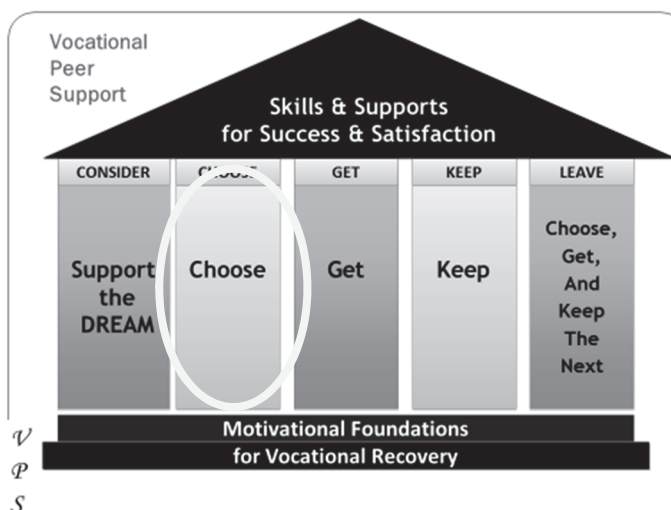
	Module 4 Table of Contents	Page
4.1	Overview of Module 4	85
4.2	Choosing Work	86
4.3	Overall Example of Supporting Choice: Reggie’s Story	87
4.4	Identifying Preferences	88
4.5	Example of Identifying Preferences: Mariana	89
4.6	Identifying Preferences Tool	90
4.7	Identifying Preferences Discussion Prompts	91
4.8	Gathering Information	92
4.9	Example of Gathering Information: Mariana	93
4.10	Brainstorming Meaningful Options Tool	94
4.11	Discussion Prompts: Brainstorming Meaningful Options	95
4.12	Articulating Research Questions	96
4.13	Articulating Research Questions Tool	97
4.14	Discussion Prompts: Articulating Research Questions	98
4.15	Researching Possibilities	99
4.16	Researching Possibilities Tool	100
4.17	Keeping Track of the Research	101
4.18	Discussion Prompts: Researching Possibilities	102
4.19	Supporting Decision-Making	103
4.20	Example: Supporting Decision-Making	104
4.21	Supporting Decision-Making Tool	105
4.22	Supports for My Best Option Tool	106
4.23	Discussion Prompts: Supporting Decision-Making	107

4.1 Overview of Module 4

Choosing Work

Vocational Peer Support has its roots in both peer support and in psychiatric vocational rehabilitation. At the heart of psychiatric vocational rehabilitation is Choose-Get-Keep, a process developed for supporting people who want to be involved with employment.

Choose-Get-Keep focuses on keeping the process of acquiring jobs, school, and careers in the hands of the person it belongs to: The person who wants to work.



Why Peers? People often are being asked to select a goal without much preparation or support for the exploration that goes into making such a major life decision. Peer Support can offer scaffolding, such as exploring, accompanying, listening, and sharing of mutual experiences to support Choosing efforts in ways that other professionals may not be able to offer.

In this Module, you can expect to learn information and skills, and to gather, tools which you can use to support a person who wants to **choose** a job, a career direction, or a training program.

You will see introductions to the concepts, examples of Supporting Choice activities, discussion prompts, and tools that can assist you to scaffold the people you serve.

4.2 Supporting Choice: The How-To

Supporting Choice is scaffolding the efforts of people to explore and choose the jobs, careers, and school environments they prefer.

This Module will give you the information, tools, and discussion prompts you need to support people to choose vocational goals.

Career

Job

School

**Choosing Jobs,
Careers,
Schools, and
Areas of Study**

Identifying preferences

Gathering information

Supporting Decision-making

Questions to Ponder:

- How did YOU decide on your job?
- Was it a simple decision? Difficult? Messy? Or a straight line?
- What kinds of feelings came up for you when you were choosing?
- What kinds of obstacles were in your way as you were exploring?
- How did you get over them?

4.3 Overall Example of Supporting Choice: Reggie's Story

Reggie has worked with his peer specialist, Miguel, to have more of a voice with his team. They have worked on exploring and building Reggie's Motivational Foundations for work. Reggie feels more confident about work now, and is starting to think about what he wants to do.

Miguel understands that this process is new for Reggie, so he knows he needs to start with Orienting. Miguel started by orienting Reggie to Choosing activities. They talked about the point of Choosing: that not only would they explore past jobs, but that they would get into his preferences for future jobs by looking at the past. Reggie was into it, and Miguel was pretty excited to continue his own learning about Choosing by working with Reggie on it.

They started by exploring more about the jobs Reggie had done in the past. Reggie had some experience with work: He worked as a stocker in a grocery store, and he used to take care of his nephews when he was younger. He didn't really think of this as work, but after exploring his responsibilities, they decided that it was indeed a job. Looking at past work like this gave them the opportunity to explore what Reggie had liked, and what he hadn't liked in those past jobs. They realized that Reggie had definite preferences that might influence the kinds of jobs he would want to look at in the future. For example, he didn't like supervisors "who were breathing down my neck," and he did want to work in an office, where he "could be a professional."

Over time, they decided to take on the task of researching the kinds of office work that might exist in Reggie's community. They decided that they wouldn't look "for" a job yet, but that they would look at what was "out there."

To do this, they talked to other peers who were working, explored O*NET online to understand jobs in general, and they went to local job fairs. Reggie also took walks around the area to get a sense of the kinds of businesses that were located in his town. They took notes on the options that seemed to interest Reggie, and held onto those notes so that they can look at them later.

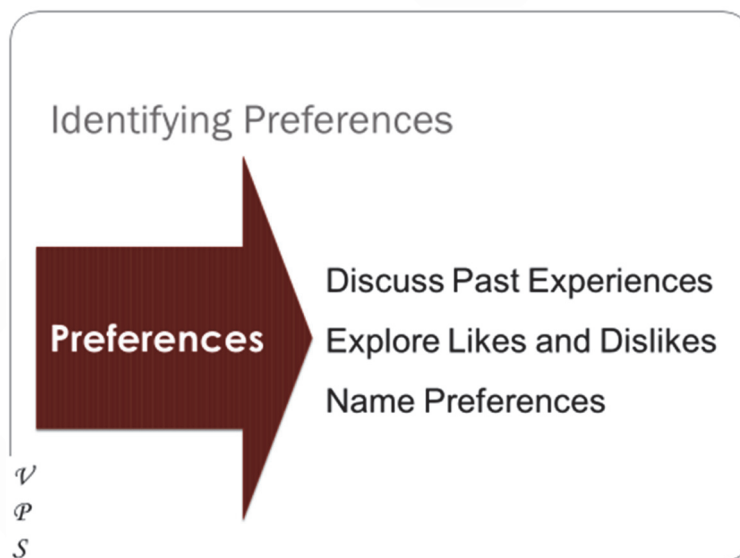
In the end, they compared Reggie's preferences to his top three types of office jobs: reception desk, filing clerk, and recovery mentor.

Question: How is Reggie's experience similar to or different from your own?

4.4 Identifying Preferences

What is it? Identifying Preferences is supporting the person to create a list of criteria the person will use to decide between career or job options.

Why do it: The person will have more information about himself or herself, and can use this information to decide between options after some research.



How do we do it?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1. | 2. | 3. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss past experiences with work, school, volunteer work, etc. Write the "resume" you would never hand to an employer! | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore likes and dislikes with each of the past experiences as well as strengths and areas for growth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help name preferences for the future. Come up with 2-3 word names to remember it by. |

4.5 Example of Identifying Preferences: Mariana

Mariana didn't have a lot of experience with thinking about her preferences. Because Hugh had VPS training, he knew that they could start with looking back at her past experiences and translate those experiences into preferences. When he explained this to Mariana, she exclaimed, "Finally!" They were clearly onto something.

Hugh and Mariana went out to get a cool drink, and sat at the café to think. She told him the ins and outs of her work experiences so far. They talked about the people, what she did, the kinds of places she had worked in, and what her supervisors were like. They took notes so they could remember what they had talked about, but Hugh focused on listening to her experiences. It seemed to really help when he would paraphrase because they both got more information about what was most important.

After looking at her past experiences, Mariana wanted to keep exploring – this was getting fun! So she and Hugh sat down with a Tool, and with the assistance of some Discussion Prompts, Mariana started to identify her preferences.

It was pretty easy to figure out which things she wanted to see in her next job. They carried over some of her best experiences, job tasks she would like to do again, and aspects of the people and the kinds of places she's worked in. She named things like having a supportive supervisor and an academic environment as key.

It was a little harder to think about the dislikes, but after the first one, it made sense: Hugh invited her to think about what she would want INSTEAD of the bad experience or thing she did not like. Her dislikes included things like direct people contact and unclean workspaces.

At the end, Hugh and Mariana looked at the list – Hugh asked Mariana if this list "looked like" her, and she realized that there were some important preferences that weren't there. So they added preferences related to hours, and once they had about 10 preferences, it felt more like a complete list. It really started to feel like they were getting somewhere!

Q **uestion:** Have you ever done anything like this? If not, how do you think a process like this could be helpful to you and the people you serve? If yes, what did you learn from it?

4.7 Identifying Preferences Discussion Prompts

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Listing Past Jobs:

- What kinds of jobs, volunteer, military, and school experiences have you had in the past?
- If none, let's talk about any work you have done for or with your family, such as babysitting, yard work, caring for loved ones, chores, etc.

Exploring the Experience:

- What did you do?
- What were your experiences with the people?
- What did you think about the workplace itself?
- What did you like or not like about your work activities?
- How do you feel about the role?

Naming the Preference: (NOTE: Aim for 8-12 preferences!)

- When looking at your past experiences, what did you particularly like?
- What would you like to carry over into your next job or career?
- If we could give this "like" a name, what would you call it?
- What did you dislike? Which of the "dislikes" stand out to you? Why?
- If you could "do it over again," what would be different next time? What would you want your next job experience to be like instead?
- What would you call that preference in 2-3 words?
- What else would you add to your preference list?
- What do you think about this list? Does it give you a better sense of what you want and don't want?

4.8 Gathering Information

What is it? Gathering Information is researching the kinds of settings that that are appealing to us because we have an interest in them. The work or school settings “fit” our strengths and skills, and they are a match for our values.

Why do it? Gathering Information supports the person to make a more informed decision about a vocational direction. The more people know about their options, the better choice they can make about where they want to work or go to school.

How do we do it?

**Gathering
Information
involves:**

Brainstorming meaningful options

Articulating research questions

Researching Possibilities

Questions to Ponder:

- Have you taken any of the above steps before?
- What was your experience like? What was easy? Difficult?
- What emotions did you experience when researching possibilities?
- What twists and turns did your own process take?

In these next pages, you will see an example, Discussion Prompts and Tool(s) for supporting someone to Gather Information.

4.9 Example of Gathering Information: Mariana

Mariana liked looking back at her experiences with work and school to figure out her current preferences. It really felt like things were starting to take shape. Given this excitement, she and Hugh agreed to keep going. Mariana wanted to go in to her vocational counselor with a goal in mind, so that the counselor could help her to get the job that she really wanted. Hugh knew that as a peer support specialist, it wasn't his job to find Mariana a job, but he knew he had time to listen to Mariana, and he could help ensure that her voice would be heard in the process.

To start, Hugh invited Mariana to start to think about what kinds of things she was interested in, as well as what she had to offer and even her values. Mariana found that although she knew those things she wanted to see and do again, she wasn't really sure about what was out there. This made her nervous, and she wondered aloud if she should just let the vocational program "put" her in a job again. Hugh realized that he could relate to how difficult and scary it is to be in a position of "not knowing."

He decided to share a snippet of his own story that had to do with how he got through those moments himself. He told her about one situation in particular that seemed relevant to her concerns: A moment in time when he lost a job and had no idea where else he could work. Mariana said that she was really glad he saw this as a "moment," because sometimes those moments seem like they will last forever!

They started to brainstorm, and then found that they really needed to get more information. They decided to do some preliminary research, and to set a meeting with the counselor, who also might have a better sense of what was out there.

Q **uestion:** How does Mariana's experience with Gathering Information mirror or not mirror your own experience(s)?

How could doing a process like this support the people you work with?

4.10 Brainstorming Meaningful Options Tool

1. Which areas of interest, which skills, and which values are most important to my choice of career, work, or school?

<p>What areas of work am I most interested in?</p>	<p>Mariana: I love working with data, and on issues that really matter to me.</p>	<p>Your Interests:</p>
<p>What do I know about what I can do (skills)?</p>	<p>Mariana: I'm apparently good with numbers and computers!</p>	<p>Your Skills:</p>
<p>What are my values that impact my choice about work?</p>	<p>Mariana: Honesty, cleanliness, a job well done, and education.</p>	<p>Your Values:</p>

2. What kinds of **options** might fit these values, skills, and interests?

<p>Brainstorm options that fit your interests, values, and skills: Mariana: State University, Rehab Research Center, Hartville Hospital</p>

4.11 Discussion Prompts: Brainstorming Meaningful Options

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Interests

- What kinds of work do you think you're most interested in?
- When you see people working, what types of work do you feel the most excited about?

Skills

- Looking back at your past experiences, what are you good at?
- What other things do you know how to do?
- What are you best at?
- What are you not so good at?

Values

- When you make decisions, what do you base your decisions on?
- If you could name the three things that are most important in your life, what are they?
What do they say about what is important to you?
- If you are unsure about your values, would it be helpful to find a values clarification activity to do together?

Options

- What options for (work, school, career) do you want to consider?
- What could we do to find additional options?

4.12 Articulating Research Questions

What is it? Articulating Research Questions is creating a list of what you want to know about when you look into your options.

Why do it? If we support someone to articulate their research questions, we will help them prepare for getting additional information about their potential options for work, school, or career choices.

How do we do it?

Articulating

Define Your Preferences

Research Questions

State the Question

Mariana's Example

Mariana and Hugh had some ideas for possibilities, and decided to research them. Mariana told him that she wanted to visit some of these places and talk to people there, but was too scared to even think about it!

They talked about this a bit, and Hugh remembered how scary it was for him to talk to people about his dreams of working again, never mind walking into places he was interested in. After sharing this with Mariana, they decided that it would be much more tolerable, and maybe even fun, if they went together.

Hugh offered to help Mariana come up with research questions. He suggested trying those questions out in an informational interview with someone he knew at a nearby hospital.

To do this, they confirmed that Mariana's listed preferences were still important to her. Then, they worked together to define what she really meant by each one. For example, when they looked at "Working with Data," knowing that she did not want to spend a lot of time working with people, they defined it as, "The percentage of my time that I would be working with numbers and other information."

Her research question for Working with Data became: "What percentage of my time here would be spent working with numbers and other information?"

4.13 Articulating Research Questions Tool

Instructions: List your preferences in the left-hand column, and write a definition of each in the middle column. Lastly, turn those definitions into questions.

Preference Name	What do I mean by this? (Define your preference)	Research question
Example: Working with data	Working with data means the amount of time I spend working with numbers and other information.	What percentage of time per week will I be working numbers and other information?

4.14 Discussion Prompts: Articulating Research Questions

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Naming Preferences

- What are some of the preferences that you named when we Identified Preferences?
- What would you add to that list?
- How can we give those preferences a name that you will remember them by?
- Do the names involve a noun and an adjective that describes the noun?

Defining the Preferences

- What does the preference name mean to you?
- What would you see happening if this preference was present in a work or school environment?
- How often would you want it to happen?
- How would you measure it?
- How could we turn all of that information in a definition?

Articulating the Research Question

- How could we turn the definition into a question?
- If you were to ask the question of someone in the environment, or in looking up information about the environment, what would you ask?

4.15 Researching Possibilities

What is it? Researching Possibilities is getting personalized information about your options.

Why do it? When we Research Possibilities, we assist the person to get more information with which to make an informed decision.

How do we do it? Scaffold people to find information in a variety of ways and places:

- Internet searches
- Job postings (Internet, newspaper, etc.)
- Talking to people we know
- Informational interviews (asking people familiar with the option)
- Visiting the place
- Talking with customers/members/workers/students
- Other _____

Tip! When researching, the closer we get to the actual place that we are interested in, the better information we will get!

Questions to Ponder:

- How have you researched career, work, and school options in your own life?
- What resources did you use to help you?
- How did you find out what workplaces and training programs were like?
- What research methods scare you? Excite you?
- How do you support others to research options?

4.16 Researching Possibilities Tool

Instructions: Brainstorm options you might want to research further. Consider your qualifications, availability, interest, and the location: (check or comment in each box)

My Brainstormed Option (list each one)	Do I have the qualifications for this option?	Is this option available to me?	Is this option interesting to me?	Is this option in a good location?
Mariana’s example: State University	✓ I have experience and some training	+/- Need to find out if there are jobs open	✓ Absolutely – it’s up my alley!	+/- It’s in an okay location

Instructions: Pick your **Top 3 Possibilities** by looking at your brainstormed options and consider which make the most sense for you to research right now.

<p>Mariana’s Example: Top Option 1: State University – I am hoping to look at research options there.</p>
<p>Top Option 1:</p> <p>Top Option 2:</p> <p>Top Option 3:</p>

4.18 Discussion Prompts: Researching Possibilities

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Researching Possibilities:

- After looking over your Brainstormed Options, which options do you want to consider for your Top three Possibilities?
- How did you decide which would go into your Top three?
- What qualifications are required of you for each option?
- Do you currently have those qualifications?
- To what extent are these options available to you?
- Do you think that these options are accessible or open, to you?
- How much does this option interest you? Why?
- Is this option in a good location for you? How so?

Doing the Research:

- How do you want to get these questions answered?
- Would it be more helpful to read about the place, talk to people who know about the place, or see the place? Or all three?
- If you opt to read about or see the place, how will you “ask” the questions?

Keeping Track of Research:

Use these prompts, if you are reviewing the person’s research after the fact.

- Which option did you research, and how did you research it?
- What did you find out?
- Which information do you want to write down, so you remember it?
- What other information do you want to record here?

4.19 Supporting Decision-Making

What is it? Supporting Decision-Making is scaffolding the efforts of the person to decide between options based on what is important to him or her.

Why do it? Working with someone in Supporting Decision-Making can help the person to work through a concrete process to make a choice.

How do we do it?

**Scaffolding
Choice:
Support the
Person to...**

Consolidate answers to research questions

Discuss a best choice

Decide how to move forward



Pitfalls to watch out for

- If the decision-making gets confusing, check to see if the person has a clear idea of what is being researched: Are we looking at Career choices? Job choices? School choices? For example, “Supportive supervisor” will not help in choosing a career.
- Has the person had a chance to see or hear about the options directly? The closer we get to the environment itself, the better information we will gather about those options.

4.20 Example: Supporting Decision-Making

Below is an example of how Mariana chose which option was best for her. Mariana listed her preferences as well as her three best options. Mariana and Hugh researched her options and rated each of them according to her preferences using the scale at the bottom. They then added up the scores to see which option best met her preferences.

My Preferences	Best Option 1: Hospital Research Assistant	Best Option 2: University Research Assist.	Best Option 3: Community College Assistant to professor
Working with Data	5 I'd be doing research	5 Mostly research tasks	3 Some work w/students
Low People Contact	5 I'd be in an office mostly by myself	5 I wouldn't have to interview participants	1 Work with students, profs
Flexible hours	1 It's a hospital – this is pretty rigid	3 Definite expectations, but a laid-back office	3 Some flexibility here
Academic Atmosphere	1 A teaching hospital, but still a hospital	5 It's a university!	5 Academic, but more laid back
Quiet office	1 Very busy	5 I'd be in the back offices	5 Not too much traffic when I went
Full Time Work	5 Full time	3 30 hours/week	5 Full-time
Clean Work Environment	5 Focus on cleanliness	5 Office work – clean	5 Also very clean environment
TOTAL SCORE <i>sum of scores</i>	23	31	27

Scale:	5	High	Meets my preference at a HIGH level
	3	Medium	Meets my preference at a MEDIUM level
	1	Low	Meets my preference at a LOW level

4.21 Supporting Decision-Making Tool

Instructions: Write in your Preferences in the first column, and then write the names of your top 2-3, researched options. How does each option rate on each of your preferences? Add up the scores at the end, to see which meets your criteria the best. Make copies if needed.

My Preferences Write in below.	My Best Option 1:	My Best Option 2:	My Best Option 3:
TOTAL SCORES:			

Scale:	5	High	Meets my preference at a HIGH level
	3	Medium	Meets my preference at a MEDIUM level
	1	Low	Meets my preference at a LOW level

4.22 Support for My Best Option: Tool

My Best Option (Highest Score):

Before you make a decision about your best option, consider:

- Did I get to do the research I wanted to?
- Were the scores different enough that I feel confident about which is best?
- Do the scores match my “gut feeling” about my best option(s)?
- Am I missing any personal criteria that should be considered?
- Do I want to set this “Best Option” as my work goal? Or think about it some more?

My best option is: _____.

I want to go forward with pursuing this option yes no maybe

I would like to be working/in school (circle one) by _____ (date).

What kinds of supports do I need and want in order to move forward?

Supports I want/need...

How I want them to support me...

What I would like from Peer Support as I move forward...

4.23 Discussion Prompts: Supporting Decision-Making

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Making the Choice:

- What preferences did you use to research your options?
- Which options did you research?
- How did you keep track of your research?
- Would you like to gather all of your research into one place?
- How would you rate each of your options as it pertains to your preferences?
- If you don't like the scale on the Tool, what kind of scale do you want to use? (*Note: scales can simply use checkmarks, smiley faces, etc.*)
- How do your ratings add up? Can we give each option a total score?
- Which option seems to meet your preferences the best?
- How does that match your "gut feeling" about which choice is the best?

Moving Forward:

- Did you get to do the research you wanted to do?
- Would you like to do more research, or do you have enough to go on?
- Which choice do you want to name as your top choice?
- By when do you want to be working or going to school?
- How do you want to move from here?
- What are the first steps you want to take?

Supports:

- Which supports do you need and want as you move forward?
- How can I continue to support you as you move into getting and keeping your goal?

Module 5

Scaffolding Getting into Jobs and School

What to Expect from Module 5: Scaffolding Getting

The Big Question of Module 5

- How can I support the efforts of people who are working on getting into jobs and school?

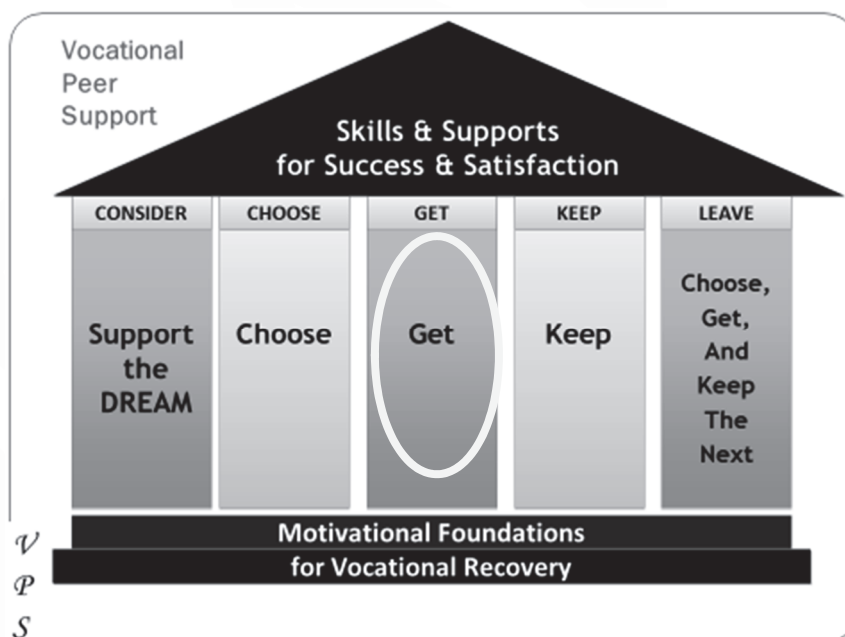
Supporting people to plan out and work on getting into job and school settings are the core of Module 5. In addition, you will learn how to work with people to address other big questions of getting jobs, such as whether to disclose a disability.

	Module 5 Table of Contents	Page
5.1	Overview of Module 5: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs and School	110
5.2	Overview Example: Scaffolding Getting	111
5.3	Scaffolding Getting into Jobs	112
5.4	Scaffolding Getting into School	113
5.5	Small Group Exercise: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs	114
5.6	Small Group Exercise: Scaffolding Getting into School	115
5.7	Getting Plan Tool	116
5.8	Discussion Prompts: Getting Plan	117
5.9	Scaffolding Decisions about Disclosure	118
5.10	Example Disclosure: Pros and Cons	119
5.11	Pros and Cons of Disclosure Tool	120
5.12	Discussion Prompts: Scaffolding Decisions about Disclosure	121
5.13	Example: Disclosure Thinking	122
5.14	Disclosure Thinking Tool	123
5.15	Discussion Prompts: Disclosure Thinking	124

5.1 Overview of Module 5: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs and School

Questions to Ponder:

- What has getting into school or work been like for you in the past?
- What do you know about the concerns of the people you work with in regard to “getting”?
- What do you hope to get out of this Module?



This Module will explore the many ways in which peer support specialists can scaffold people as they **get** into jobs and school.

**In this Module,
we will learn
how to:**

Scaffold Getting Jobs and Schools

Create a Getting Plan

Think about Disclosure

5.2 Overview Example: Scaffolding Getting

Tanisha, a peer specialist on an ACT team, is working with Aaron, a 22-year-old man, who is receiving intensive case management services. Aaron wants to work. As he has said, “I just want a job, so I can go out with my friends.” Tanisha and he have had many conversations at the local coffee shop and through this, Aaron has decided already that he wants to use work right now as a “learning lab” to find out if he can work, if he likes work, and what kinds of work he likes.

Tanisha and Aaron decided to make a Getting Plan. They included supports Aaron will need, including support from Tanisha, the kinds of documents he would need for a “learning lab” job: A “cheat sheet” with past job info for applications, a list of references, and a sample thank you letter for after interviews.

They also decided that it would be a good idea to involve the employment specialist on the ACT team, since Tanisha doesn’t know all of the “ins and outs” of getting jobs. Aaron wanted Tanisha to go with him to his first meeting, because even though he has met John before, he was nervous about the meeting.

Tanisha decided to share a snippet of her own vocational recovery story, describing how scared she was when she started thinking about working again, and about how her best friend waited at the Dunkin Donuts while she met with her vocational counselor. She remembers being surprised about how confident it made her feel.

When coming up with the Getting Plan, Aaron said he wasn’t sure who to contact. So they asked around amongst some peers who were working. They found out that the people who were most successful at getting a job had contacted just about everybody they knew. Aaron and Tanisha wrote up a list of everyone they could think of, and suddenly it became clear to Aaron who he wanted to contact first. Tanisha offered to support him to figure out what to say, and they were on their way.

Q **uestion:** How does this example remind you of your own experience? Of the experiences with the people you serve?

5.3 Scaffolding Getting Jobs

Questions to Ponder:

- How have you gotten your last two jobs?
- What are you good at doing? What are you not so comfortable with?
- What do you think the most important tasks of getting into jobs are?
- What do you most want to do to support your peers to get a job?

Scaffolding Getting into Jobs is supporting people as they go through a process of applying to, interviewing for, and negotiating offers for employment.

As peer supporters, we can support people to pull together information and documentation, make connections, try out new skills, and *go with* as desired.

PITFALLS to watch out for!

- *Scaffolding Getting is DIFFERENT than getting jobs for people!*
- *Avoid the trap of doing for ... stay peer by supporting the person and the person's process.*
- *Remember that there are experts in getting jobs out there: Scaffold the inclusion of other supports as desired by the person, including employment specialists, vocational counselors, etc.*

5.4 Supporting Getting into School

Questions to Ponder:

- Think back to the last time you went to a training program, college, or school.
- What did it take to get in?
- What were you good at doing? What were you not so comfortable doing?
- What do you most want to do to support your peers to get into college?

What is it? **Supporting Getting Into School** is scaffolding people to prepare for and walk through the process of applying for acceptance into school or training programs.

Why do it? Supporting people as they get into school offers peer support as people go through the “hoops” of getting accepted into the training programs and schools of their choice.

How to do it? On the next pages, you will have the opportunity to think through ways in which peer specialists can support people to get into work and school.



-
- *Stay Peer by walking alongside the person, rather than taking over the process.*
-
- *Remember that there is more than one way to do everything, and your way might not be the best way for the person!*
-
- *Learn together about the process and about what the person is good*

5.5 Small Group Exercise: Scaffolding Getting into Jobs

Instructions: Team up with a group of 3-5 people to explore the scaffolds you could put into place to support someone’s job search efforts. Brainstorm any sub-tasks on the left, in order to get ideas for scaffolds. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

Tasks for Getting Jobs Brainstorm tasks under each category	Potential Scaffolds Name ways of supporting the person
Gathering information for applications	Example: Calling past employers for dates of empl. Looking up old resumes Calling references for contact info.
Writing letters	
Identifying Jobs	
Networking with potential employers	
Researching positions	
Interviewing	
Presenting strengths to employers	
Negotiating job offers	
Deciding about disclosure of disability	
Other:	
Other:	

5.6 Small Group Exercise: Scaffolding Getting into School



Instructions: Team up with a group of 3-5 people to explore the scaffolds you could put into place to support people to get into schools or training. Add sub-tasks as relevant in the left column. Then brainstorm possible scaffolds on the right. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

Tasks for Getting into School Brainstorm tasks under each category	Potential Scaffolds Name ways of supporting the person
Gathering information for the application	Example: Request transcripts Read application carefully Look up education history (where, dates)
Writing essays	
Setting up interviews	
Preparing for school interviews	
Following up with Admissions	
Applying for Financial Aid and other scholarships	
Exploring disclosure	
Researching Disability Services/ADA Compliance Officer	
Other:	

5.7 Getting Plan Tool

Instructions: Write in the left column what you need to do to work on Getting. In the middle column, write any steps you need to take to do those tasks. On the right, add what you might need people to support you with.

“Getting” Tasks	How will I do it? (steps)	How can a Peer and others support me?
Example: Writing my resume	VR job club can help me learn how to do it, and give me computer access	Help me remember past jobs, maybe make phone calls with me
Documents I need to create or gather:		
People I want to contact:		
Places I want to contact:		
Skills I want to practice:		

5.8 Discussion Prompts: Getting Plan

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

Documents to Develop:

- What documents do you have already? (examples: resume, cover letter, references, college application, essays)
- Which documents do you still need to develop now?
- What kinds of “cheats” do you need to have on hand to help in filling out applications, etc.? (cheat sheets, etc.)
- How do you want me and/or other peers to assist you?

People to Contact:

- Who do you know? Let’s think about people in all kinds of places in your life: home, work, schools, church, peers, social clubs, clubhouses, family, friends, neighbors
- Who do they know?
- Who would you want to connect with?
- How do you want to connect with each person or category of person?
- How do you want me and/or other peers/providers to support you?

Places to Contact:

- What places do you want to look at, to see if they have openings?
- What kind of application do they require of you?
- What documents or information do you need to have with you?
- What supports do you want to have around you as you do this?

Skills to Practice:

- What skills do you have that can help you get the job or school you want?
- What skills do you want to learn?
- What skills do you want to practice? (examples: greeting interviewers, answering questions, closing interviews, writing thank-you notes)
- How can I support you to practice these skills?

5.9 Scaffolding Decisions about Disclosure

Questions to Ponder:

- Whose decision is disclosure of a disability?
- What is your experience with disclosing a disability at work or school?
- What benefits can people get out of disclosing? What risks are there?
- How do you think peers can support others to decide about disclosing at the job or at school?

What is it? Scaffolding Disclosure Decisions is supporting people as they think about, explore, and choose how they want to proceed with telling key people in a work or school environment that they have a disability. Disclosure often is linked to requesting a “reasonable accommodation.”

Why do it? Scaffolding Decisions about Disclosure gives us a way to support people who are wondering whether they need to tell someone about their disabilities.

Americans with Disabilities Act Definitions to be familiar with:

Disability: In this case, disability has a very specific meaning: having a medical condition that makes it difficult for the person to have a “level playing field” in a work or school environment. This usually has to do with having “functional limitations” that prevent success in living, learning, working, and/or social environments.

Essential Functions: Essential functions are the basic job duties that the employee must perform, with or without an accommodation* under the law (<http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada17.html>). The person, in other words, has to be able to do the core tasks of the job itself in order to have protection under the law.

Functional Limitations: The person may be asked about these, and it can be difficult to talk about. Functional limitations are skills the person currently does not have or tasks he or she cannot do without supports from the environment.

***Reasonable Accommodation:** refers to an adjustment to the environment in some way to accommodate the worker or student under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA and amendments).

5.10 Example Disclosure: Pros and Cons

Jing, Alice’s peer supporter, is helping her to figure out whether she would want to disclose a disability to her employer at all, and if she does, when and to whom she would want to disclose. The following tool is one that they used to think “on paper” about the risks and benefits of disclosing.

<p>I’m <u>concerned</u> that if I disclose... (“Cons” of disclosing)</p>	<p>I <u>hope</u> that if I do disclose.. (“Pros” of disclosing)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What if I don’t get hired because of discrimination? • I’ve heard that I shouldn’t – some of the people I know have had trouble once they disclosed. • I am worried that word will get out if I tell a supervisor about my disability. • I’ve also heard that sometimes people are watched more closely if they disclose. • That my privacy will not be protected by people who are curious or gossipy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be nice to not have to “hide” that I have a disability. • I may need accommodations at some point. • If I have accommodations, I may be more productive, a better worker. • I’m hoping to be accepted for exactly who I am. • I won’t have to carry around a “secret” about my diagnosis.
<p>Are there any things above that I want to learn more about?</p>	<p>Who will support me? How?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I definitely want to learn more about the ADA, how I’m protected, and how I’m not protected. • I’d like to know more about people’s positive experiences with disclosure. • Who should know, and what are their responsibilities to me? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jing has said he will help me research this, and my VR counselor too. • I may want to look for recovery stories, talk around with my friends. • Jing and my VR counselor said they can help me research this.

5.11 Pros and Cons of Disclosure Tool

Instructions: Write in the boxes below your hopes and concerns about disclosure, as well as what you want to learn about in relation to disclosure, and the supports you think you will need as you decide about disclosing a disability.

I hope that if I disclose... (“Pros” of disclosing)	I’m concerned that if I disclose... (“Cons” of disclosing)
Are there any things above that I want to learn more about?	Who will support me? How?

5.12 Discussion Prompts: The Pros and Cons of Disclosure

Note: Remember to use other partnering skills, such as reflective listening, orienting, and sharing snippets of your vocational recovery story.

In general:

- What is your experience with disclosing a disability? What do you know about it?
- What have people in your life said about disclosing a disability?
- What do you think will happen if you disclose a disability at work or at school?

Cons: “I’m concerned that if I disclose...”

- What risks do you think you are taking if you disclose?
- What do you think disclosing could cost you?
- Have you or people you know experienced costs to disclosing?

Pros: “I’m hoping that if I disclose...”

- What positive things do you think will happen if you disclose a disability to your boss or your school?
- What benefits do you think you’ll get out of disclosing?
- Do you think that you will feel relieved if you disclose, or worried?

“What things above do I want to learn about?”

- Are there any things that you want to learn more about?
- Are there concerns or hopes you want to get more perspectives on?

“What supports will I need?”

- Who do you want at your side as you decide about disclosure?
- Do you want support to learn more about certain concerns/benefits?
- How can I support you?
- What kinds of reasonable accommodations do you think you may need?

5.13 Example: Disclosure Thinking

This is the example that **Aaron and Tanisha** worked on together. Using her partnering skills, Tanisha helped Aaron explore his answers to these questions. The big questions were: whether he would disclose, and if so, what would he say?

1. Why do I want this job?

I'm thinking about a cooking job, and I would say that I want this because I love to cook, and present nice-looking, good-tasting food. It makes me happy when people eat something I've made.

2. What strengths do I bring to this job?

I have a real love of cooking. I love to work in a clean space, so I will keep my workspaces clean. I have worked with other cooks in a kitchen before, so I know what it's like to take orders, and I do it well.

3. How do I want to describe my disability?

I have a medical condition that is pretty well under control. I want to disclose because I may need to take breaks more often than other cooks, and I have to make sure to drink water throughout the day.

4. How do I think my disability will interact with this job?

I know I'll be building my "work muscles" in the beginning, and I may need to take a break every two hours. Because of some medications that I take, I need to make sure to drink lots of water, and I can't afford to forget.

5. What adjustments to the job might I need in order to do this job well?

- a. People supports** (training, supervision, job coaching, etc.) *I'd love some good training, but don't think I'll need anything else from people on the job.*
- b. Flexible scheduling** *I may need more frequent breaks, but many cooks need smoke-breaks, so I may not need anything special. I can come in for any shift.*
- c. Changes in non-essential job tasks** *I don't need these right now.*

6. Are there people who might support me during this process (brainstorming accommodations, talking with my employer, etc.)?

I don't know that I'd talk about this with my employer, but yes, I have a peer specialist who is working with me, a voc rehab counselor, as well as others. They may help me along the way, I can introduce them to my boss if I need to, but I don't think I will.

5.14 Disclosure Thinking Tool

Instructions: Use this Tool to help you decide if you want to disclose a disability to an employer or training program.

1. Why do I want this job? _____

2. What strengths do I bring to this job? _____

3. How do I want to describe my disability? _____

4. How do I think my disability will interact with this job? _____

5. What adjustments to the job might I need in order to do this job well?

- a. People supports (training, supervision, job coaching, etc.) _____

- b. Flexible scheduling _____

- c. Changes in non-essential job tasks _____

6. Are there people who might support me during this process (brainstorming accommodations, talking with my employer, etc.)? _____

7. **With all of the above, do I want to disclose?** Yes No If Needed

5.15 Discussion Prompts: Disclosure Thinking

Why do I want this job? (focus on what the employer wants to hear)

- What do you value about this employer/organization/job?
- How do you want to contribute to the work of the organization?

What strengths do I bring?

- What are you good at that this employer will value?
- What do you want to make sure to mention that you add to the company?

How do I want to describe my disability?

- What words would you want to use to describe why you are disclosing or requesting an accommodation?
- How can we use real English, rather than clinical language?

What adjustments or accommodations do I need to do this job well?

- **People Supports:** What do you need from people on the job in order to do this job well? What do you need from the supervisor, coworkers, or human resources that would give you a leg up? Will any of these break the bank of the company, or change the job altogether?
- **Flexible Scheduling:** Do you need to start later or end later than other employees? Need more breaks? Do you need a flexible schedule in some other way? Are these needs or wants? (*Wants may not be accommodated.*)
- **Changes in non-essential job tasks:** What are the essential, or main, tasks of the job? Are there tasks that are not core to your position? Are there any of those tasks that are getting in the way of your success, that we might ask for changes in?

Who else might support you in this process?

- Are there other people who can help with asking for any needed accommodations, or with disclosing a disability?

Given all of this, do you want to disclose a disability after all?

Module 6

Keeping Work and School

What to expect in Module 6

The Big Question of Module 6

- How can I support people to KEEP the jobs and training programs they want to be in?

This Module will help us consider how to support people to identify some of the skills, supports, and even employer-provided supports, called Accommodations, that people may need when working to keep jobs and school.

	Module 6 Table of Contents	Page
6.1	What does it take to Keep a job?	128
6.2	Keeping Example: Reggie	129
6.3	Job and School Expectations	130
6.4	Listing Expectations Tool	131
6.5	Discussion Prompts: Listing Expectations	132
6.6	Skills: What's the Deal?	133
6.7	Example: Getting Specific About Skills	134
6.8	Exercise: Breaking Skill Categories Down Into Skills	135
6.9	Tool: Skill Funnel	136
6.10	Tool: Turning Expectations into Skills	137
6.11	Tool: General Expectations to Specific Skills	138
6.12	Discussion Prompts: Breaking Down Expectations into Skills	139
6.13	Common Skills	140
6.14	Supports	144
6.15	Small Group Exercise: Supporting Challenging Situations	145
6.16	Supports I Have Now Tool	146
6.17	Tool: Brainstorming Supports I Still Need	147
6.18	Brainstorming Supports Discussion Prompts	148
6.19	Tool: Overcoming Challenges with Supports	149
6.20	Discussion Prompts: Overcoming Challenges with Supports	150
6.21	Accommodations: Employment	151
6.22	Accommodations: Education	152
6.23	Example: Reggie and Miguel	153
6.24	Exercise: Turning Can'ts into Can-Do's	154
6.25	Exercise: What Helps YOU?	155

6.26	Tool: Turning “Can’ts” into “Can-do’s”	156
6.27	Discussion Prompts: Turning “Can’ts” into “Can-do’s”	157
6.28	Building Skills and Supports	158
6.29	Exercise: Developing Skills and Supports	159
6.30	Tool: Learning Skills	160
6.31	Discussion Prompts: Learning Skills	161
6.32	Tool: My KEEPING Summary	162
6.33	Helpful Links	163
6.34	The Americans with Disabilities Act (and Amendments): Some Basics	164
6.35	Reasonable Accommodations	166

6.1 What does it take to keep a job?

It might take a village! However, we can work with people as they keep the roles they want.

Questions to Ponder:

- What helps you to keep your job?
- What kinds of things have gotten in your way of keeping a job in the past?
- How did you overcome those obstacles?

In Vocational Peer Support, we may scaffold the person's capacity to keep a job or stay in school. We cannot keep the person there ourselves!

The role of VPS is to provide scaffolds as the person develops the skills, supports, and accommodations needed to be successful and satisfied where he or she wants to be...

What helps us be successful and satisfied at work and school:

Skills – What we KNOW HOW TO DO that supports us to be successful at work and school.

Supports – The PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS and ACTIVITIES that help a person to be successful and satisfied.

Accommodations – Supports that the EMPLOYER PROVIDES to provide a “level playing field” for a person with a disability.

6.2 Keeping Example: Reggie

Reggie and Miguel have worked together to consider, choose, and get into work that Reggie is interested in. Reggie recently has started a receptionist job at the SLG Corp., which after some research, seemed to be a good fit for him. He wanted a professional job; one in which he could be around people pretty often.

Now that Reggie has started, the reality of keeping the job is settling in. Reggie wonders, “what if I can’t do this?” Miguel has shared his own experience about the time that he got into his first paid job after getting hospitalized. He remembers being so scared that he would lose the job that he didn’t go to the first day of work! He told Reggie about the supports that made a difference, including the job coach that helped Miguel call his boss to explain what happened. In this spirit, Miguel offered to support Reggie in the work of keeping his job.

In their first meeting, they decided to figure out what they will work on and how. They knew they would want to look at what Reggie will need to do at the job, and think about any supports he will need.

They first worked on skills. Figuring out the explicit skills was easy enough because they had the job description, which listed most of the everyday tasks that Reggie would need to do. The hidden, or implicit skills, were harder to find. For this, they would need to ask a coworker or two and maybe even the boss about the skills nobody talks about up front. They even looked at skills the job wouldn’t ask for from Reggie, but that he needs to be successful, such as getting his lunch ready.

They also considered supports. Reggie didn’t want anyone coming to the job itself, but told Miguel that he could really use a “pep talk” every once in a while. They explored what Reggie meant by that, and decided to meet for coffee before work on Mondays, which are the hardest days for Reggie.

The last thing they do is to think about accommodations, but remembered from the “getting” process that Reggie didn’t want to disclose just yet. So they decided to keep an eye on anything that may come up along the way, paying close attention to the Monday morning coffee get-togethers, and to “feel out” any supports or adjustments that the job itself can provide.

6.3 Job and School Expectations

When supporting a person to figure out how to keep a job, volunteer position, training program, etc., we may want to keep three categories of expectations in mind.

These include expectations of the environment, and of the person:



Explicit Expectations

Skills that are easily found in job descriptions, or described in the interview.

Ex: Stock shelves, greet customers, analyze research data



Implicit Expectations

"Hidden Expectations" are harder to see or find out about until you trip across them.

Implicit Expectations: culture of the office, social.

Ex: How people participate in celebrations, go out after work, keep breakroom clean



Personal Expectations

The Person wants to put these into place for success and satisfaction, not an employer requirement.

Ex: packing a lunch, getting to work early, clearing the desk at the end of the day

Questions to Ponder:

- What kinds of **Explicit** Expectations are required of you in your current work?
- What **Hidden** Expectations exist in your workplace now?
- What **Personal** Expectations do you have of yourself to be successful and satisfied as a worker?

6.4 Listing Expectations Tool

Introduction: Success often is linked with what we do. To get an understanding of what you need to do to be successful on the job or at school, find out what is expected from you. Learn about expectations from written materials, interviews with supervisors, coworkers, classmates or teachers, observe “unwritten rules” in the environment, and keep in mind your own experience.

Instructions: List for yourself the Explicit, Implicit, and expectations that you find.

Type/Source of the Expectation	List of Expectations
Explicit Expectations/ Written materials, verbal instructions	<i>Examples: Study every day; Be punctual</i>
<i>Example: Look up job description or student handbook</i>	
Hidden Expectations/ Talking to Key People	<i>Examples: Be a good worker; Get along with others</i>
<i>Example: Talk to people who work or study there</i>	
Hidden Expectations/ Observing the Setting	<i>Examples: Only chat at break times; Be nice to the receptionist</i>
<i>Example: watch how people talk (or don't talk) to each other</i>	
Personal Expectations/ Doing my own thing to ensure success	<i>Examples: Estimate my travel time; Planning lunch</i>
<i>Example: take stock of what you've done in the past that has helped you to be successful</i>	

6.5 Discussion Prompts: Listing Expectations

Sources for Learning about Expectations

- What kinds of written, or easy-to-find, sources are there for you to learn about the expectations of this environment?
- Who might you talk to about any not-so-obvious, or hidden, expectations?
- How can you observe the setting for clues about what is expected of the people who work (or study) there?
- What kinds of similar experiences have you had that might give you a sense of what you might need to do to be successful and happy there?

Gathering Expectations

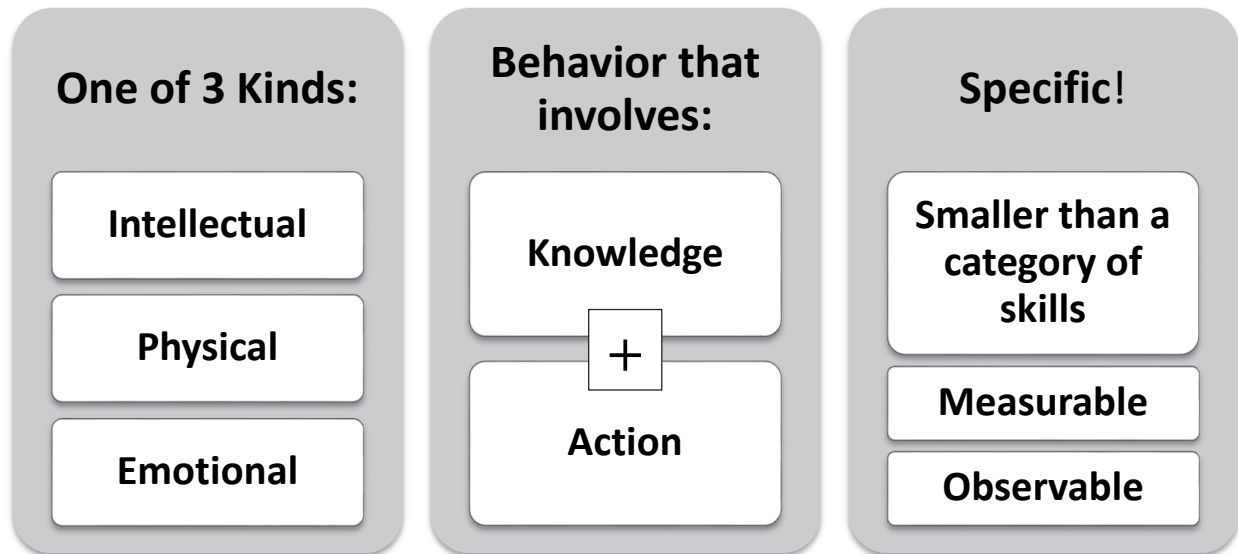
- What did you do to find out about explicit, or easy-to-find, expectations in this environment?
- What did you do to find out about hidden expectations?
- What did you do to think about personal expectations for your own success and satisfaction on the job?

Listing Expectations

- What did you find out about the expectations of this place?
- Which do you think are the most relevant to you?
- Which do you anticipate being easy to meet?
- Which do you think will be hard to do?

6.6 Skills: What's the Deal?

A Skill is:



1. What are Skills?

Skills are what people “know how to do.” Performing a skill is purposefully doing an action for a reason, in a context that requires it. We can master skills with practice and know-how!

2. Skills are Specific:

- Individual skills are different than categories of skills (see next pg.)
- Measurable: We can measure whether we are doing a skill enough for success
- Observable: We can see whether a skill is being performed.

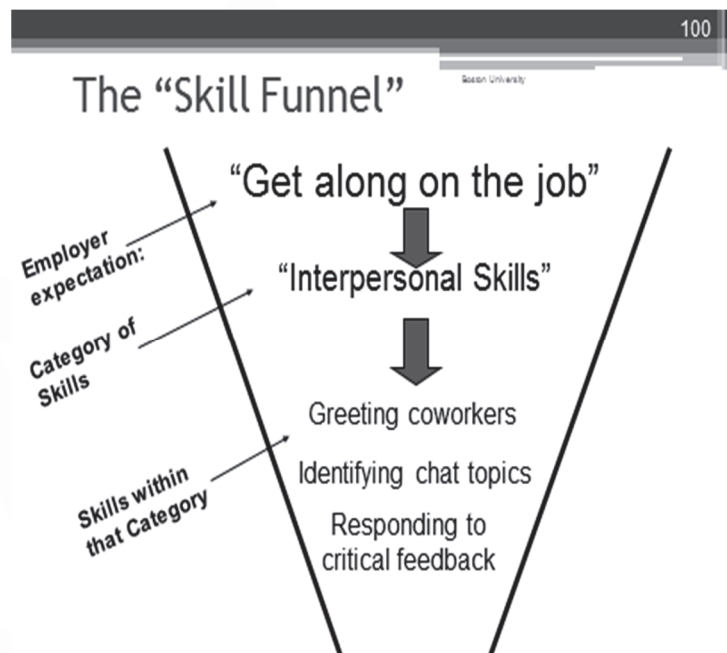
3. Three Kinds:

- Intellectual skills: that we do “in our heads”
- Physical skills are those that we do with our bodies (and are easiest to see)
- Skills may be emotional: used in connection with ourselves and others

6.7 Example: Getting Specific about Skills

This is an example of how to get from a vague expectation in the environment to a specific set of skills that the person needs to perform:

- Start with the broad expectation, and then break it down into smaller and smaller pieces until you get to the skill.
- A skill is teachable but a vague expectation is generally not!



Reggie's Example of Skills

Once Reggie started working, he realized he might need some support to keep the job going. It was his first job in a while, and though he thought he could be good at reception because he liked talking to people, he also knew that it required a lot more than just talking.

Miguel offered to sit down with Reggie and clarify what the expectations were.

The first thing Reggie said at lunch was, "I can't believe they expect me to do everything on a computer! I thought this was a people job!"

Miguel and Reggie broke this down, by exploring the actual expectation, which went from "doing things on the computer" to "keeping track of things" to the actual skill: *Logging customer interactions*.

6.8 Exercise: Breaking Skill Categories Down into Skills

1. With the whole group, break down the skill category of Time Management into specific, individual skills. When naming the skills, have in mind the format of, “doing something.” For example, “Identifying Tasks.” Write your answers on the lines next to the graphic.

Time Management

Identify Tasks

Adhere to Schedule

Schedule Tasks

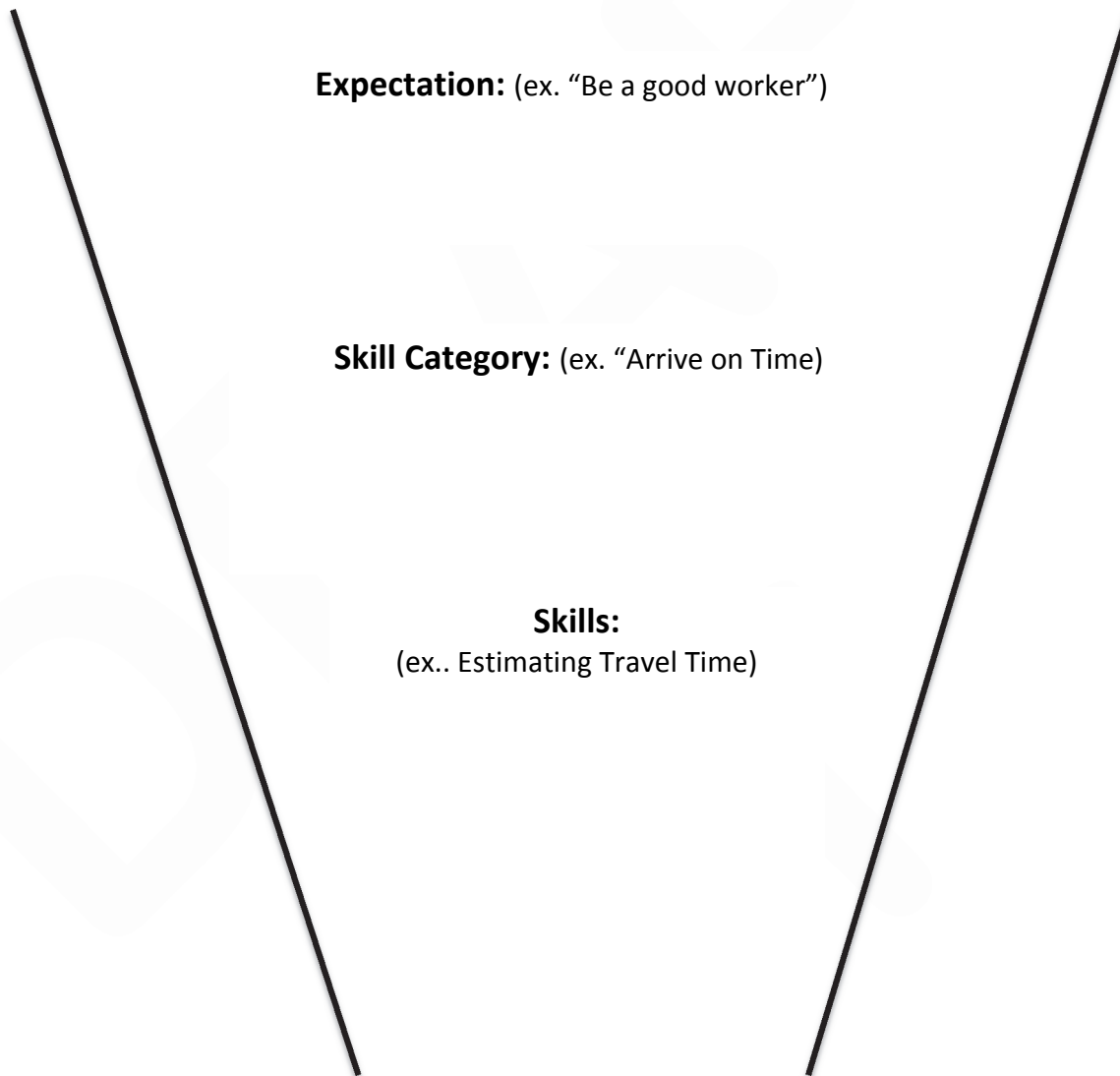
Prioritize Tasks

2. Which individual skills fall within the following categories? (Work in small groups; be prepared to share your answers)

Broad expectation	One category of skills	Individual skills
“Be presentable”		
“Get along on the job”		
“Be a good worker”		

6.9 Tool: Skill Funnel

Instructions: Use this Skill Funnel to get more specific about the skills required at work or school. Break broad, general expectations down into individual skills. Use one Tool for each broad expectation.



- Which Skills are you already using, and which are good at?
- Which Skills do you not know how to do or need more practice for?

6.10 Tool: Turning Expectations into Skills

Instructions: To work on more than one expectation, use this tool to break vague expectations into smaller pieces. Specific skills will be easier to learn, to use, and to improve! This tool may be used as an alternative to the “Funnel.”

List one vague expectation on the left, brainstorm a list of possible smaller skills in the middle, and then star (*) the most important or relevant skill in the right-hand column.

Vague Expectation	Brainstorm possible skills	Most Important Skill(s)
<p><i>Example:</i> “Get along with others”</p>	<p><i>Skill 1: Requesting clarification</i> <i>Skill 2: Greeting coworkers</i> <i>Skill 3: Offering assistance</i></p>	<p>* <i>Requesting clarification</i></p>
<p>Expectation 1:</p>	<p>Skill 1: Skill 2: Skill 3:</p>	<p>* *</p>
<p>Expectation 2:</p>	<p>Skill 1: Skill 2: Skill 3:</p>	<p>* *</p>
<p>Expectation 3:</p>	<p>Skill 1: Skill 2: Skill 3:</p>	<p>* *</p>
<p>Expectation 4:</p>	<p>Skill 1: Skill 2: Skill 3:</p>	<p>* *</p>
<p>Expectation 5:</p>	<p>Skill 1: Skill 2: Skill 3:</p>	<p>* *</p>

6.11 Tool: General Expectations to Specific Skills

Instructions: If you have trouble gathering information about expectations and skills, try out this tool to get a general sense of skills you might need to succeed.

Note: The more you know about the place you're going to, the better equipped for success you will be!

Skill Category:	Break it down...	Now even smaller!
<i>Example: Dressing for Success</i>	<i>Figuring out what to wear</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choosing work outfits</i> • <i>Matching my clothes</i>
Physical skills		
Organizing skills		
Time Management skills		
Getting along with Coworkers/ Classmates		
Working w/Sups/ Teachers		
Planning Skills		

6.12 Discussion Prompts: Breaking Down Expectations into Skills

Listing Expectations

- Which of the Expectations that you listed do you think are important enough to break down into individual skills?
- Which of the tools do you want to use to help you break down expectations into smaller, more learnable pieces?
- What do you know about skills vs. expectations?

Breaking Expectations Down

- Why do you think it is important to break down expectations into smaller pieces?
- Do you think any of these expectations are too big in scope, meaning that it probably contains more than one skill?
- How would you break that down into smaller pieces?
- How could we break the smaller pieces into even smaller pieces?
- Is the smallest piece something that you can either do or learn how to do?

Evaluating my Skills

- Which of these smaller pieces do you think will be important to your success and/or happiness?
- Which do you think you will have an easy time doing?
- Which do you think you will have a hard time doing?

6.13 Common Skills

Listed below are some of the skills related to particular work and school activities. This list is not exhaustive, but is meant to guide you as you think about skills. Skills are listed by environments – here we will focus on work and school. Keep in mind that skills that are listed in one environment also may be very relevant to someone’s success and satisfaction in a different setting.

People don’t have to know how to do these skills before going into their chosen environment or role. However, if a skill is required, we will want to support the person to learn the skill once in the environment if not before.

WORK ENVIRONMENT – These are some skills that support people to be both successful and satisfied in their work environments.

Working with Coworkers

Expressing Opinions	Conversing about Social Topics
Asking Personal Questions	Dividing Work Responsibilities
Requesting Favors	Discussing Differences of Opinion
Responding to Questions	Recognizing When to Interrupt
Refraining from Interrupting	Recognizing Body Language
Recognizing Angry Feelings	Asking for Help
Recognizing Escalating Emotions	Resolving Conflicts
Focusing on Personal Activities	Recognizing When to Assist
Clarifying Verbal Comments	Expressing Feelings
Listening	Discussing Impersonal Topics
Initiating Conversations	Selecting Friends
Recognizing Others’ Personal Space	Recognizing Feelings

Working with Supervisors

Responding to Feedback	Clarifying Feedback
Clarifying Instructions	Requesting Feedback
Requesting Assistance	Sharing Self-Evaluation
Resolving Conflicts	Discussing Problems
Recognizing Feelings	Recognizing Others’ Personal Space
Expressing Feelings	Recognizing Escalating Emotions
Requesting Assistance	Expressing Opinions
Scheduling Appointments	Discussing Differences of Opinion
Compromising	Listening
Responding	Recognizing When to Interrupt
Recognizing When to Speak	Choosing Discussion Topics
Choosing Responses	Initiating Conversations

Discussing Impersonal Topics	Initiating Additional Tasks
Refusing Requests	Requesting Information
Evaluating Accommodations	Identifying Disclosure Needs
Disclosing Disability	Requesting Accommodations

Socializing at Work

Responding to Personal Statements	Requesting Assistance
Choosing Discussion Topics	Matching Jokes to Setting
Expressing Opinions	Expressing Feelings
Choosing Gifts	Acknowledging Gifts
Praising Others	Acknowledging Praise
Assisting Others	Selecting Friends
Initiating Conversations	Asking to be Included
Introducing Self	Discussing Impersonal Topics
Asking Questions	Recognizing Non-Verbal Cues
Extending Invitations	Recognizing Others' Personal Space

Preparing for Work

Planning Travel Route	Estimating Time for Travel
Estimating Time for Getting Ready	Choosing Time for Alarm
Selecting Alarm Clocks	Identifying Alternatives to Alarm Clock
Preparing Lunch Food	Choosing Clothing
Identifying Needs	Choosing Things to Bring for Day
Requesting a Ride	Navigating Public Transportation

L **EARNING ENVIRONMENT** – These are some of the skills that improve peoples' success and satisfaction in school.

Applying for School

Evaluating School/College Choices	Choosing Colleges/School
Completing Applications	Requesting Transcripts
Interviewing for College/School	Selecting College/School
Exploring School Funding Options	Applying for Loans/Grants

Taking Courses – In Class

Choosing Courses	Evaluating Performance
Estimating Arrival Time	Arranging for Accommodations
Evaluating Accommodation Needs	Recognizing Material to Note
Organizing Note Materials	Responding to Questions
Asking Questions	Responding to Feedback
Negotiating with Teacher/Professor	Analyzing Concepts
Expressing Opinions	Requesting Information

Taking Courses – Studying

Choosing a Study Space	Organizing Study Space
Selecting Material to Study	Scheduling Time to Study
Identifying Learning Style	Brainstorming Memory Techniques
Recognizing Study Needs	Clarifying Assignments
Defining Words/Terms	Answering Questions
Summarizing Facts	Clarifying Points
Researching Information	Illustrating Points

Working with Teachers/Professors or Other Students

Expressing Opinions	Expressing Disagreements
Asking Personal Questions	Conversing about Social Topics
Requesting Favors	Dividing Work Responsibilities
Responding to Questions	Discussing Differences of Opinion
Refraining from Interrupting	Recognizing When to Interrupt
Recognizing Angry Feelings	Recognizing Body Language
Recognizing Escalating Emotions	Asking for Help
Focusing on Personal Activities	Resolving Conflicts
Clarifying Verbal Comments	Recognizing When to Assist
Listening	Expressing Feelings
Initiating Conversation	Discussing Impersonal Topics
Interacting with Others	Selecting Friends
Offering Feedback	Offering Assistance
Recognizing Others’ Personal Space	Recognizing Feelings
Expressing Opinion	Responding to Personal Statements

EITHER ENVIRONMENT: No matter which environment, you will need these.

Grooming/Hygiene

Identifying Hygiene Tasks	Brushing Teeth
Assessing Appearance	Brushing Hair
Recognizing When to Cut Hair	Selecting Makeup
Applying Makeup	Applying Deodorant
Applying Perfume/Cologne	Shaving Facial Hair
Shaving Body Hair	Washing Hair
Washing Body	Requesting Assistance
Identifying impact of body odor	Recognizing non-verbal cues

Dressing

Selecting/Choosing Clothes	Assessing Appearance
Estimating Time to Dress	Estimating Time to Shower/Wash

Matching Clothes to Weather	Tucking in Shirt
Choosing Accessories	Washing Clothes
Operating a Washing Machine	Operating a Dryer
Operating an Iron	Recognizing Need for Laundering
Scheduling Laundry	Folding Clothes
Buying Clothes	Budgeting for Clothing

Health

Identifying Health Needs	Scheduling Appointments
Recognizing Physical Symptoms	Recognizing Psychiatric Distress
Identifying Wellness Tools	Choosing Wellness Tools
Recognizing Angry Feelings	Asking for Help
Evaluating Medication Benefits	Evaluating Medical Support
Choosing Health Care Providers	Identifying Healthy Foods
Conversing about Health Needs	Preparing Healthy Foods

Budgeting

Assessing Finances	Exploring Housing Options
Recognizing Affordable Housing	Identifying Household Bills
Allocating Income	Prioritizing Spending
Paying Rent	Paying Bills
Saving Money	Buying Groceries
Prioritizing Needs	Estimating Expenses

Banking

Balancing a Checkbook	Writing a Check/Money Order
Depositing Income	Recording ATM Debits

Be mindful that there are certain words that will *look like and feel like* skills until we try to see what they look like and what steps it would take to learn them.

The following SOUND LIKE skills, but are not...

Allowing	Arriving	Keeping	Having
Avoiding	Being	Trying	Knowing
Doing	Feeling	Seeing	Wanting
Hearing	Hoping	Remembering	Talking
Learning	Liking	Staying	Wishing

6.14 Supports

As peers, we may be accustomed to talking with people about supports – it is an important part of our work. This Module may expand our vision of supports that can assist a person to be successful and satisfied in their work or school settings.



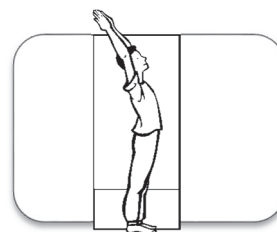
People



Places



Things



Activities

Reggie's Example of Supports

After looking at skills, Miguel knows that a next step for Reggie could be exploring the Supports he needs for success.

Miguel oriented Reggie to the big idea of supports – both inside and outside of work - that could help him be a success at work.

They decided to brainstorm the supports that Reggie already has, and the supports they thought he needs to develop. But they ran into a snag: Reggie wasn't really sure what supports he needs.

So they took a different tack. They decided to make a log to note down any problems Reggie might run into. That way, they could look at supports as the need arose.

Reggie wondered about his mental health team – “what about them?” Miguel and he decided to bring up discussing with the team how they could support Reggie with work on an ongoing basis, now that he is working.

6.15 Small Group Exercise: Supporting Challenging Situations

Instructions: Following the example below, get together with 2-3 partners to brainstorm supports that may scaffold a person who is challenged in the following ways. Consider the people, places, things, and activities. Be prepared to share ideas with the group.

Situation:	Possible Supports: People, Places, Things, Activities
I don't know how I will get all my work done.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job coach to help strategize (<i>person</i>) • Find a quiet space to work (<i>place</i>) • Reminders on my phone (<i>thing</i>) • Prioritize tasks with supervisor (<i>activity</i>)
I don't know how to tell my supervisor that I'm having a hard time.	
Nobody seems to be talking to me at school.	
I can't seem to get there on time.	
I'm worried that my symptoms may come back.	
My supports are not working together.	
I get bored at work.	

6.16 Supports I Have Now Tool



People



Places



Things



Activities

Instructions: List the People, Places, Things, and Activities that you **already have** to support your success at work or school.

Which supports do you have **now**?

<p><i>The PEOPLE who support me:</i></p>	
<p><i>The PLACES that support me:</i></p>	
<p><i>The THINGS that support me:</i></p>	
<p><i>The ACTIVITIES that support me:</i></p>	

6.17 Tool: Brainstorming Supports I Still Need

Instructions: Use this tool to help think about potential supports you need to **keep** work or school.

Support Category	Situation	Examples	Supports You Need or Want
People	At work or school	Supervision time with boss, Disability Services	
	Outside:	Peer support, counseling, time with my pastor	
Places	At work or school	Closed office, lunchroom, library	
	Outside:	Local park, place of worship	
Activities	At work or school	Taking study breaks, accessing tutoring, lunch with coworker	
	Outside:	Exercise, sleeping 8 hours, developing a WRAP plan	
Things	At work or school:	Smart phone, calendar, favorite cup for coffee, books, water bottle	
	Outside:	alarm clock, coffee maker, home computer	

6.18 Brainstorming Supports Discussion Prompts

These prompts are designed to start discussion and exploration! Substitute the word, “school” or “training,” if you are looking at education.

People Supports:

- Who are the people that support you now at work? How do they support your success and satisfaction at work?
- Who else do you think you need to support you at the job itself?
- Who is outside of work (in your life in general), who supports your success at work?
- Who else do you think you need more support from so that you can be successful at work?

Place Supports:

- What are the places at work that support you?
- What other places at work do you think you need in order to be more successful and satisfied there?
- What places support your work success but are outside of the job?
- What other places do you think could support your success and satisfaction at work, even though they are outside of the job?

Activities:

- What do you do at work to support your success at work now?
- What kinds of things do you need to do at work to increase your satisfaction and success at work?
- What do you do at home or in other parts of your life to ensure your success at work now?
- What else do you think you would like to do in your life outside of work to enhance your success?

Things:

- What kinds of things do you have that make you successful and happy at work?
- What kinds of things do you think you need that could make you more successful?

6.19 Tool: Overcoming Challenges with Supports

Instructions: Use this tool to think through the people, places, things, and activities that could support you through challenging situations at work or school. The example in gray shows a support in each category. List on the left any challenges you are having at work or school, and then brainstorm on the right the supports that might help.

Challenge at Work or School	Possible Supports: People, Places, Things, Activities
Example: I don't know how I will get all my work done....	Job coach to help me strategize (<i>person</i>), a quiet space to work (<i>place</i>), a cellphone that gives reminders (<i>thing</i>), prioritizing tasks with a supervisor (<i>activity</i>)

6.20 Discussion Prompts: Overcoming Challenges with Supports

Problem Situations:

- What has been going well at work/school so far?
- In what situations do you feel the most support at work (school)?
- What kinds of things have been hard at work (school)?
- What kinds of “bumps in the road” have you run into at work or school lately?
- What kinds of problem situations are you running into at work?
- Do any of the example problem situations listed on the Tool sound familiar?
- Do you have others that you want to think through?

People Supports

- Who are the people who might support you?
- How might those people support you? Can they support you emotionally (like be a cheerleader), with practical supports, like bus fare, or in other ways?
- Consider supports both inside the workplace or school and outside in the rest of your life.

Places

- What places might support you? Consider places inside, such as a quiet place to work, lunchroom, library, etc.
- Do you have access to those places? Could we request access?
- Are there places outside work or school that could support you in this situation (a place to take a walk, a place to go for support)?

Things

- What things could support you? Consider things such as computers, washing machine, alarm clock, etc.
- Do you have access to these things? How could we think about getting them?

Activities

- What activities could support you, both inside and outside work?

Peer Support

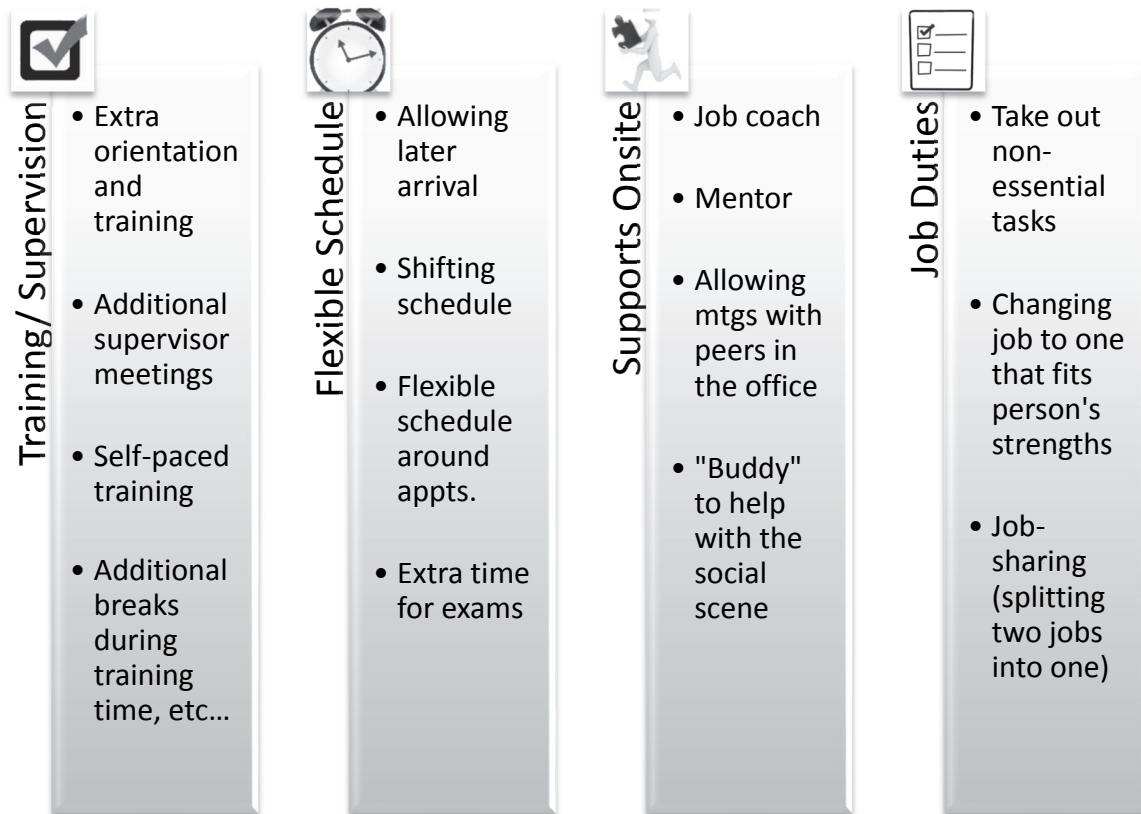
- How can I support you?
- How can I work with you to access or use any of these other supports?
- What can we learn together to help you get the support you need?

6.21 Accommodations: Employment

What is it? Accommodations are supports that the EMPLOYER provides.

The word, “Accommodations” comes from the Americans with Disabilities Act, which allows people to request and receive “reasonable accommodations” in employment and other settings, in order to “level the playing field” for the disability.

Rather than raising the height of a desk, or other physical adjustments, we may be talking about the following (not an exhaustive list). These focus primarily on work:



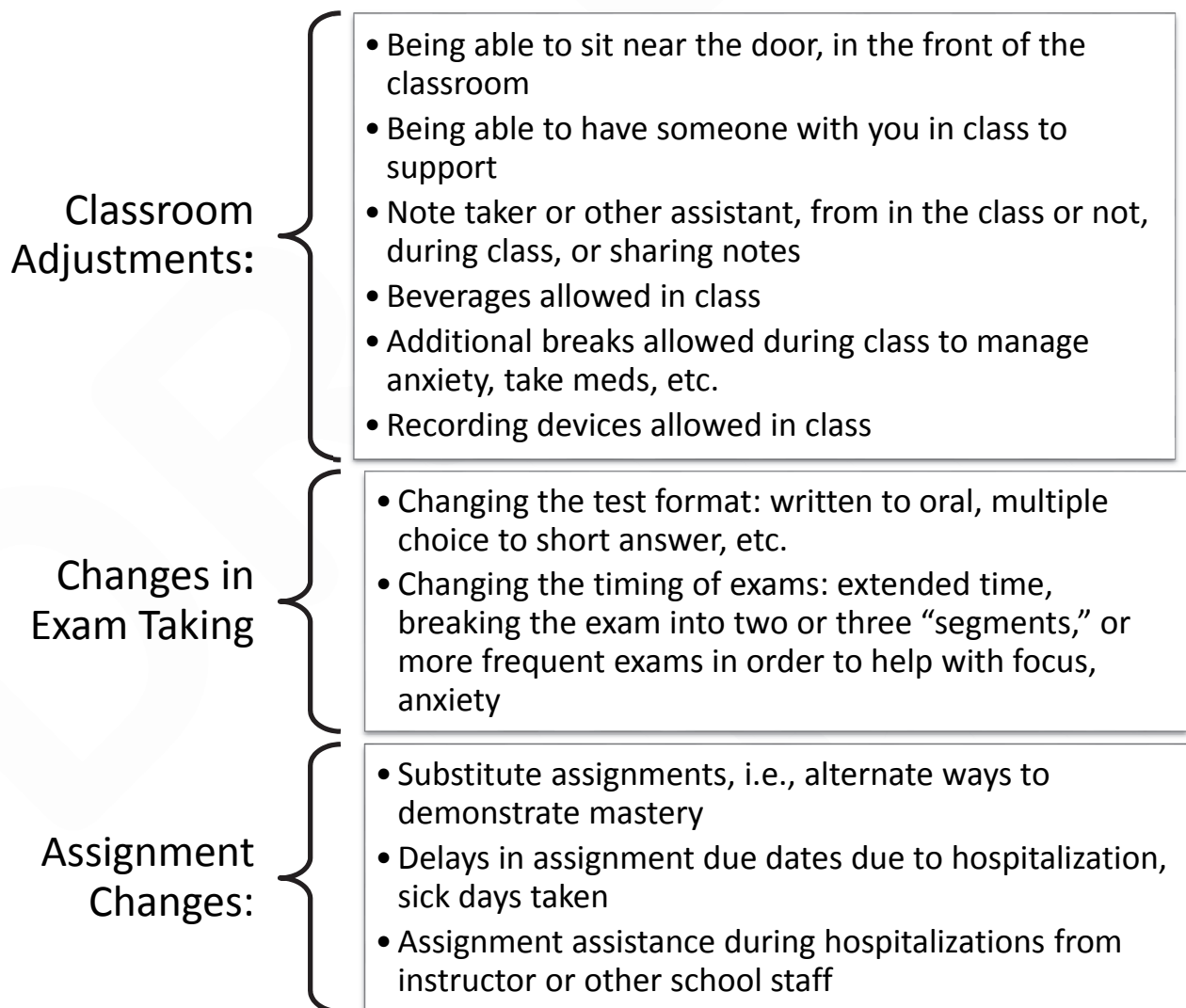
Important Note! Accommodations often make the workplace more accessible for all workers, not only workers with disabilities. Employers who are thinking about how to accommodate workers with disabilities may be making the environment better for everyone.

For more examples, check out the Job Accommodation Network at www.askjan.org

6.22 Accommodations: Education

The following offers a few examples of accommodations you may request in a school environment.

For more examples, refer to the website of the BU Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation:
<http://cpr.bu.edu/resources/reasonable-accommodations/>



Please note that these are examples of *potential* accommodations. Accommodations must be negotiated with the school or training program. It may be helpful to engage the school disability services or “504 C officer,” who must ensure compliance with laws related to accommodating disabilities.

6.23 Example: Reggie and Miguel

Reggie and Miguel have been meeting on Mondays for some time now. They have been talking about using skills that Reggie already knows how to do, but sometimes finds hard to use on the job. They also have been thinking about supports inside and outside of the workplace that can help Reggie be successful and happy on the job.

For the past few months, Reggie has been talking more and more about his worries that he is going to get a bad evaluation. Miguel paraphrased that concern, because he knows first-hand how it feels to be told, “Oh, it’s not going to be that bad; it’ll be fine!” In fact, when Reggie was feeling blown off by some of his providers, Miguel shared how he recovered from what he calls “the slap of dismissal.”

But they didn’t stop there. They talked about what Reggie needs on the job. Reggie thinks he “knows what’s going to go down” when evaluation time comes around. After talking a bit, Miguel asked if Reggie had heard anything from his supervisor, Virginia, and he hadn’t. In fact, from Reggie’s perspective, Virginia doesn’t say anything about Reggie’s work either way, leaving him to assume the worst.

So they decided to ask Virginia for feedback. They practiced what Miguel would say, and agreed to meet the afternoon after he talked to her. What happened surprised even Miguel: Virginia didn’t say much at all, making Reggie even more nervous. They decided that this may be a time to ask for an accommodation, because though no feedback may or may not be an issue for some people, for Reggie, the anxiety could actually push him out of the job.

Miguel realized that he didn’t know a lot about accommodations, but he knew that Reggie’s VR counselor did. They decided to look over the “Disclosure Thinking” tool again. In addition, they decided to consult Reggie’s counselor for help in making the actual request. This way, they could enhance supports and request an accommodation at the same time.

Q **uestion:** How can you relate to Reggie’s situation? What parts of your own vocational recovery story could have supported Reggie here?

6.24 Exercise: Turning “Can’ts” into “Can-do’s”

Below are a few examples of supports and accommodations for common problems experienced at work. What would you add to the lists?

Common “Can’ts”	Possible Skills	Brainstormed Supports	Possible Accommodations
Can’t get into work on time	<i>Requesting a wake-up call Estimating time Scheduling morning activities</i>	<i>Alarm clock Wake up call Ride to work</i>	<i>Ride with coworker Later start time</i>
Can’t remember what to do next			
Can’t figure out what to do first			
Can’t seem to make friends			
Can’t get my work done in time			
Can’t take it when my boss yells at me			

6.25 Exercise: What helps YOU?

Instructions: Team up with someone you don't ordinarily work with. Choose which one of you will facilitate the exploration, and who will explore **their own** situation. Facilitators should use their partnering skills! Both of you should be yourselves; do not play a role.

- 1. What are some examples of SKILLS that your job requires you to meet:**
 - a. Job Tasks
 - b. Hidden Expectations (including Social/Cultural Expectations)
 - c. Personal Expectations

- 2. What kinds of SUPPORTS do you need to be successful and satisfied at work? (Supports can be inside or outside work)**
 - a. People
 - b. Places
 - c. Things
 - d. Activities

- 3. What kinds of ACCOMMODATIONS do you need?**
 - a. People supports (Training, supervision, job coaching)
 - b. Flexible schedule
 - c. Changes in job tasks

6.26 Tool: Turning “Can’t’s” into “Can-do’s”

Instructions: Use this tool to figure out what kinds of skills, supports, and accommodations could assist you with what you might be struggling to do at work or school.

“I Can’t’s”	Possible Skills	Supports that might help	Possible Accommodations (employer supports)
Example: I can’t get into work on time!	Requesting a wake-up call Estimating time Scheduling morning activities	Alarm clock Wake up call Ride to work	Ride with coworker Later start time
I can’t			
I can’t			
I can’t			
I can’t			
I can’t			
I can’t			

6.27 Discussion Prompts: Turning “Can’t’s” into “Can-Do’s”

Can’t’s:

- What is coming up as problems at work or school?
- What do you think is getting in the way of your overall success at work or school?
- What would you like to get better at?

Possible Skills:

- What are you good at doing at work or school?
- What skills do you already have that could help you with this “can’t”?
- What do you think you want to learn how to do that could improve this situation?
- What skills do you want to get better at, that could help in this situation?
- What skills do you want to practice with me or somebody else?

Possible Supports:

- Who could help you with this situation? How?
- What kinds of places might support you with this situation?
- What kinds of activities might help you out?
- What kinds of things do you need that could support you here?

Possible Accommodations:

- How could your employer (or school) support you in this situation?
- What kinds of adjustments to the workplace (or class load) could help to level the playing field with other workers/classmates?
- Is there something you need from the people at work?
- Would you be able to do your job if your schedule was adjusted in some way?
- Would you be able to be successful if extra (not essential) job duties were not required of you?
- How can I support you to get what you need?

6.28 Building Skills and Supports

New skills and supports: When we don't know how to do something, or do not have support, we may need to develop new skills and/or supports. Consider:

Learning new skills and developing new supports

Many vocational and other programs offer skill and support development. Support people to get connected to skill teaching programs and providers.

Support practice! As they say, "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?"

Help make sure that the goals being worked on are related to the person's vocational recovery goals. Skill learning must be linked to where the person wants to go!

Strengthening skills and supports: Being "strength-based" is in part referring to acknowledging, and building on, the skills people have already. To do this, we need to:

Building on Strengths

Support people to use what they already know how to do.

Scaffold people with experiences with doing things and practicing skills they might already have! (i.e., the more we do, the more we can do!).

Help people to apply skills to new settings.

Support the strengthening of supports.

Help people to overcome barriers that get in the way of using skills and supports in the new setting.

6.29 Exercise: Developing Skills and Supports

Instructions: Read the scenario and pair up with a partner. Consider the questions below to think through how you might support Marco to keep his job.

Marco started working at the Home Depot as a Sales Associate two months ago. He is good at his job, and has gotten good feedback from his supervisor about his performance.

Marco has been focusing on doing well on the job so much that he hasn't really started to meet people. He ends up spending break times alone, or just working through them because he doesn't know what to say to people in the break room. He has had friends before, but at the job, talking to people feels different to him.

What skills does Marco need?	How could you support him to learn those skills?
What supports does Marco need?	How could you scaffold him to gather those supports?

Q. How would you support the use of skills and supports Marco already has?

What skills does Marco already have?	What scaffolds could support him to use those skills in this job?
What supports does he already have?	What scaffolds could help him to use those supports?

6.30 Tool: Learning Skills

Instructions: How will you learn or improve the skills you named?

Use this sheet to name the skill, and how you will learn, improve, or practice each one.

Skills	Learn, Improve, or Practice
Example: Requesting Clarification	Practice asking my boss to repeat or write down instructions with Petra, my peer specialist.

6.31 Discussion Prompts: Learning Skills

Listing Skills

- Which skills do you think will be the most important to list here?
- Why did you choose those skills?
- Are there any other skills that you think would be important to list here?

Thinking through Level of Learning Needed

- Which of these skills do you already know how to do?
- Which of these skills do you need some practice with, so that you can fine-tune your skill level?
- Which of these skills do you need refreshing?
- Which of these skills do you need to learn how to do?

Planning for Learning

- How do you think you can learn this skill?
- How can you practice any skills that need fine-tuning?
- How can we learn more together about these skills?
- How would you like me to support you as you learn these skills?
- What other supports would you like to pull in to support your learning?
- How would you like to keep track of your learning over time?

6.32 Tool: My KEEPING Summary

***Instructions:** Use this Tool to bring together information from other tools you used to make decisions about keeping work or school.*

Skills: List skills you want to develop to be a great worker or student.

Explicit Skills
(easily found)

**Hidden/
Implicit Skills**

**Personal
Expectations**

Supports: List those supports you need to be happy and successful.

People

Places

Things

Activities

Accommodations: Describe changes you need from the workplace.

**Training/Supervision
/Supports**

Flexible Schedule

Physical Space

**Job Duty
Modifications**

6.33 Helpful Links

American Disability Association (ADA): <http://www.ada.gov/>

Association for Higher Education and Disabilities (AHEAD): <http://www.ahead.org>

DO-IT The Faculty Room: <http://www.washington.edu/doit/faculty/>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC):
www.eeoc.gov

Job Accommodation Network (JAN): www.jan.wvu.edu

Judge Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law: www.bazelon.org/

National Disability Rights Network: www.ndrn.org

U.S. Department of Justice ADA Home Page: www.ada.gov

Disclosure

From Job Accommodation Network: <http://askjan.org/topics/discl.htm>

For articles on disclosure: <http://www.adainfo.org/content/disclosure-disabilityaccommodation-requests-workplace>

Disclosing at a One-Stop Center:
http://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=269

6.34 The Americans with Disabilities Act (and Amendments): *Some Basics*

The ADA has five different Sections called “Titles.” Title I is Employment

Goals of the ADA:

- Eliminate discrimination and ensure that people with disabilities experience:
 - Equality of opportunity
 - Full participation and integration
 - Independence
 - Economic self-sufficiency
- Remove barriers to access.
- Provide clear, strong, enforceable standards

An employee is protected under the ADA if:

- There is a physical or mental impairment that causes a substantial limitation of one or more major life activities.
- The person has a “record of” a disability or who are “regarded as” having a disability.

The employee must be:

- *Qualified to do the essential job functions of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation.*

Workplace Protections: The Americans with Disabilities Act is an *anti-discrimination law, not an anti-firing law!*

- Discrimination is prohibited in all facets of employment, including:

Job application procedures	Hiring or Advancement
Benefits and Compensation	Discipline / Termination
Training	Any terms, conditions, or privileges of employment
Company events	

Medical Inquiries – In General

The employer is NOT entitled to request information regarding:

- General medical information
- Medical conditions or impairments unrelated to the reasonable accommodation request
- Any medical inquiry must be “job-related and consistent with business necessity.”

The Permissible Question

- An employee or applicant is not required to mention that they have a disability until a reasonable accommodation is needed.
- An employer may not request any disability-related information or give any medical examinations prior to making a job offer to the applicant. Any question that may elicit disability-related information is prohibited.
- Permissible Question: Are you able to do the job with or without an accommodation?
 - People with or without disabilities can answer yes to this question (without indicating “with” or without”)

After a Conditional Job Offer is Made:

- “Conditional job offer:” A job offer conditioned on the applicant successfully meeting the reasonable and legitimate physical and medical requirements of the job.
- Employers may ask disability-related questions and require a medical exam if done uniformly of all applicants.
- Employers cannot withdraw a job offer unless:
 - The individual cannot perform the essential job functions;
 - A reasonable accommodation cannot be provided; and
 - The reasons for withdrawing the job offer are job-related and consistent with business necessity.

Disability-Related Information – On The Job

The employer may only seek disability-related information if there is a “reasonable basis” to believe that the employee:

- Is unqualified to do the job;
- Needs a reasonable accommodation; or
- Poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the employee or others.

6.35 Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable Accommodations are defined as:

Modifications or adjustments to the work environment or to the manner or circumstances under which the position is customarily performed that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of that position or enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment. 29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(o)(1). (Equal Employment Opportunity Community (EEOC) Regulations)

An Accommodation does not have to be provided if it:

- Is unreasonable
- Requires reallocation of essential job functions
- Will not enable the employee to be qualified
- Causes an undue hardship to the employer; or
- Results in a direct threat to the health or safety of the employee or others.

“Essential Functions”

- Fundamental Job Duties
- Job descriptions may be used as a guide to determine essential job functions, but essential job functions may be in a job description.

“Undue hardship” is defined as “Significant difficulty or expense, in light of:”

- “The nature and net cost of the accommodation...”
- “The impact ... upon the operation of the facility, including on...”
- “The ability of other employees to perform their duties...”
- “The facility's ability to conduct business.”

“Direct threat” “A significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others...”

- “That cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.”
- Requires an “individualized assessment...”
- “Based on a reasonable medical judgment that relies on the most current medical knowledge and/or on the best available objective evidence.”

See Module 5, Scaffolding Getting, for more on supporting Requesting Accommodations.

Module 7

Coordinating with Employment Service Providers

What to Expect from Module 7

The Big Question of Module 7

- How can I support people who want to use employment support services for vocational recovery?

In this Module, we will get an introduction to various vocational and employment service models, and look at some concrete ways in which we can serve our peers through connecting with other providers.

	Module 7 Table of Contents	Page
7.1	Why connect with Employment Service Providers	169
7.2	Example of Coordinating with Employment Service Providers: Rafik	170
7.3	The Array of Vocational Services	171
7.4	Public Vocational Rehabilitation	172
7.5	Supported Employment	173
7.6	Other Employment Support Program Models	174
7.7	Partnering with Service Providers	175
7.8	Connecting with Service Providers	176
7.9	Exercise: Scaffolding Employment Service Use	177
7.10	Discussion Prompts: Partnering with Service Providers	180
7.11	Negotiating for Success with Vocational Services	181
7.12	Exercise: Negotiating for Success	182
7.13	Tool: Negotiating for Success	183
7.14	Helpful Links	184
7.15	Practice Assignment: Researching Vocational Services	185

7.1 Why Connect with Employment Service Providers?

Questions to Ponder:

- How has working with vocational and employment service providers been helpful in your own vocational recovery?
- What are your concerns about connecting people with employment and education support providers? Your hopes?

Not everyone will connect with employment or education providers to achieve work and school goals. However, there may be specific tasks that employment, education, and career services may provide.

Instructions: Sit with a partner and together identify:

Benefits to getting involved with vocational services:

Task the provider could help with:	What kinds of supports can vocational service providers offer?
Help with resume writing	Expertise in types of resumes, “what sells,” etc.

Risks to getting involved with vocational services?

Risk:	Why is this a risk?
Feeling “pushed” into a job I don’t like	For me, it has made me not want to work in the past

7.2 Example of Coordinating with Employment Providers: Rafik

Rafik, a peer counselor at a mental health agency in a large mid-western state, has been working with Maribel for a few months now. Maribel has been involved with many services for most of the last 10 years, and has been feeling for a while that work was something she wants to try out. Maribel wondered, “Would vocational services be a good idea?” She asked Rafik if he could help her.

Rafik knew that the best way to support Maribel is to find out first what she wanted out of this next phase of her life. She might want assistance finding out what her options are, and to find that out, they would need to chat some more. So they decided to set a time to go on a walk and talk about what her hopes and dreams were.

After their first mile, they started to realize that Maribel simply didn’t have a lot of information. She didn’t know about the kinds of vocational services out there, what they do, or what would be expected of her. It became pretty clear to both of them that she needed more information to confidently move forward, and Rafik offered to support her. Maribel pointed out that she has a trusted therapist and a couple of good friends whom she also would want to consult.

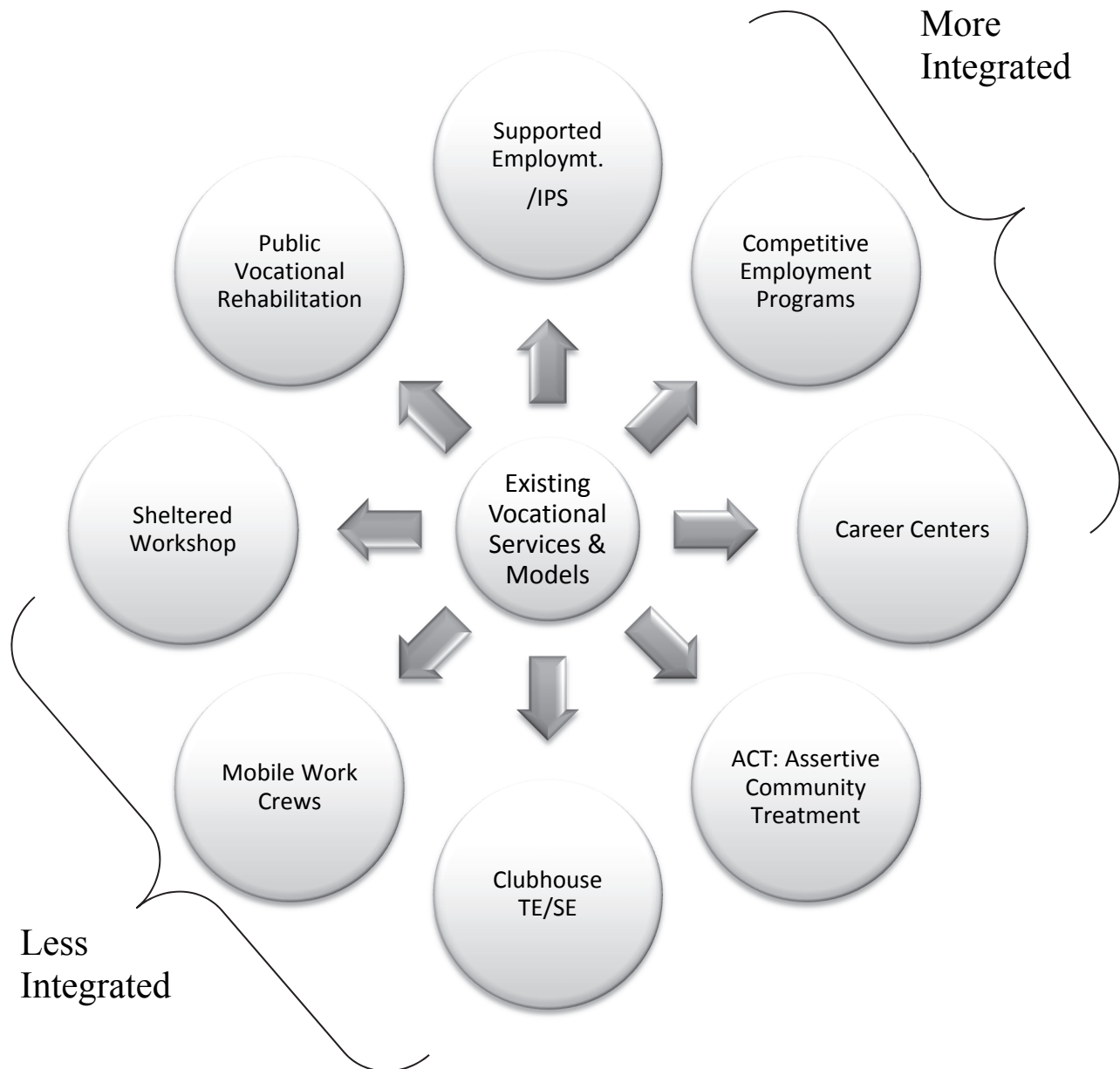
Rafik had been looking into some of the programs in the area. Maribel wanted to start with those, and keep her options open for looking further. Rafik shared some of the information he had gathered. He had learned about State VR, the clubhouse at the agency, and the new Supported Employment program. They wanted to learn more together, so Rafik, Maribel, and one of Maribel’s friends, George, went together to a few of the programs. They wanted to see the programs and talk to people who used the services. Maribel got pretty excited about the Clubhouse. She said that because she hadn’t worked in so long, she wanted a chance to try out a few jobs in their Transitional Employment program, and then move into Supported Employment. As she talked to more people, she got even more excited, and then she got nervous.

Maribel wanted this to be successful. She also wanted to do a good job. But she knew that if she got too nervous, she wouldn’t go. Rafik offered to go with her to the first couple of appointments, if she wanted. Maribel loved that idea, and they set up an appointment for an intake at two places: the State VR agency to support her long-term goals, and the clubhouse.

Question: What could you do to support Maribel in addition to what Rafik has offered?

7.3 The Array of Vocational Services

People who are seeking to choose, get into, or maintain meaningful work may want to get the support of vocational services – and there are a variety of options for them to choose from. Here are a few of the major models and services types that exist in 2015:



Note: “Integrated” refers to supporting work that is not specifically designated for people with disabilities. The more integrated on this list, the more likely that the work people do as a result of the program is “real work, for real pay.”

7.4 Public Vocational Rehabilitation

Public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) “empowers individuals with disabilities to achieve employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into our communities.”

Retrieved from <http://www.rehabnetwork.org/>



Questions to Ponder:

- What do you know about Vocational Rehabilitation Services?
- What is Public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) called in your state?
- What do you know about what they are mandated to do?
- How many people do you think each counselor serves?
- Who do you think they serve?
- What do you know about how VR can offer assistance?

Public VR has an important function in helping people with disabilities to secure work:

- Their mandate is to help people with disabilities to work.
- They serve just about anyone with a disability.
- They are mandated to serve the “most disabled.”
- Services are free for most people.
- VR can send people to other services and pay for important services and education required to get work.
- VR is pretty readily available in most communities.

7.5 Supported Employment

Supported Employment (SE) is a model of vocational services which focuses on “Real Work for Real Pay” in competitive, integrated work environments. Choose-Get-Keep is a Supported Employment approach, and provides a basis for this training.

<p>Competitive Employment ensures that people with disabilities:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• earn equal pay• with equal benefits• for equal work• in community workplaces alongside people with and without disabilities

The Evidence-Based Supported Employment Program Model, Individual Placement and Support (IPS), focuses on the following:

- All services focus on competitive employment
- No one is excluded who wants to participate
- People do not need to be “job ready” to participate
- Rapid job search
- Employment and mental health services are integrated
- Employment is based on person’s preferences
- Ongoing support
- Individualized supports

7.6 Other Employment Support Program Models

Clubhouse: People who attend clubhouses are invited to be members. Clubhouses value a “work-ordered day” everyone who wants to can have a role to play in the success of the club.

Members + Staff \rightleftarrows Work Side-by-Side \rightleftarrows Functioning Clubhouse

Many clubhouses also offer **Transitional Employment (TE)**:

- The employer “hires” the service agency to fill the job.
- Members work in short-term job slots with employers, usually up to 6 months.
- Job performance is guaranteed: if the person does not go to work, a staff person may do the job instead.
- People may be moved from job to job over time, due to the short-term nature of the job.



Assertive Community Treatment or ACT, is a mental health treatment model designed to integrate mental health treatment and rehabilitation services, including vocational services and peer support.

Inherent in ACT is the value of intensive, in-the-community support, and an “everyone does everything” attitude, so roles may overlap, including medication monitoring and treatment compliance checks.

ACT is recognized as an Evidence-Based Practice in mental health by SAMHSA.

One-Stop Career Centers (also called American Job Centers): Funded by the Dept. of Labor, they provide a “full range of services to the entire job-seeker community.” These services are for everyone, and may or may not have a specific focus on disability.

Non-integrated Models (that may still exist):

Mobile crews are operated by mental health service staff, who hire people with disabilities to work as a group for a community employer. Mobile crews may provide janitorial and other services to employers in temporary or permanent positions.

Sheltered Workshops are set up to “train” people in work skills to get ready for employment, but are segregated environments that are not in the community. Sheltered workshops have not been shown to be effective in supporting people to move to competitive employment.

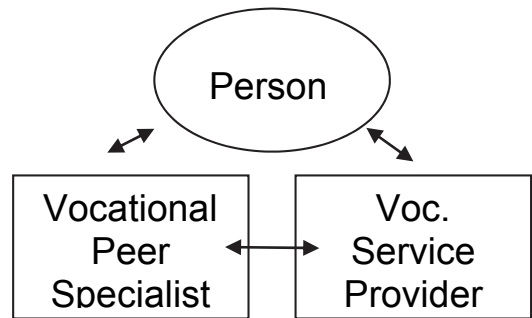
7.7 Partnering with Service Providers

Questions to Ponder:

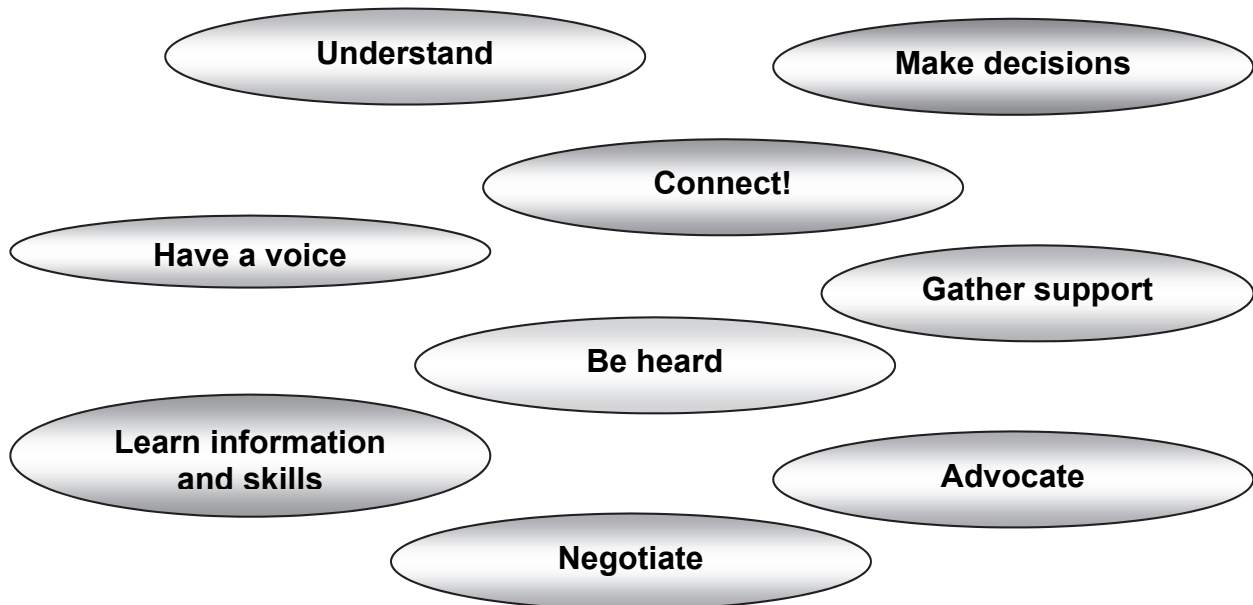
- What can we do to help people connect with vocational service providers?
- Which VPS skills do you think will help the most to connect with service providers?
- What do you wish somebody might have helped you with when you were working with vocational service systems and providers?

There are many partners in our work – the people we work with, their families and loved ones, our coworkers and supervisors, other service providers, and employers.

We might think about partnership as a “**three-legged stool**!”



As Peer Supports with VPS skills and tools, we can make a difference in what happens with vocational services, by supporting people to:



7.8 Connecting with Service Providers

WHAT WE CAN DO:

Listen – “Don’t just do something, stand there!”

We are not required to do, or fix, anything. We can:

- 1) Clear our minds and our environments of distractions,
- 2) Focus in on the person and what they are communicating,

Facilitate Understanding. We can help translate between services and the person.



Help the person to be heard! Getting involved with services, especially services that are new to us, can be very intimidating.

- Scaffold the person’s efforts: Orient the person to what will happen. Help plan or write down what he or she wants to say.
- Invite the person in to the conversation as needed.
- Help the vocational provider to “hear” the person.
- Help summarize, ensuring that the person’s voice is in the mix.

Supporting Decision-making. Vocational services often work best for people who know what they want, and who know something about their options:

- We can support people to explore their dreams, options, even what their first jobs should look like.
- We often have the flexibility, time, and the role to visualize the possibilities.

Accompanying. Sometimes it is enough to “go with” – whether or not we go into the meeting itself. Having someone there in the moment, who is willing to go with us, walk through the door, or be waiting at the coffee shop next door, can make or break our experience.

Learning with! Remember that we do not need to know it all – we are learning with, and from, our peers.



7.9 Exercise: Scaffolding Employment Services Use

Small Group 1: *Read the scenario and brainstorm scaffolds:*

Scenario: You are a peer specialist working in a residential home for people labeled with psychiatric diagnoses. Your state has adopted the IPS Supported Employment model for all state-run agencies.

One of the people you've been working with, Paul, had his first appointment today with the employment unit connected to your agency. When you ask him how it went, he said that he's totally overwhelmed. He was assigned to an employment specialist who did an employment profile with him, and who told Paul in the first meeting that the goal was to have him out searching for work in the field of his choice within 30 days.

Paul has told you that he feels pressured to perform "right away." He says he has no idea what he wants to do, and that "it doesn't really matter what I want to do because I'm not qualified to do much of anything besides sweep floors anyway." He says that it was probably a mistake to say he wanted to talk to someone about work.

Group Instructions:

Brainstorm the scaffolds that could support Paul and write them in the box below.

7.9 Exercise, continued

Group 2: *Read the scenario and brainstorm scaffolds:*

Scenario: You work as a peer specialist in a local peer-run recovery learning center. Your agency offers classes in self-help tools like WRAP and self-advocacy, and offers peer support to community members. Samantha runs one of the WRAP classes and has used that experience to build up her work skills. She also gets a lot of peer support at the center.

Today, Samantha has come by to vent her anger and frustration after visiting her local VR. She waited for three months after her initial orientation to meet a counselor, and she was excited about getting started on the road to her dream job. She wants to be a Rehabilitation Counselor, knows the school she wants to go to, and was hoping to start classes in the Fall.

But when she met with the counselor today, she was told that they would have to do a series of tests to make sure that this was a realistic goal for her, and that it would take three months to complete that process. She is crushed because she thinks her dream is being questioned and is angry because she really wants to “get this party started.”

Group Instructions:

Brainstorm the scaffolds that could support Samantha and write them in the box below.

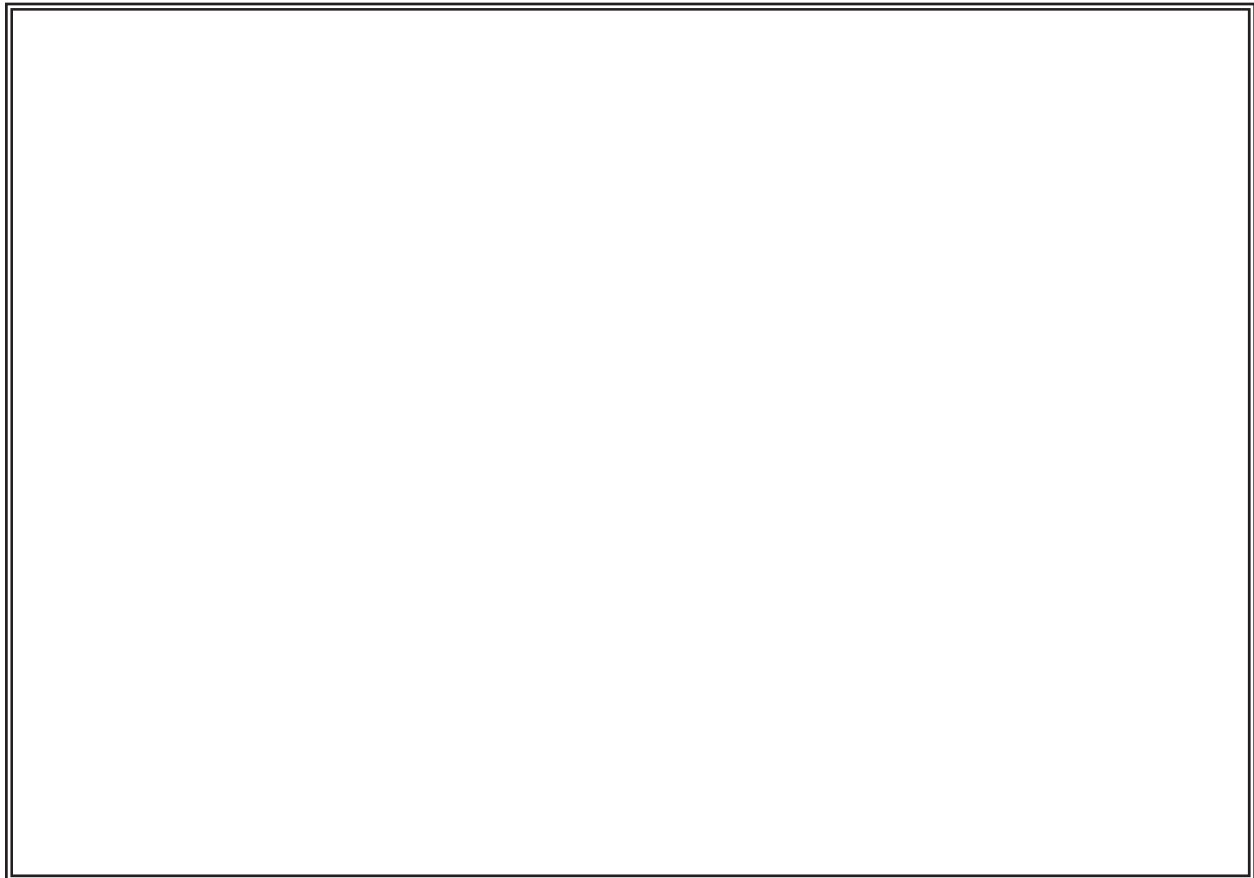
7.9 Exercise, continued

Group 3: *Read the scenario and brainstorm scaffolds:*

Scenario: You work in a clubhouse that has a long tradition in supporting people to work. They have a supported employment program as well as a Transitional Employment Program. The club has begun to hire peer specialists at the clubhouse. When they learned that you had VPS skills, you were hired to support people in their vocational recovery.

You've been working with Jose, a Latino man who has been involved with the clubhouse for about five years. He started working in the clubhouse two years ago, and tells you that he wants to move beyond the clubhouse job and get work in the community. But he also knows that the clubhouse relies on him. He has been serving in a supervisory role in the administrative unit, and he doesn't want to disappoint the staff after all they've done for him.

Group Instructions: *Brainstorm scaffolds that could be supportive to Jose.*



7.10 Discussion Prompts: Partnering with Service Providers

Please feel free to change the wording and include education as relevant.

Benefits of Connecting with Service Providers

- What is your experience with working with vocational or employment service providers?
- What do you see as the benefits of working with a provider to help you think about, get into, or keep work?
- What do you think you could get out of working with a service provider?

Risks of Connecting with Service Providers

- Have you ever had any bad experiences with service providers in the past? What was that like?
- What do you think the downside of getting involved with a service provider could be?

Support for Connecting with Service Providers

- Which service providers have you thought about getting involved with?
- What are you hoping to achieve with a vocational (or other) service provider?
- What kinds of supports or skills do you think you need to actively engage a service provider right now?
- What can I do to support you to get involved with the service providers you are most interested in?
- What do you need from others?

7.11 Negotiating for Success with Vocational Services

Negotiating is a way to achieve consensus when there is disagreement.

When working with vocational services, people may disagree about the:

1. Goal of services
2. Process of getting there
3. The way services are being provided

Example: Mary is being told by her vocational counselor that her dream of becoming a veterinarian is not reasonable. Mary thinks she is being discriminated against, for having been labeled with a mental illness. LaShauna, her CPS, offers to go with her to meet with the vocational counselor to try and work it out, using this framework:



1) Get: the person's concerns, and affirm them



When Asha, the counselor, talked with them, LaShauna was careful to think about why Asha might think the way she did. She responded, "I think we understand that you are concerned; you want Mary to be successful with work. You don't want to set her up for failure, and think it's unethical to go down a road you are unsure about."

2) Give: your connection to that perspective

LaShauna thought about her own path: "I remember when people didn't think I could work in peer support, or work at all! I had had a pretty tough time at one point, and looking back, I know that people couldn't see the 'working me.' I wasn't so sure I could survive a life that didn't include supporting others to recover in some way. Once people saw me taking steps, even if they didn't always work out, they started to see the 'me' that I saw."

3) Merge: perspectives with a "what if we..." solution

Mary and LaShauna talked, and asked Asha: "What if we tried out a step or two in the direction of veterinary work and see if two things happen: 1) that Mary still likes it, and 2) that it's working out? Then we could get back together and see where to go from there."

7.12 Exercise: Negotiating for Success

Instructions: Get into a small group of 2-3 people, and read the following short scenario. Discuss with the group how you would Negotiate for Success as you scaffold Nolan. Be prepared to discuss your responses with the class.

Nolan is working with an employment service for the first time. He's hoping that he can get a job right away, because he "just wants some money" so he can go out and buy things he wants. His employment counselor met with his team, and the team has some concerns about whether he has enough "stability" to start work right away.

How would you:

- 1) **Get: the counselor's concerns, and affirm them?** What values and ethics do you think are at work here? What could you say to show that you understand that perspective?
- 2) **Give: your connection to that perspective.** What experiences have you had that are related? What can you say that shows that you can relate to the other person's perspective?
- 3) **Merge: perspectives with a "what if we.." solution.** What might you suggest as a strategy that merges the two perspectives? How would you put it, to demonstrate that this is a "we" solution, rather than a "you" or "me" solution?

7.13 Tool: Negotiating for Success

Instructions: Use this tool to help strategize how to approach difficult situations. Think through the following:

1) Get: the service provider's concerns, and affirm them

What values and ethics do you think are at work? What could you say to show that you understand that perspective?

2) Give: your connection to that perspective.

What experiences have you had that are related? What can you say that shows that you can relate to the other person's perspective?

3) Merge: perspectives with a "what if we..." solution.

What might you suggest as a strategy that merges the two perspectives? How would you demonstrate the strategy as a "we" solution, rather than a "you" or "me" solution?

7.14 Helpful Links: Vocational Support Providers

General Information on Working and Disability

- Repository of Employment Resources:
<http://cpr.bu.edu/resources/employment/welcome>
- Career One-Stop: Tools for exploring work and careers, job market, local resources, and basic tips on interviews, resume writing, etc.: <http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) *NOTE: each state has its own agency*

- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation:
<http://www.rehabnetwork.org/>
- Disability Resources: <http://www.disabilityresources.org/VOC-REHAB.html>

Supported Employment

- Association for People in Supported Employment (APSE): <http://www.apse.org/>
- Individualized Placement and Support (“IPS”) Model of Supported Employment (also known as Evidence-Based Supported Employment); SAMHSA Toolkit:
<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Supported-Employment-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA08-4365>
- Evidence-Based Supported Employment/IPS: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ips/>

Young Adults

- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability, NCWD for Youth – Great resources and manuals to support you <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/>

Social Security Benefits:

- <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/>
- Institute for Community Inclusion:
http://www.communityinclusion.org/topic.php?topic_id=15
<http://www.disabilityresources.org/PASS.html>
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN) - <http://askjan.org/>
<http://www.disabilityresources.org/ADA.html>
- Self-Employment – Start-Up USA, technical assistance center on Self-Employment
<http://www.start-up-usa.biz/>

Supported Education

<http://www.disabilityresources.org/HIGHERED.html>

7.15 Practice Assignment: Researching Vocational Services

Instructions: *This assignment should be completed before the next session. Bring enough information to share with each participant in the class.*

Assignment Details:

Research a vocational service that is available in your area.

Look into a program or service that is of interest to the people you work with, to you, and/or to your agency, that you don't know already well.

a. When researching the agency, do as many of the following as possible:

- Look at brochures and other materials
- Go to the organization's website
- Visit the program
- Talk to people who run the program
- Talk to people who work there
- Talk to people who participate in the services

b. Gather information about as many of the following as possible:

- What kind(s) of services are offered?
- How the services are provided (one-to-one meetings, groups, community support)?
- Who can participate?
- How long people can participate?
- Benefits to participating?
- Costs to participating?
- What people can expect to get out of the program in the end?
- What people need to do to participate successfully in the program?

Write up a ½– 1 page description to share with your colleagues

Use any format you desire: lists, bullets, or narrative, but make it easy to understand.

Bring enough copies for the entire class with you to the next training session, and be prepared to talk about it briefly (1-2 minutes).

Module 8

Researching Information

What to Expect from Module 8

The Big Question of Module 8

- How can I support people who are working to gather information and utilize resources for vocational recovery?

In this Module, we will look at ways to validate the information you might research with people as they work on their vocational recovery.

	Module 8 Table of Contents	Page
8.1	Scaffolding in the Community	188
8.2	Researching the Basics	189
8.3	Clarifying the Question	190
8.4	Tool: Clarifying the Question	191
8.5	Brainstorming Information Sources	192
8.6	Tool: Brainstorming Information Sources	193
8.7	Gathering the Information	194
8.8	Tool: Gathering the Information	195
8.9	Example and Exercise	196
8.10	Evaluating the Information	197

8.1 Scaffolding in the Community

Knowledge is Power...

There will be many times in our work that we will be asked information that we don't have the answer to, but we know the information is important. There also will be times when we will have a hunch that there may be more information that could help the person we are working with. There will be other times when simply knowing the BIG picture will be invaluable.

There are two strategies that are key to our success in supporting people get the information they need:

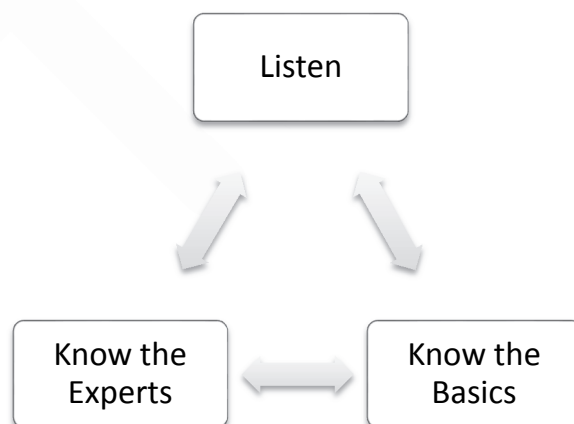
Partner with the Experts

There are some areas that we will never learn (or want to learn), such as the ins and outs of Social Security or the VR system. Luckily, there are many experts in the community who do great work. Creating relationships with experts in these different areas can be invaluable.

In some cases, experts will become the people that you can refer someone to, with confidence. In other cases, the experts may be people we can consult with to clarify an issue or ask a question.

Know the Basics

It's important that we know the basics, though, even if we have partnered with other experts. Knowing basic information about a variety of vocational recovery areas allows us to know what the questions are, and may alert us if we hear potential misinformation. We also don't want to overwhelm our experts by looking to them for the answer to every little question. So even with experts, we need to know how to research information and get the basics for ourselves.

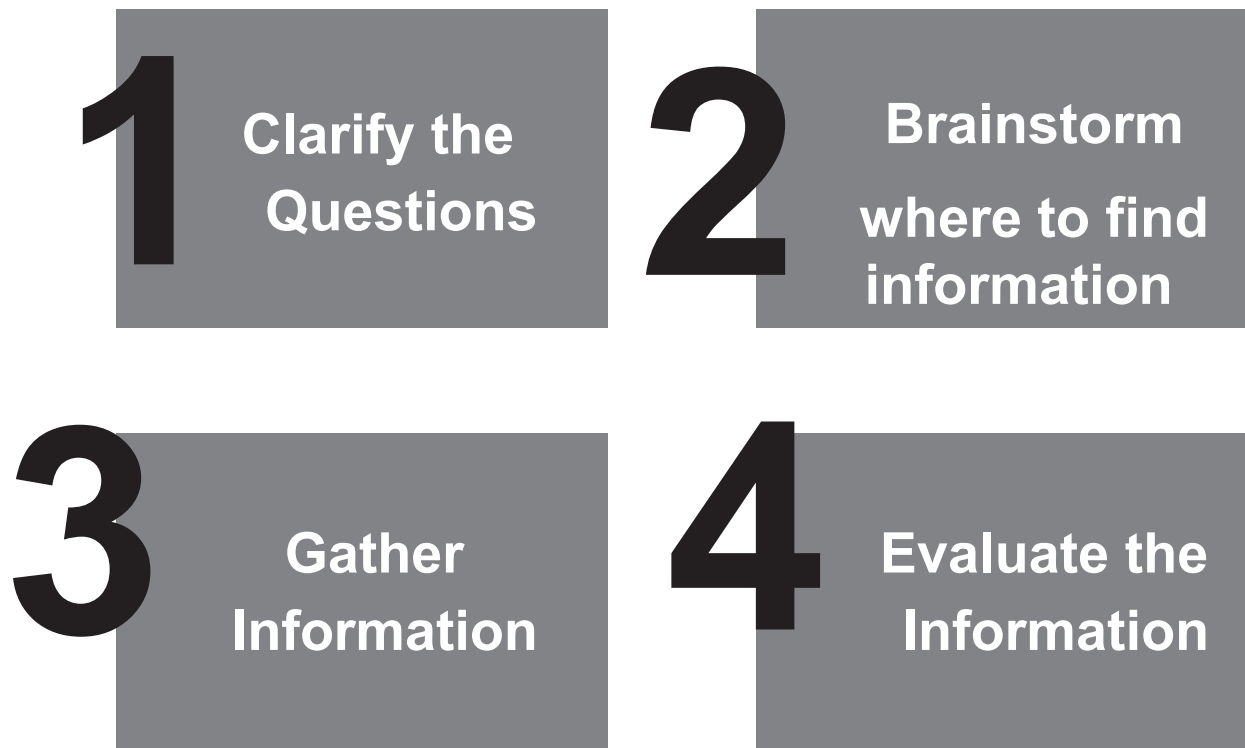


8.2 Researching the Basics

So how do we gain the knowledge of the basics that we need, or other information that's important?

There are four steps that we can use whenever we have to try to gather information.

Researching Information



The following pages will give us some information on what each of these means, what it could look like, and a Tool to use when working with people on researching information.

8.3 Clarifying the Question

1

Clarify the Questions

A Problem Clearly Stated
is a Problem Half Solved...

Stephen Covey

- Move from general to specific concrete questions
- Use open-ended questions and partnering skills

Questions come in all sizes and shapes, but when it comes to researching information, the clearer the question, the better you'll do. Spending a little time to spell out exactly what you want to know can save you lots of time.

Example 1: Mario has been working and is thinking about increasing his hours. He wants to know how much he can make and not jeopardize his benefits. After asking some questions, you learn that Mario is aware of his benefits, knows that he's in his Extended Period of Eligibility, and will be fine if he stays under the SGA figure. He just doesn't know what SGA is right now, so the question is, "What is the current SGA figure?"

Example 2: Sasha has been saying that she wants to try working again. She's worked off and on over the years, but with little success. She's afraid of working, though, because she believes she'll lose her Medicaid. At first, you think the question might be "how does work impact Medicaid?" But after talking more with Sasha, you learn that she gets Medicaid because she has SSI, so you realize that another important question is, "What are the work rules for someone on SSI?"

Keep in mind that you are working in partnership. Each one of you is learning what the questions are.

- Getting clear on the questions involves listening to the person with an ear for getting clear on the key question(s).
- You also may want to ask open-ended questions (see Module 2 on Partnering), to get more information from the person.
- Paraphrasing is key, as you and the other person come to an understanding.

Once you both feel clear on what the important questions are, decide together if you need general information, or the answer to a specific question.

8.5 Brainstorming Information Sources

2

Brainstorm where to get information

Brainstorm avenues to get information

- Internet
- Library
- People

Types of Sources

- “Knowledgeable” primary resources
- Experienced
- Written
- Observed

We are living in the age of information. The Internet gives us access to volumes of information at the touch of a button. This can be both a help and a hindrance to finding information, and it should be seen as only one of many ways of gathering information.

Different ways to get information include (but are not limited to):

<p>Knowledgeable Sources – Talking to people “in the know.” Knowledgeable sources are people with direct connections to what you’re looking for, like people who work somewhere (government agency, VR, Social Security)</p>
<p>Experienced Sources -- Talking to people who have experiential knowledge, e.g., someone who has used a service, worked with them in the past.</p>
<p>Written Sources -- Gathering brochures or other written materials, including books and Internet sites, on the topic.</p>
<p>Observation -- One of the best ways to get information about a service or setting is to visit and observe. Ask for a tour and/or an orientation!</p>

Brainstorming Information Sources involves three steps:

1. Come up with as many possibilities as you can: No idea is a bad idea!
2. Evaluate your list for the top three sources of information. Consider
 - a. Availability – is it local?
 - b. Accessibility – can the person access the information?
 - c. Feasibility – is it easy to get to?
 - d. Reasonable Cost – will it cost too much financially or personally?
3. Decide who will do what, and what scaffolds will support the effort.

8.6 Tool: Brainstorming Information Sources

Your peer specialist will not know everything, but rather work with you to understand what you need to know as you make choices, gain experience, and move forward in your vocational recovery.

To Brainstorm Information Sources:

1. Come up with as many possibilities as you can: No idea is a bad idea!
2. Decide if each option is accessible, available, feasible, and reasonable, and therefore, a best option to use to get information.

My Brainstormed Ideas	Is it available?	Is it nearby/ accessible?	Is it feasible/ doable?	Reasonable Cost?	Best Option?
Example: Go with my peer sp. to VR for orientation	I have to call	Yes	Yes, she'll help me	Yes, it's free	Yes

8.7 Gathering Information

Gathering information can be a quick or not-so-quick adventure, depending on what you're looking for. Some information is readily available, while other material will take some creativity to find.

Gathering information involves three steps:

1. Ask the question(s)
2. Support the person to get/ hear the information
3. Help record the details

3

Gather the Information

Gather enough leads to ensure you have good information

Prioritize and evaluate your leads:

- Availability-is it local?
- Accessibility-is it accessible to you and/or the person you're working with
- Feasibility – is it easy to get?
- Reasonable Cost – does it cost too much, financially or personally?

Scaffolding Gathering Information may involve many things. Here are some examples:



Peers may gather the first piece of information, to show that gathering the information is possible.



You may decide with the person that accompanying him or her to knowledgeable or experienced sources is useful.



Or, you may be the person they tell about it after the information is gathered.



You may also “sit with” the person as he or she gathers the information on the phone or by Internet.



Whatever the scaffold, it is important that you decide together whether, and how, the supports are offered.

Web searching tutorials: For more on how to use the Internet to search for info, see: http://college.cengage.com/english/resources/research_guide/1e/students/tutorials/part3.html

8.8 Tool: Gather Information

Instructions: Use this Tool to record information you have gathered. On the left, write in the questions you have for a service, employment or education option. On the right, record what you found out.

My Questions	Information I got
Example: How do I apply for Financial Aid, especially if I don't want to deal with student loans?	<i>I found out that I can apply through the FAFSA, and that I can let the school know what kinds of aid I am accepting. There also are scholarships out there --</i>

8.9 Example and Exercise

Instructions: Read the example of Sasha below. With a partner, complete the exercise.

Sasha wanted to know what would happen to her SSI if she goes to work. Gloria is her peer specialist, and she offered to help her brainstorm ways to get the information and to support her to get quality information about this topic. They acknowledge how scary it is to start the process, since so many people have misinformation. When they brainstorm options, they do not include in their top three options the idea of talking to friends who have had bad experiences with Social Security (right now). Sasha thought that she wasn't sure if those friends had had a chance to get good information with which to make decisions.

They decided to visit the benefits planner in Sasha's area. Sasha asked Gloria to go with her and to help her with taking notes, since she knows that it is sometimes hard for her to focus when talking about something so important.

Gloria supported Sasha to get her questions asked and paraphrased the information the planner gave, so they could 1) make sure they understood the information, 2) invite the benefits planner to give all the information possible, and 3) help Sasha hear the information from a variety of angles. Afterwards, they reviewed their notes, and added a quick search of the Red Book online to confirm that the information was correct.

With a partner: Consider the following:

1. What snippet of your Vocational Recovery Story would you consider sharing with Sasha in this scenario? Why?
2. Given the three steps of Gathering Information, what else could Gloria do to scaffold Sasha?

8.10 Evaluating the Information

This is the most important step. Much of the information that's on the Internet and other places may be inaccurate, and knowing whether it can be trusted is vital. The "5W's" are good guides for evaluating your research:

4

Evaluate the Information

Key Questions

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why

WHO

- Who wrote the pages and are they an expert?
- Is a biography of the author included?
- How can I find out more about the author?

WHAT

- What does the author say is the purpose of the site?
- What else might the author have in mind for the site?
- What makes the site easy to use?
- What information is included and does this information differ from other sites?

WHEN

- When was the site created – is it out of date?
- When was the site last updated?

WHERE

- Where does the information come from?
- Where can I look to find out more about the sponsor of the site?

WHY

- Why is this information useful for my purpose?
- Why should I use this information?
- Why is this page better than another?

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Module 9

Supporting People to Work While on Benefits

What to Expect in Module 9

Supporting People to Work while on Benefits

The Big Question of Module 9

- How can we support people to work when they receive Social Security Benefits?

In this Module, you can expect to learn about the differences between the two disability programs under the Social Security program, an introduction to some of the rules that determine what happens when a person with benefits goes to work, and how to support someone who is considering, going after, or keeping work to make informed decisions.

NOTE

This Module is designed to offer you some basic information about general SSA disability benefit program rules and resources. As a Peer Support Specialist trained in VPS, you are expected to “Know the Basics; Go to the Experts.” This training will not offer information or tools as needed for every individual situation. Check with Social Security Administration materials, such as the Red Book, for updated information, and use local resources.

	Module 9 Table of Contents	Page
9.1	A Review: Your Experiences with Disability Benefits and Work	200
9.2	Myths and Facts about Social Security Benefits	201
9.3	What’s the Difference between SSDI and SSI?	202
9.4	How Does Work Impact a Person’s Benefits?	203
9.5	SSDI Work Incentives: Timelines	204
9.6	SSDI Incentives to Keep Working: (IRWE’s)	205
9.7	SSDI Incentives to Keep Working: Subsidies	206
9.8	SSI Work Incentives: Exclusions	207
9.9	SSI: Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS)	208
9.10	Expedited Reinstatement (EXR) SSI and SSDI	209
9.11	Medical Benefits and Work Incentives	210
9.12	Now that you Know the Basics, Go to the Experts	211
9.13	Resources and Experts	212

9.1 A Review: Your Experience with Disability Benefits and Work

R **Real Play:** Find a partner. Decide who will speak about his or her own experiences, and who will listen and partner.

If you are the one who is speaking, be yourself. Do not play a role. You will consider the questions below with the support of your partner.

If you are the one who is listening, be yourself. Do not play a role. Orient to this exercise, use your partnering skills to demonstrate understanding of the person's situation, and share any snippets of your own vocational recovery story that are relevant to what your partner needs.

Together, consider these questions:

1. What is your experience with benefits and work?
2. What made dealing with benefits and work easier?
3. What made working while on benefits harder?
4. What resources did you use to support you?
5. What did you wish you had known?

At the conclusion of this exercise:

Listener: Review your partnering skills. How did you demonstrate understanding? Did you decide to share a snippet of your story? Why or why not?

Both: Be ready to share with the class your learnings from this exercise.

9.2 Myths and Facts about Social Security Benefits

➤ *Myth: If I go to work, I'll lose my check right away.*

Fact: Both SSI and SSDI have “work incentives” that give people the opportunity to test out work while continuing to receive cash and/or health benefits. These Work Incentive Programs have been put into place to encourage people to work. Work impacts SSI and SSDI in different ways, but in both programs, the work incentives allow people to start working without losing their check right away.

➤ *Myth: If I work, I'll lose my health insurance.*

Fact: The Social Security Work Incentives also protect people from losing their health insurance when they return to work. The rules cover ongoing Medicare and Medicaid, often for many years despite increased income from work.

➤ *Myth: Social Security is out to get me – there doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason to their decisions!*

Fact: When people begin to work, benefits usually change in specific ways according to the Work Incentive regulations. When people understand the SSI and SSDI program basics, changes can be anticipated so that decisions by Social Security feel less random. Sometimes, Social Security makes mistakes, but knowing the options and having supports that understand Social Security can help resolve these issues.

Questions to Ponder:

- Which of these Facts are the most familiar to you? Which are the least familiar?
- What are you most looking forward to learning about in this Module?

9.3 What’s the Difference between SSI and SSDI?

Questions to Ponder:

- What do you know about some of the differences between the two major disability benefit programs under the Social Security Administration?
- Is there a difference between them in terms of how Social Security deals with working?

Similarities and Differences

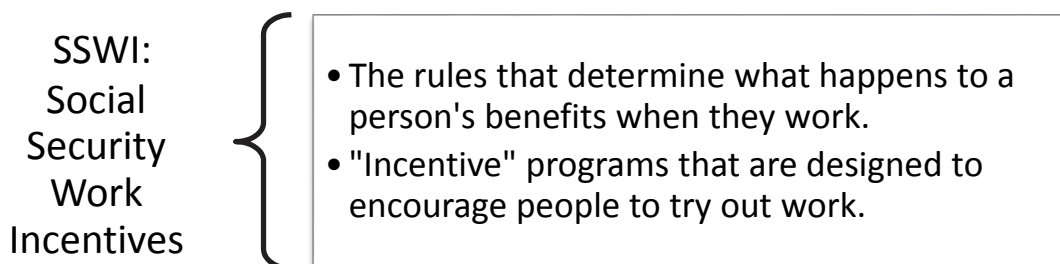
	SSDI	SSI
Name of Program	Social Security Disability Insurance	Supplemental Security Income
Type of Program	<u>Insurance Program</u> : If paid in through FICA, and person becomes disabled and unable to work, can get insurance benefit.	<u>Security Income</u> : Financial Need-based program/Public Assistance for folks with little work history and little money or assets.
Disability Eligibility	Social Security’s Definition – Inability to do any significant work due to documented physical or mental impairment, which can be expected to last for at least 12 months or result in death.	
Work History Eligibility	Significant work history required, plus payments into FICA through work.	Little to no work history needed.
Asset Eligibility	Doesn’t matter how much money or assets one has, no impact on eligibility, as insurance program.	Person has set asset limits that vary depending on situation (i.e. \$2000/individual in 2015).
Effects of Earnings	Either receive full check or no check, depending on timelines and other factors.	Checks decrease as work income increases.
Health Care Associated	Generally Medicare after 24 months of eligibility.	Generally Medicaid.

9.4 How Does Work Impact a Person's Benefits?

Questions to Ponder:

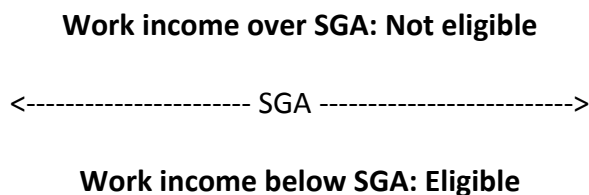
- What do you know already about how work impacts a person's benefits?
- Does it make a difference what type of benefit the person has?
- How have you worked to support others to deal with benefits in the past?

What we will learn in this section of the Module is about some of the differences between how work affects different Social Security Disability Benefit programs.



Key Concept SGA: Substantial Gainful Activity

What is it for? Eligibility for benefits often is determined by looking at work income: above or below SGA?



What is it now? In 2015, the SGA level is \$1,090 for people with disabilities other than blindness. The figure changes each year in accordance with federal cost of living increases. Find annual SGA levels on the Social Security website, www.ssa.gov.

9.5 SSDI Work Incentives: Timelines

Questions to Ponder:

- How much do you know about how SSA makes their decisions about whether a person receives or does not receive an SSDI check?
- What do you know already about the timelines of SSDI?

Trial Work Period (TWP)

What is it? People can try out work without impact on cash or medical benefits.

How do you know you're in it? SSA considers TWP to be any 9 months (not necessarily in a row) within a 5-year period in which earnings are over the Trial Work Level. The Trial Work Level changes year to year; in 2015 was \$780.00.

Why is it important? During the TWP, get a full check and medical benefits.

Extended Period of Eligibility (EPE)

What is it? The EPE is an extended safety net, with which one can 1) get a check when work income is low, and 2) have immediate access to benefits if work income decreases or stops.

How do you know you're in it? The EPE starts, whether working or not, immediately after the 9th Trial Work Month. The EPE is a 3-year period, consecutive, calendar years.

Why is it important? A person can receive the full SSDI check and medical benefits during months in which before-tax, countable earnings are under SGA. (Countable earnings will be discussed in "Key Rules.") If a person is working above SGA and not receiving cash benefits, medical benefits continue. A person does not lose eligibility due to work during the EPE.

Question:

With a partner, consider: How could SSDI Timelines information be helpful to your work in VPS?

What experiences do you have that might be included in snippets of your Vocational Recovery Story?

9.6 SSDI Incentives to Keep Working: Countable Income and Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE's)

Countable Income

Key Concept: “Countable” earnings is what SSA *counts* after making certain allowable deductions. The Countable Income is compared to SGA.

Quick Tip:

*Countable earnings are computed on paper only to determine if someone is performing SGA.
The person's actual earnings are not affected.*

Impairment-Related Work Expenses

What is it? Costs you pay for *out-of-pocket* that are related to your disability, without which you could not work. Some examples include:

- payments or co-payments for medications or medical appointments
- special transportation to work
- support-related portion of halfway house rent, personal care attendants, etc.

Why do it? IRWE's can mitigate the effects of income on eligibility for benefits. The amount of IRWE's can be deducted from your income to produce your “countable income.”

How does it work? The monthly total of these expenses is deducted, dollar for dollar, from your gross income to calculate your countable income.

Example: John is in his Extended Period of Eligibility and has work income of \$1200 in January, which is over the 2015 SGA limit. However, his IRWE's of therapy and medication copays for the month amount to \$140, leaving his *countable* income at \$1,060. This is below SGA, and John is eligible for his check in January 2015.

John, in 2015	
\$1200	Income is over SGA of
\$1090	
- 140	IRWE's for January
\$1060	Income now is under SGA

9.7 SSDI Incentives to Keep Working: Subsidies

Question to Ponder:

- What is your experience with subsidies?

What is a Subsidy? Social Security does not consider your full income when determining if you meet SGA if you have subsidies.

Why do it? Reporting a subsidy may help reduce your countable income when SSA determines whether you meet SGA.

There are **TWO** kinds of subsidies (as of 2015):

Job Coach Subsidy: When a person receives job coaching, a monthly deduction is calculated by multiplying the number of hours he or she meets with the job coach by the PERSON's hourly wage. This total is then subtracted from a person's gross earnings.

Job Coach Subsidy: Anne makes \$10/hr, and receives 10 hours of job coaching per month from Gary, 4 hours onsite at the job and four hours at his office.

\$10	Anne's salary
<u>X 8</u>	hours of job coaching/mo.
\$80	Job Coach Subsidy deduction

Employer Subsidy: Deduct the value of any support or adjustment the employer makes because of the disability, including doing less than peers in a similar position or changing the structure, hours, or way in which the job is done. Many "reasonable accommodations" may fall under employer subsidy. The employer must describe the subsidy for SSA, and can indicate the value of the subsidy.

Employer Subsidy: Due to his psychiatric disability, Sam is allowed to go to the doctor during work hours, has flexibility in his schedule and gets extra supervision.

His employer wrote about this in a letter: Approximately 10% of Sam's work time is impacted by these accommodations.

Sam earns \$1150, but after deducting 10% of his earnings (\$115), his *countable* earnings are \$1035. This is *under* SGA in 2015.

9.8 SSI Work Incentives: Exclusions

Questions to Ponder:

- What do you remember about SSI, as different from SSDI?
- What do you know about the concerns of people who receive SSI?

NOTE: In SSI, there are no timelines to consider. SSI is computed monthly. If earnings change monthly, the amount of the SSI check also changes monthly.

Key Concept: People on SSI who work part-time generally have more money to live on than those who have SSI alone. It's usually worth it to work!

Income Exclusions (1619 a): SSA does not count a certain amount of income when calculating how much the SSI check should be for that month. SSA does not count:

- General Income Exclusion: The first \$20 of income (earned or otherwise)
- Earned Income Exclusion: The next \$65 of *work* earnings.
- Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE's): The total amount of costs you pay out-of-pocket for, that are related to your disability, and without which you could not work.
- ½ Remainder Exclusion: After discounting the above exclusions, SSA divides the person's remaining income by 2 (in half) to determine the portion of work income that will actually count as income when calculating the SSI check.

Example: Phil has SSI only (no SSDI), and is starting a part-time job on Monday.

Phil's Gross Work Income/mo:	\$700.00
General Deduction	- 20.00
Earnings Deduction	- 65.00
IRWE's (copays, group home)	- 100.00
Subtotal	\$515.00
½ Remainder exclusion: Subtotal/2	\$257.50 Countable

Question: Decide with a partner and get ready to discuss as a class: Is it worth it for Phil to work? Why or why not?

Income

Subtract PASS expenses (if relevant)

Impact on Income:

If the person's SSI check is usually	\$733.00
Subtract Countable Income	-257.50
New SSI:	\$478.50

Total Income: Add new SSI + Work 478.00 + \$700 = **\$1178**

9.9 SSI Work Incentives: Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

What is a PASS? PASS is said to be the most under-utilized Work Incentive of all. A PASS is a written agreement between the person and SSA to use earnings and/or other income (i.e., SSDI benefits) to purchase items and services needed for work in an entry level job, such as:

- training, equipment, uniforms, job coaching, licenses, certifications

Who is eligible? The person must have a form of income besides SSI to help fund the PASS. PASS plans allow the person to save up for or pay for PASS expenses, and SSA in return will maintain or increase eligibility for SSI so there is some money to live on while on PASS.

Why do it? PASS can help people to fund what is needed to start a job, gain credentials for a job, or even start a small business. PASS can, for some people, make it financially feasible to get into a job or field through which it is possible to become “self-supporting.”

How is it done? PASS is a written contract that starts with a written application, much like a small grant application. It is best if done on SSA Form 545, a 16-page application form.

Applicants generally must have:

- A work goal, especially if it is backed by vocational rehabilitation.
- A plan with steps that will help achieve that goal.
- A financial plan detailing how the person will pay for any items, services or training needed to achieve the steps and/or goal.

Example: Is it worth it for Juana to have a PASS? Why or why not?

<p>Juana has a goal to become a medical assistant. She needs training, uniforms, books, and transportation to school. She plans to save \$300/month for two years. Juana has SSDI of \$350, does not work right now, and gets an SSI check of \$403. Right now she lives on \$753, and if she puts aside \$300/mo, without a PASS, will have \$453 to live on.</p>	<p>Juana’s SSDI: \$350 General deduction - 20 PASS/mo <u>- 300</u> Countable Income \$ 30</p>	<p>SSI Federal: \$733 - Countable: <u>- 30</u> New SSI: \$703</p>
	<p>Subtract the countable income from the Federal Rate for SSI: \$733 in 2015.</p>	<p>***** SSDI: \$350 New SSI: \$703 -PASS: <u>\$300</u> \$\$ to live on: \$753</p>

9.10 Expedited Reinstatement (EXR) SSI and SSDI

Classroom Discussion Questions:

- What do you know already about expedited reinstatement?
- If you tried to return to benefits in the past, what was your experience?
- How have you worked to support others to facilitate a return-to-benefits in the past?

What is it? Expedited reinstatement is an additional safety net created by the SSA work incentives that allows people to easily return to benefits without having to file a whole new application.

If the person needs to return to using cash benefits (SSI or SSDI) because work income stops or drops below SGA within five years of the end of their benefits due to work, the person can request an expedited reinstatement.

Once a person has requested reinstatement, Social Security restarts the benefit check(s) and provides up to six months of benefits while it is determined if the person continues to meet requirements. If they decide that the person isn't eligible, the provisional benefits do *not* have to be repaid.

Who is eligible? Any SSI or SSDI beneficiary who lost their cash benefits due to working.

TIP:

Remember to stay peer in this process.

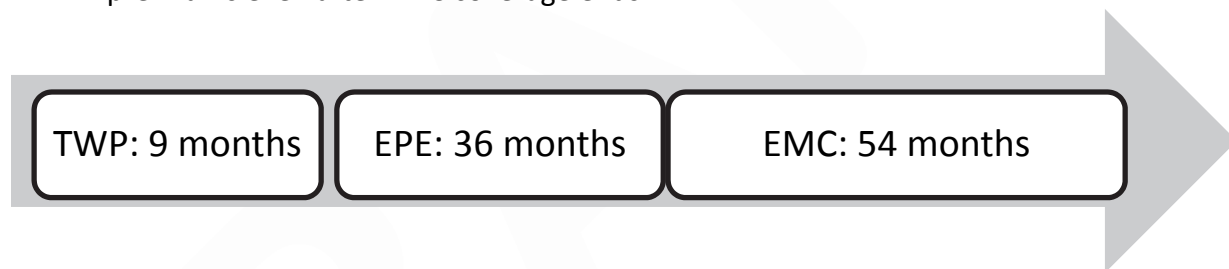
You do not need to have all the answers or know all the information.

Know the Basics, and Ask the Experts!

9.11 Medical Benefits and Work Incentives

Extended Medicare Coverage (EMC)

What is it? Medicare coverage continues in the usual way for at least seven years beyond the completion of the Trial Work Period. If, at the end of the EPE and EMC periods (below), the person is still not working or working below SGA, Medicare coverage continues on in the same manner until the person's income rises above SGA. The person may be entitled to maintain Medicare coverage with the payment of full premiums even after EMC coverage ends.



Continued Medicaid Eligibility (1619b)

What is it? Eligibility for Medicaid is automatic as long as someone gets at least \$1.00 in SSI, even if the person is working. If the cash benefit stops as a result of high earnings, the person is still eligible for continued coverage if earnings remain under the “threshold amount” for your state. Some states may provide a waiver for a Medicaid buy-in program to those who qualify.

The state threshold amounts vary widely from state to state and are listed under the 1619b section of the SSA website, <http://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/1619b.htm>

Who is eligible? The person must have been eligible for SSI benefits for at least one month, and still meet the disability and non-disability eligibility requirements for SSI, need Medicaid benefits to work, and not have enough income to replace SSI, Medicaid, and any attendant care services. The person must contact SSA, not Medicaid, for eligibility.

Question: Discuss in a small group:

What does all this mean to the people you work with?

How does knowing some of the basics support you in your VPS work?

9.12 Now that you Know the Basics, Go to the Experts

Your Role:

- You are not expected, after studying this VPS Module, to know everything there is to know about the Social Security Work Incentives, how to deal effectively with the Social Security Administration, or to fix every (or any) problem.
- You are invited to continue to be a mutual peer supporter, to share your own experience to support the discovery of inner wisdom, and to have enough basic information to both have hope for the person who is considering how to proceed and to ask good questions.

How can we scaffold?

Find the experts in your area	Talk to VR
	Look up Work Incentives Planning and Assistance in your area
	Contact the person's Ticket to Work provider
Help create access to resources	Support the person to make phone calls
	Go with the person to appointments if desired
	Learn about the Work Incentives together
Work with the person to follow through	Help track and work on gathering documents and reporting to SSA
	Check in with the person over time to support the person to stay on top of reporting to SSA
What would you add?	

9.13 Resources and Experts

Questions to Ponder:

- Who can people go to in your own organization for assistance with benefits?
- What other organizations in the area offer benefits assistance?
- What experiences have you had with the local Social Security Office?

National Resources:

Social Security Administration

www.ssa.gov

<https://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/generalinfo.htm>

Social Security “Red Book” on Work Incentives:

<http://ssa.gov/redbook/>

Disability Benefits 101: Information and examples of SSI and SSDI. (Some info is AZ-specific):

<https://az.db101.org/programs.htm>

Ticket to Work:

<http://www.chooseworkttw.net/about/work-incentives/index.html>

Work Incentive Planning and Assistance: find information about local experts:

<http://www.ssa.gov/work/WIPA.html>

Local Resources: (Add resources here as you find them or as discussed in class):



Module 10

**Using the Scaffolding:
How do we keep this going?**

What to Expect in Module 10

Using the Scaffolding: How do we keep this going?

The Big Question of Module 10

- How do we use VPS concepts, skills and tools to support the vocational aspirations of the people we work with?

In this Module, we will review the knowledge, skills and tools we have learned throughout this Vocational Peer Support training, and explore how they fit into the work we do, what we expect to start doing, stop doing and continue doing as a result of this training, and make a plan for utilizing VPS in our work.

We also will see a Questions Map that can help to orient us when we are working with someone but are unsure of “where” in the VPS framework the person is working from. The Questions Map can, like all of the VPS materials, be shared with the person.

	Module 10 Table of Contents	Page
10.1	What Skill Areas do I think I will use the most?	215
10.2	Exercise: Start-Stop-Continue	216
10.3	Your Plan: What’s Next?	217
10.4	Questions Map: Where should we start?	218

10.1 What Skill Areas do I think I will use the most?

Small group exercise: *Get together with 3-4 people you either work with, or could collaborate with, in your work. In view of the following topic areas, what will you take home with you? Which areas are the best fit for your work?*

Skill Area	How does this fit into my work?
Supporting Vocational Recovery	
Partnering: Orienting, Listening, Sharing My Voc. Recovery Story	
Building Motivational Foundations	
Supporting Choosing Work	
Scaffolding the “Getting” Process	
Keeping Jobs and School	
Coordinating with Employment Services	
Researching Resources in the Community	
Other:	

10.2 Exercise: Start-Stop-Continue

Get together with a different group of 3-4 people, and talk together about what you will **Start** doing, **Stop** doing, and **Continue** doing as a Peer Specialist, now with VPS training, skills, and tools. Dig deep!

I plan to Start ...	
I plan to Stop ...	
I plan to Continue ...	

10.3 Your Plan: What's Next?

Think for a few minutes about where you want to take your new skills.

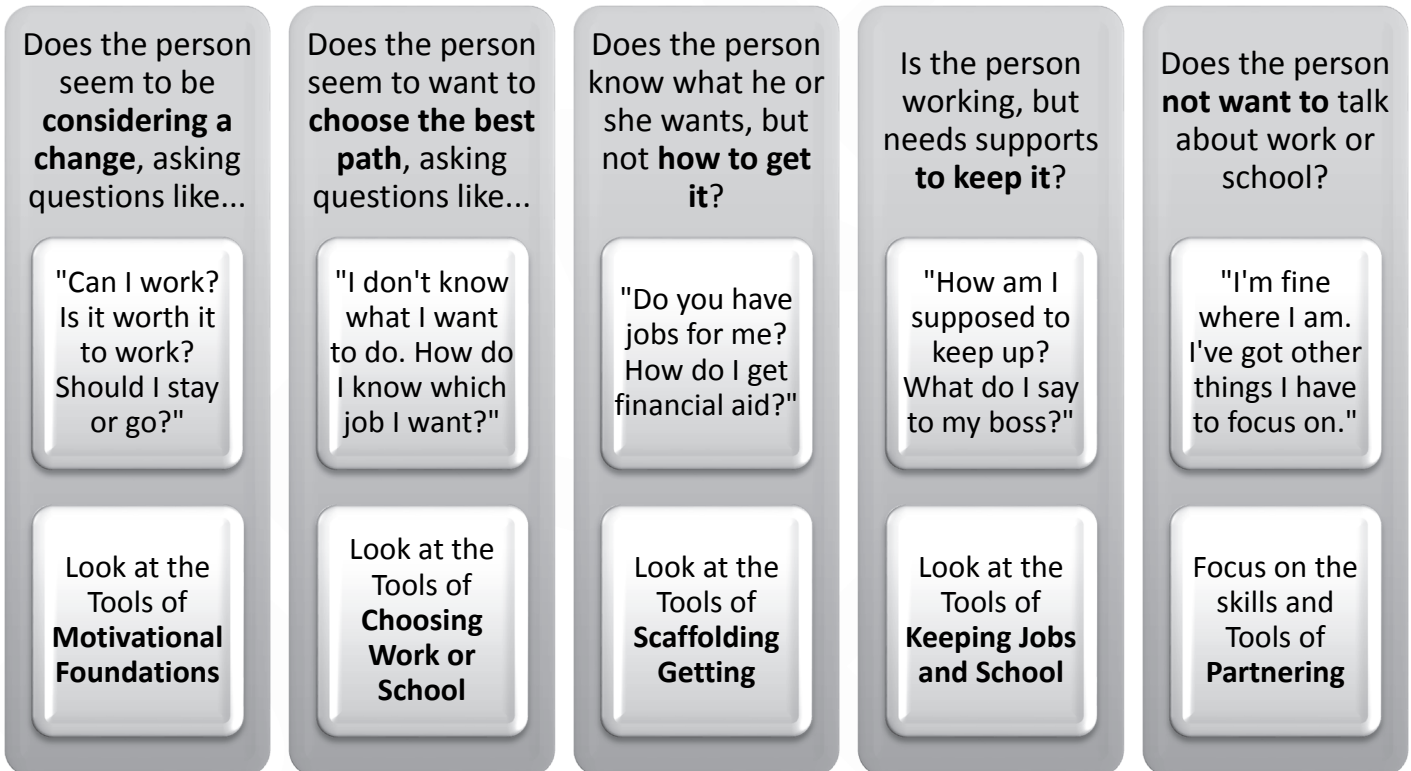
1. How do you want to support the vocational recovery of others?

2. What scaffolds or supports will you need to do this?

3. What additional skills or information do you think you will need in order to support vocational recovery?

10.4 QUESTIONS MAP: Where should we start in VPS?

***Instructions:** Use this Map when you are not sure what part of VPS would be helpful to the person. Listen for the essential questions the person is asking, and then use the Map below to help decide where in the process they may be. Make sure to check it out with the person and involve the person in deciding on which process, and which tools, to use.*



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Debbie Nicolellis, Marianne Farkas,
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With gratitude,

Debbie Nicolellis, Marianne Farkas, Lyn Legere

Table of Contents	Page
Introduction to the Implementation Guide	5
Concepts in Vocational Peer Support	6
Training in Vocational Peer Support	7
Skills and Tools of the VPS Training Curriculum	8
FOR ADMINISTRATORS	
Introduction: Do we have what we need?	10
What could a job description look like for a VPS-trained peer?	12
Organizational Self-Assessment: Are we ready to offer a Training in Vocational Peer Support?	14
Assessing Your Organization’s Readiness for Training in VPS Skills and Tools	15
Training Assessment Key	16
Understanding your Readiness for Training Assessment Score	21
Developing Readiness for Training	22
Program Characteristics that Reflect the Effective Use of Vocational Peer Support	25
Understanding Your Score	29
FOR SUPERVISORS	
Introduction to VPS Supervision	31
Operationalizing VPS Supervision	32
VPS Practice Checklist for Supervision: Introduction and Modules 1-9	33
Tips for Supervisors of VPS-trained staff	43
References	44

Introduction to the Implementation Guide

What is the Implementation Guide? The Implementation Guide is a supplement to the:

1. Vocational Peer Support Trainee Handbook and Toolkit and
2. Vocational Peer Support Trainer's Guide

Who is the Implementation Guide for? Administrators, program managers, supervisors, and peer support personnel may find the content of this Implementation Guide useful in their work to support the vocational aspirations of people in recovery.

Why use the Implementation Guide? The Implementation Guide includes information and tools designed to support the use of Vocational Peer Support (VPS) in agencies and organizations. By informing the culture of organizations, supporting, and evaluating the effective use of Vocational Peer Support, including the elements of a relevant job description and other materials, the Implementation Guide is intended to provide advice for the incorporation of Vocational Peer Support into peer services currently delivered in your organization. The Implementation Guide does not supplant VPS training, rather it supplements the efforts of administrators and supervisors as they consider operationalizing ways to support individuals with vocational aspirations through the use of peer support.

When should the Implementation Guide be used?

- **Before VPS training:** The Implementation Guide presents a method of helping organizations assess their readiness for a training program in Vocational Peer Support by providing examples of program characteristics and resources that make it possible for VPS training to be delivered effectively.
- **During VPS training:** The Implementation Guide components, such as the Practice Checklists, may be useful for supervisors to support trainees as they learn and practice new skills within their roles at the organization, and as the program is developing its capacity to deliver VPS supports. In addition, VPS-trained peer staff may use these elements to enhance their own practice using VPS within their agency roles.
- **After VPS training:** Once staff are trained, an organization that implements certain program characteristics, will be more likely to deliver VPS-informed supports effectively. Continuing to develop a culture that both supports vocational recovery and is prepared to support VPS-trained staff is necessary, but not sufficient. The Implementation Guide offers guidance and support to organizations as they continue to use the skills, tools, and information of Vocational Peer Support by providing examples of additional program characteristics critical to implementation of VPS, along with a method of evaluating the extent to which the organization has such characteristics in place.

Concepts in Vocational Peer Support

What is VPS? Vocational Peer Support is an approach to providing employment and educational supports through peer-to-peer mutual support. VPS is designed for trained and/or certified peer specialists who want to support the vocational aspirations of the people they serve.

VPS is not meant to duplicate or take the place of other employment support approaches, such as vocational rehabilitation or supported employment; rather, it was designed to be a complementary approach that utilizes peer supports as the primary supporter of vocational changes. Vocational Peer Support builds on core peer support skills and knowledge by adding VPS concepts, skills, and tools.

What is the approach? Vocational Peer Support uses the Choose-Get-Keep approach to employment support, which uses the Psychiatric Rehabilitation approach (Anthony, Cohen, Farkas & Gagne, 2002; Anthony & Farkas, 2011) as a basic framework. Applied to the domain of work, Choose-Get-Keep (Danley & Anthony, 1987) upended the traditional approach of *assessment, placement, and follow-along* and created a person-directed approach in which the person chooses the vocational direction he or she wants to move in, the person gets the desired position, and the person keeps desired jobs or other vocational roles with supports as needed and wanted.

The original Psychiatric Rehabilitation approach included a component to support people to determine for themselves whether or not they were prepared and willing to make the change implied by choosing a goal (Farkas et al, 2000; Farkas & Nicolellis 2003). Based on this original Psychiatric Rehabilitation component, VPS added the concept of “Considering” work to the vocational process of Choose-Get-Keep and called the techniques used to support someone considering work “Motivational Foundations.” Considering whether or not to Choose, Get, or Keep work allows people who are unsure about work to explore factors, such as their need for a change, their beliefs about working, information about themselves, their options, and whether or not they have enough supports for making a change now.

What is Vocational Recovery? Vocational Recovery in VPS is defined as “*an individualized journey of claiming or reclaiming one’s right and capacity to choose, get, and keep vocational paths.*” This definition affirms the basic *right* of people with psychiatric disabilities to both have and go after their vocational dreams. Research over the past few decades clearly has indicated that psychiatric diagnoses are not good predictors of people’s *capacity* to work, or even the types of work that people can do (Rogers & MacDonald Wilson, 2011).

Training in Vocational Peer Support

Introduction. VPS training may assist programs that are considering adding VPS to the repertoire in order to increase participation of service participants in employment and education.

Structure. Vocational Peer Support training is a 5-6 day class through which participants are exposed and have experience with concepts, skills, and tools of VPS. The core training is five days, with an optional sixth day of Social Security Work Incentives overview. Each day is composed of six hours of actual training time, with an additional 1.5 hours of breaks throughout the day.

VPS training involves community-based assignments that allow for in-vivo practice of new skills between training sessions. The assignments allow trainees to explore community employment support resources as well as opportunities to explore VPS concepts, tools, and skills with people served in their own workplaces.

Trainers. VPS trainers have expertise in peer support, psychiatric rehabilitation, recovery, and employment support. Lived experience of recovery and peer support is an important characteristic of those who offer the training. It is expected that at least one half of the training team is made up of people with lived experience of recovery and peer support.

VPS Trainees. VPS training works best for Peer Support Specialists, i.e. people with lived experience of recovery from the impact of mental illnesses and/or the public mental health system/addiction services:

- Who have full training and/or certification in the information, skills, and ethics of providing peer support
- Who are currently providing peer support

It should be noted, however, that experience shows that VPS training is best utilized in organizations that also train supervisors and other supporters of peer staff in VPS.

Training Style. VPS trainers engage trainees in learning in a variety of ways, by engaging active participation of the class in dynamic class discussions, showing examples, demonstrating skill performance, and leading active exercises to teach people how to perform key VPS skills. Trainers work to attend to a variety of learning styles throughout the training to accommodate auditory, visual, kinetic, and other learners.

Skills and Tools of the VPS Training Curriculum

Vocational Peer Support adds competencies for peer support specialists so that they are able to support people who want to Consider, Choose, Get, and Keep jobs, training programs, and careers. Throughout the training, participants learn how to “scaffold” people’s efforts to move forward in their vocational lives through a variety of ways.

The following list describes the major VPS Training Modules (Nicolellis & Legere, 2015):

- **Partnering** offers enhanced orienting, listening, and sharing skills that peer specialists need to work effectively with people who are interested in exploring their vocational lives.
- **Building Motivational Foundations** enhances skills that Certified Peer Specialists need in order to support people who are considering a change in their vocational lives to explore and build the foundations for a meaningful vocational life.
- **Supporting Choice in Work and School** allows peer specialists to learn how to support people to identify their work preferences, research potential job options, and make choices about a best match.
- **Scaffolding Getting into Jobs and School** gives peer specialists new ways to think about supporting people as they go after the jobs of their choice.
- **Keeping Work and School** teaches peer specialists additional competencies needed to support the new or potential worker in identifying strengths and areas that need to be built up to increase the likelihood of success and satisfaction on the job (or in training).
- **Coordinating with Employment Services Providers** gives peer specialists the information, skills, and tools they need to support access to and utilization of vocational services.
- **Supporting Informed Decisions about Benefits** provides basic information peer specialists may need about Social Security benefits and work to enhance the CPS’s ability to support people to utilize benefit specialists and programs in their communities.

For Administrators

Introduction: Do we have what we need?

Do we have the staff we need to deliver Vocational Peer Support?

An administrator interested in introducing Vocational Peer Support into an agency can do so best by having or hiring the right staff to deliver VPS. The best candidates for VPS are people who are trained already and/or certified in peer support and hold a set of values about: the importance of work as a pathway to recovery; the value of work as an individual's personal vision for a meaningful life; the critical quality of partnership in the recovery journey; the importance of supporting people's right to make choices about their own life; and the fundamental value of holding hope for people being served, even if they themselves have lost their hope (Farkas, Gagne, Anthony, Chamberlin, 2005; Farkas 2007).

Do we have the job function(s) appropriate for a person who has been trained in VPS?

Before entertaining the thought of hiring individuals with VPS skills and/or providing training for existing staff in VPS, it is important for administrators to have a vision of where they might use individuals with such a skill set.

Several roles/job titles are common to organizations that wish to provide employment support to individuals with psychiatric disabilities. These titles can create confusion about the types of job roles or functions an individual with VPS skills should have. Some agencies hire employment staff in the role of "*Employment Specialist*." Employment Specialists deliver services within a variety of models, including the Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) model of Supported Employment developed by Becker & Drake (2003), or other models, such as the Transitional Employment Program model (Beard, Propst & Malamud, 1982; Fountain House, NY, 1999). *Job Coaches* and *Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors* also can be included in this category. Job Coaches support people to increase skills and supports while working, to enhance the capacity for success and satisfaction at work. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors generally have been trained to work with people with any disability to get back to work.

The main function of the above roles is to deliver employment or rehabilitation services. It is possible that some of the people filling those roles also may have experienced recovery from psychiatric disability and/or addictions themselves. However, the primary focus of the role they fill is the provision of rehabilitation services, not shared peer experiences.

Vocational Peer Support, rather than being a role or function within an agency, is a set of competencies added to those of a person offering peer support. The person who best offers peer support is a *trained/certified peer support specialist*, who is skilled already in delivering peer support. Peer support is a professional role with its own set of principles and ethics, and

involves offering *mutual* support, using a variety of skills with perhaps the most central one being that of sharing of personal recovery stories to inspire hope. VPS adds expertise to this mutually supportive role by including the conceptual knowledge, skills, and tools important to supporting individuals who wish to work or school.

There are various ways in which peers are involved currently in vocational services in the United States. According to Schwenk, Brusilovskiy & Salzer (2009), many peers who provide some level of vocational supports carry titles, such as *Peer Specialists*, *Certified Peer Specialists*, *Peer Mentors*, etc. In other words, many trained and Certified Peer Specialists are supporting vocational recovery now, however; some are doing so without specialized training, skills, or tools. Other peer roles offer a specialization in supporting employment. While not exhaustive, the following are some examples of these current roles:

- *Employment Peer Mentors*, (e.g., Promise Resource Network, Charlotte, NC), who support individuals who use the services of an IPS team,
- *Peer-to-Peer Vocational Support*, (e.g., Department of Mental Health and Addiction Service, CT)
- *Vocational Peer Specialist* (e.g., Chrysalis Center, WI)
- *Peer Employment Support*, (e.g., New York Association of Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services; Community Support Programs of New Jersey)

VPS offers a set of skills, conceptual knowledge, and tools that a trained peer support specialist can utilize to support vocational recovery within a variety of potential organizational roles:

- For example, VPS could be provided by peers on an Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACT). A peer specialist with VPS skills could provide hope for vocational recovery to an individual being served by the Employment Specialist, thereby strengthening the ability of the ACT team to provide effective vocational services.
- Similarly, general outreach and engagement teams might provide VPS, including those who serve individuals experiencing homelessness. A peer specialist, who has had similar experiences and who believes in the possibility of vocational recovery for people using outreach services, may bolster engagement and hope.
- In peer-run organizations, some peer specialists may offer general peer support, while others may wish to specialize in VPS to offer hope for a meaningful vocational life amongst other recovery goals.
- Psychosocial Clubhouses, which focus on helping people to prepare for work amongst other activities, could include peer specialists with additional expertise in VPS to bolster employment-oriented efforts.

- Many behavioral health organizations are beginning to increase their focus on the employment domain as a pathway to recovery. Such organizations could include roles for VPS-trained peer specialists in their employment or educational programs.
- Outpatient clinics and inpatient hospitals are hiring peer specialists in greater numbers. Peer specialists with VPS skills, who work in these environments, can inspire hope for a meaningful, productive life even as the person seeks treatment for immediate needs.

What could a job description look like for a VPS-trained peer?

The role of peer staff using VPS is based on his or her level of training and competency in Vocational Peer Support concepts and skills, rather than on academic degrees. Lived experience of vocational recovery is valued, experience supporting vocational recovery is desirable, and skill in providing VPS supports is essential.

Many organizations seek guidance about what the role of staff utilizing VPS as a major component of their job might look like. A job description for peer support specialists, who will be using VPS in their work, might take many forms.

The following are recommendations for important elements to consider in such a job description but are not intended to be a comprehensive list, nor are they expected to encompass all elements of the peer specialist role.

Education:

- Training (required) and Certification (preferred) as a Certified Peer Support Specialist
- Completion of training in VPS (desirable)

Other Qualifications/Characteristics relevant to VPS:

- Demonstrated capacity to demonstrate empathy with the experience of another person
- Lived experience of recovery from mental health and/or substance abuse challenges
- Lived experience of vocational recovery

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Support the vocational recovery of people served in the program
- Model vocational recovery in everyday activities
- Share vocational recovery stories, as relevant to inspire hope for vocational recovery
- Provide Vocational Peer Support, including, but not limited to:

- Discuss vocational recovery and a meaningful vocational life
 - Develop and sustain partnerships that engage the individual using services in a mutually supportive relationship that can inspire hope for vocational recovery
 - Facilitate exploration of motivational factors related to vocational change
 - Help to identify vocational preferences, strengths, and criteria
 - Work with people to research vocational options
 - Support vocational decision-making and choosing of goals in work and school
 - Help to amplify the voice and choice of the person using VPS
 - Ensure that employment, career, and education goals are reflected in the person's service planning
 - Scaffold efforts to get into jobs and training programs of interest to the person
 - Learn with the person about disability benefits, if relevant, as well as legal rights
 - Discuss and learn about potential pros and cons of disclosure of a disability and reasonable accommodations
 - Facilitate exploration and discovery of expectations in the work environment
 - Support the learning of new skills and the use of those skills, as needed in the workplace or school setting
 - Work with the person to strengthen vocational and educational supports
 - Support the use of vocational rehabilitation and/or employment and/or educational support services, as desired by the person served
 - Serve as "translator," as needed, between person and providers/services/systems
 - Utilize Vocational Peer Support tools, discussion prompts, examples, and exercises to facilitate vocational exploration, decision-making, and growth
- Support the growth of Vocational Peer Support in the organization by modeling vocational recovery and educating peers and other professionals about VPS.
 - Work as a member of an interdisciplinary team to serve as a professional with a specific set of competencies, knowledge base, and code of ethics.
 - Serve as an agent of change within the organization, by challenging the organization to hold out hope for the vocational recovery of every person served.
 - Ensure that documentation reflects work on Vocational Peer Support, including considering, choosing, getting, and keeping work and school roles and environments.

Organizational Self-Assessment: Are we ready to offer a Training in Vocational Peer Support?

How do we know that we are ready?

The factors below are indicators that may increase or decrease the likelihood that the training will be successful. Readiness for training in VPS depends on a limited number of factors:

- The right trainees, i.e., the presence of skilled peer support providers with an interest in employment and education
- Agency beliefs, at a minimum, a culture that believes in vocational recovery and acknowledges the importance of work and school to the recovery of agency service participants
- Logistical support for training, i.e., training room, available staff time, resources
- Follow up, i.e., room in trainees' schedules to participate in supervision with trainers, supportive supervisors

How can we assess readiness for VPS Training?

The Assessment on the pages following will help you as an organization to decide whether or not you are ready to begin a training program in VPS.

The Assessment provides an opportunity for you to reflect on your organization at this time and decide whether specific ingredients are present, partially present, or absent. The presence of the following ingredients make it more likely that training in VPS will be effective.

A key to each item and the meaning of each available score (i.e., +1, 0, or -1) follows the assessment chart.

Table 1 provides you with a way to understand what the scores mean, in terms of your organization's readiness to participate in VPS training.

Assessing Your Organization's Readiness for Training in VPS Skills and Tools

Instructions: Using the key on the following pages, rate your organization's readiness for training in VPS according to the following 10 items. Items may be rated on a "+1" to "-1" scale.

Factors	Items	Item exists (Score = +1)	Partially Exists (Score = 0)	Does Not Exist (Score = -1)
RIGHT TRAINEES	1. Skilled Peer Support Providers			
	2. Peers interested in work & school			
FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF	3. Culture believes in vocational recovery			
	4. Culture acknowledges importance of work			
	5. Culture acknowledges importance of school			
LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR TRAINING	6. Place and resources for in-person training			
	7. Time to participate in training			
LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR FOLLOW UP PRACTICE	8. Structure to support practice			
	9. Supervisors trained to supervise VPS			
	10. Key personnel knowledgeable about VPS			
	Column Totals	(Total "+1")		(Total "-1")
	(Total "+ scores and "- scores)		TOTAL SCORE	

Training Assessment Key

Item 1. Skilled Peer Support Providers. Skilled peer support staff must be available to offer VPS. We recommend that at least six peer supporters be in place for training. Small organizations may partner with other agencies in the same region to create a group of trainees, if they do not have sufficient peer support staff to make up a full class.

Score as follows the extent to which you have a sufficient pool of appropriate candidates for VPS training:

Score “1”: **Item exists.** Six or more skilled peer support staff are in place.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** The organization has fewer than six peer support staff, but can work with other agencies to create a full class of trainees.

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** The organization has fewer than six peer support staff and cannot collaborate with others to create a class of six or more.

Item 2. Peers are Interested in Work and School. In order to train peer staff in VPS, it is important that peer staff: 1) feel some dissatisfaction with the knowledge and skill they currently have and 2) are interested in supporting the work and school aspirations of the people they serve.

Score as follows the extent to which there is interest and enthusiasm, among the peer staff you are considering for training, in learning how to support people to engage in work and school:

Score “1”: **Item exists.** A majority of the peer support staff indicate that they are interested and enthusiastic; no peer supporters are opposed to getting trained.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** Approximately half of the peer support staff indicate that they are interested and enthusiastic; some peer supporters are opposed to it.

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Almost no peer support staff indicate that they are interested and enthusiastic.

Item 3. Culture believes in vocational recovery. Research details the possibility for individuals, who have experienced the impact of serious mental illnesses, to recover and have meaningful lives (Harding & Zahniser, 1995; Farkas 2007). Organizations, in which the prevailing culture accepts the notion that people also can develop the skills and supports necessary to have meaningful employment and that people can and do find meaningful work, are more likely to be congruent with the values and concepts of VPS.

Score as follows the extent to which the organization communicates the possibility of vocational recovery for the individuals it serves:

Score “1”: **Item exists.** Organizational leadership/senior management indicates this belief through written policy or procedures.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** Organizational leadership/senior management indicates support of this belief through verbal statements (e.g., team meetings, community meetings, supervision, etc.).

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Organizational leadership/senior management either make no statements or make negative statements about the possibilities for vocational recovery.

Item 4. Culture acknowledges the importance of work. A belief that employment is important to recovery is key to learning about and offering supports through VPS. When negative messages about work (e.g., possibility of stress, induced relapse, potential loss of benefits, worries about the person’s lack of resilience) are transmitted to the people served by the staff and the organization; people receiving services are less likely to consider employment as part of their recovery, and VPS training becomes irrelevant to the staff.

Score as follows the extent to which the organization, through its leadership and senior management, acknowledge that work is an important domain for work of the organization:

Score “1”: **Item exists.** Organizational leadership/senior management indicates a belief in work through written policy and/or procedures.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** Organizational leadership/senior management indicates a belief in the importance of work through verbal statements only (e.g. in team and/or community meetings, supervision).

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Organizational leadership/senior management either make no statements or make negative statements about the importance of work.

Item 5. Culture acknowledges importance of school. Organizations that are open to working with educational aspirations are more likely to be open to supporting training in VPS than those that are not. Organizations that are willing to support participants, who are considering work or school, are generally the most interested in VPS training.

Score as follows the extent to which the organization communicates the importance of school or educational aspirations through its mission and mandate.

Score “1”: **Item exists.** Organizational leadership/senior management indicates a belief in education through written policy or procedures.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** Organizational leadership/senior management indicates a belief in the importance of school through verbal statements (e.g., team meetings, community meetings, supervision, etc.).

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Organizational leadership/senior management either make no statements or make negative statements about the importance of educational aspirations.

Item 6. Place and resources for in-person training. Having a dedicated space in which to provide training increases focus and attention and makes the process of training more effective. Five to six days of in-person training is the recommended amount of time required to deliver training to increase the ability of peer support staff to offer VPS. A room that is available for the duration of the training and has the capacity for: participants to hear clearly and without distraction; comfortable seating, with chairs that can be moved around in different configurations (e.g., to do role plays or small group exercises); showing PowerPoint slides and using demonstration aids (e.g., flipchart, white board); and writing surfaces (e.g., desks, tables) will support a successful training environment.

Score as follows the organization’s capacity to provide needed resources for in-person training:

Score “1”: **Item exists.** The organization has a dedicated training room, as described, for the duration of the training period with all resources needed.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** The organization has access to rooms; resources must be brought in.

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Access to training rooms is limited, training space must be shared/resources are limited.

Item 7. Time to participate in training. VPS requires participants to remain in a classroom for five to six days, over a period of time (i.e., weeks, months). Within this time, participants engage in discussions, learn new concepts, and practice new skills. Outside of the training room, participants are asked to practice new VPS skills and utilize VPS tools with the individuals they support. Finally, participants are invited to engage in skill support sessions with trainers, by telephone, webinar, or other methods of communication, in order to develop expertise.

VPS training is most effective when participants are released from regular duties during the classroom and skill support sessions, without telephone calls, other meetings, and agency business, while they focus on the development of new skills. Training sessions are designed in collaboration with the agency so that training intervals (i.e., in two-day blocks or in half-day sessions) best fit the agency’s schedule as much as possible.

Score as follows the organization’s ability to release participants during training, skill supervision, and other planned VPS training activities.

Score “1”: **Item exists.** The organization can release participants completely for training.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** The organization expects participants to take calls or attend to agency business as needed during training time.

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Participant duties remain as usual throughout the training, and the participant is expected to be in the classroom as much as possible, but only when not needed for agency business.

Item 8. Structure to support practice. VPS is a competency development training program. Skills are developed by practicing them with people participating in peer support, and then reviewing the use of new skills and tools with supervisors and trainers.

Initial training practical assignments include researching, visiting, and/or talking with vocational service providers; detailing elements of one’s own vocational recovery story; and using new tools with people who are interested in exploring and working toward vocational aspirations. Organizations effective in getting expected staff skill and knowledge outcomes plan ahead to support trainees in this work. Organizations may need to consider compensation for peer support staff for extra work time (e.g., time off, extra pay), depending on the agreements about learning opportunities in the workplace. In addition, organizations may need to consider how VPS activities will be paid for within existing service components and billing requirements, or create new categories for billing to occur, if billing is a consideration for the organization. Organizations with peer support personnel may have such billing categories in place already.

Score as follows the extent to which the organization has a plan in place to support trainee practice with individuals served by the agency:

Score “1”: **Item exists.** The organization has a plan or has standard methods in place to support skill practice that can accommodate VPS training.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** Agency is willing to develop a plan to support skill practice.

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist,** Agency expects participants to absorb extra time and effort on their own and/or expects them to role play with people outside the service.

Item 9: Supervisors are trained to supervise VPS. VPS adds specialized knowledge to the foundational training of peer supporters. Organizations hiring peer specialists may or may not have supervisors, who are either themselves peer support workers or who are specifically trained to supervise peers. Supervisory training in VPS enhances the basic VPS training because

these supervisors can then provide appropriate feedback to strengthen practices assigned by VPS trainers.

Score as follows the extent to which the agency has VPS peer supervision available.

Score “1”: **Item exists.** The organization has identified supervisors willing and able to participate in VPS training/VPS supervisor training.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** The organization has supervisors willing to participate in training, but supervisors are not peer staff.

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Organization does not have the capacity for this kind of supervision and has no plans to obtain it in the near future.

Item 10. Key personnel knowledgeable about VPS. Experience has shown that agencies and organizations in which the key personnel are well versed in VPS are more effective at supporting peers trained in VPS. Non-peer key personnel only may need to understand the basic principles, concepts, and processes, without being skilled themselves in its delivery. Organizations who are willing to train, not only their peer support staff, but also administrators, managers, trainers, and other key personnel are more effective at supporting the use of VPS. Trained administrators and managers can operationalize the VPS initiative through procedural updates and organizational mandates. Trainers can support skill growth by adding to and updating new skills as staff work with the material.

Score as below the extent to which the organization has identified key staff to participate in the training to support VPS delivery.

Score “1”: **Item exists.** Organization has key staff who are willing and able to participate in VPS training.

Score “0”: **Item partially exists.** Organization would like to involve key staff, but there are insufficient numbers of staff who are willing.

Score “-1”: **Item does not exist.** Organizations have no key staff available willing to learn VPS at this time.

Understanding your Readiness for Training Assessment Score

How do I understand the Total Score we got?

To get the Total Score, add up the “+1” column and the “-1” column. The remaining score is your agency’s Total Score relative to your organization’s Training Readiness.

The Table below provides an interpretation of the final score.

Table 1: Understanding VPS Training Readiness

Scores: 7-10 Organization is ready to begin training.

Scores: 4 – 6 Organization may be ready, but needs some additional work or assistance to be able to deliver the most effective training.

Scores: 0 - 3 Organization is not ready to begin VPS training at this time.

Based on your self-assessment, you may decide to begin training in VPS at this time.

Alternately, you may decide to take more time to prepare for training based on the factors that may not be strong at this moment. You may decide to build up your organization’s culture, build partnerships with other agencies who employ peer specialists, or develop other factors that may be in the way of significant readiness. Or, you may decide that VPS training is not something the agency is ready to invest in at this time.

If you decide that you are sufficiently interested to move ahead, but need more preparation time, you can do some of the preparation yourself and/or decide to obtain consultation to help you to increase your readiness to train for, and offer, VPS.

The following pages offer some recommendations for strategies to support your organization to develop your readiness for training and implementation of VPS. You also may contact the authors for additional consultation and/or technical assistance.

Developing Readiness for Training

If your organization assesses its readiness and finds that it is less ready than is necessary to support VPS training, you have several options to consider. You may choose to go ahead and conduct training, regardless of your readiness, knowing that you may have to deal with problems either in completing the training or using the training effectively in the organizations. You may choose not to go ahead with VPS training and perhaps reconsider it at a later time. Lastly, you may decide to invest in making changes that will make it more likely that the training will be effective in your organization. The following strategies are designed to help support the option of making changes to support participation in training.

What if we don't have the right trainees to begin VPS training?

If you do not have six or more peer support workers on staff, it may be helpful for your agency to foster collaborations with other organizations who hire peer support workers and who may also be interested in developing their employment services. With more collaboration or just more discussion about VPS, you may then be able to identify six or more peers who could be potential VPS trainees.

What if our potential trainees are not interested in supporting work and/or school?

If you do have skilled peer support workers, but do not have enough staff who are interested in supporting work or school, you may want to provide your staff with resources about the relative importance of these areas to individuals' recovery journey. Resources, such as articles, video interviews of people in recovery and their perspective on work or school, or websites (for example, *Employment and Vocational Recovery Repository*: cpr.bu.edu/resources). Contacting a local peer-run organization or advocacy organization can be very helpful in addressing this issue. They may suggest coming out to do a presentation for your staff or recommend other helpful resources.

You also may decide that strengthening the organizational culture in regard to the importance of work/school is a key ingredient to raising your "readiness score." Organizations exist which have experience in providing consultation in improving the "work orientation" of agencies serving individuals with mental illnesses, including serious mental illnesses¹. Some of these

¹ Some examples include

- Boston University, Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation website: cpr.bu.edu/develop
- Transformation Center, Boston, MA, web site: transformation-center.org
- Center for Community Inclusion website: www.communityinclusion.org

organizations, like Boston University’s Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, specifically provide online and in-person technical assistance on improving organizational support for vocational recovery.

What if we don’t have the fundamental beliefs needed to begin VPS training?

If you are an administrator, who believes that vocational recovery is possible and that the domains of work and school are critical to the recovery journey of the individuals you serve, but find that you do not have much support for these beliefs in your organization, we suggest some of the same strategies as the ones suggested to strengthen peer support staff interest. Providing resources (e.g., articles, videos, website links) found in the *Employment and Vocational Recovery Repository* or other websites can be useful in sparking interest in your senior management staff. Other strategies, such as the following have been used to improve agency willingness to focus on work and school:

- Having organization-wide discussion groups on the importance of work and school to recovery.
- Bringing in speakers who are in recovery themselves and who can speak to the impact work and school has had on their own recovery.
- Discussing work and school in agency general meetings, team reviews, management team meetings.
- Including a section in your intake procedures focused on work and school aspirations;
- Discussing these areas in agency program evaluations.

What if we don’t have the logistical support needed for VPS training?

Often the idea of setting aside five days for training can seem daunting to an organization busy serving people with pressing needs. VPS training is flexible and can be delivered in different configurations (e.g., one full week, several sessions of two days each, half-day sessions, etc.) spaced over varying amounts of time to best support the organization. Organizations without their own training resources/rooms commonly obtain space in community settings (e.g., religious organizations, libraries). Collaboration with other organizations interested in VPS training also can augment your organization’s training resources.

What if we don’t have logistical support for the follow up?

Practicing VPS skills: Practicing and using the new knowledge and skills being developed in the sessions are key to actually developing expertise in VPS. Thinking through the practicalities of having staff practice something new with the people they support as well as having to go into

the community to interview those outside your organization about various aspects of work and school, go a long way to making the training effective.

Sometimes including key personnel in a work group focused on supporting the follow up to VPS training can be helpful to solve structural problems that may come up when thinking out such a plan. Having key personnel included, who are knowledgeable about VPS, will ensure that their solutions actually do support the training (see item 10, Assessment Chart, *Training Readiness*). Holding a brief introductory seminar on VPS before deciding to go ahead with the training program can help key personnel understand both the training process and the content.

Billing: Billing concerns are critical to consider. Since *vocational* peer support is a type of peer support itself, VPS services often can be paid for in the same way as general peer support is paid for in the organization. Organizations experiencing difficulties in paying for peer support can obtain technical assistance and consultation to identify strategies others have used. Websites, such as that of the International Association of Peer Supporters (inaops.org) can be a useful starting place to find this information.

Supervision: Organizations, who have hired peer support staff, may or may not have supervisors on staff who are themselves peer supporters or who are trained to supervise peer support staff specifically. Such organizations might consider contracting with agencies who do have such supervisors on staff or private individuals trained to supervise peer support staff to provide VPS supervision.

Training Key Personnel: Key personnel may wonder why they are being asked to participate in some form of training about VPS. Senior staff, program managers, in-house trainers are better able to help peer support staff follow through on both their training practice and in their use of the VPS skills after the training if they understand what VPS is and is not and know the concepts, principles, and processes.

Program Characteristics That Reflect the Effective Use of Vocational Peer Support

Once training has been completed, peer support staff will want to use their new skills and knowledge. Organizations that develop certain program characteristics are more likely to be able to incorporate VPS skill delivery as part of their ongoing peer support service, as well as more likely to integrate or coordinate efforts made by peer support staff using VPS with other employment services or initiatives in the organization.

Vocational Peer Support does not and cannot live in a vacuum. It is grounded in a recovery orientation and is effective when offered within programs that work from a belief that everyone has the potential to move forward with their lives. Both programmatic structures and philosophical underpinnings, as outlined below, can create the environment needed to support vocational recovery and the use of VPS skills.

Program Characteristics

Various programmatic characteristics may help your organization to foster vocational recovery through the use of Vocational Peer Support. These include infrastructure components, such as: Mission, Values, Policies, Evaluation, Leadership, Program Activities, Procedures, Documentation, Setting, Staffing, Hiring, Training, Supervision, and Documentation (adapted from Anthony, Cohen, Farkas, & Gagne, 2002).

Unless your organization focuses completely on peer support and the provision of vocational recovery supports, only some of the components or programs within your organization will be working to facilitate vocational recovery and, therefore, use VPS. In the process of implementing VPS practices, it is important to have some benchmarks to use in order to know if you are “on the right track.”

The Assessment of Program Characteristics is designed to help you think about the extent to which your organization currently includes Vocational Peer Support to support people to go to work and school. We suggest that you assess your agency’s progress on these items periodically in order to ensure that you are delivering services congruent with VPS. Some agencies assess themselves every six months after the training and as they begin implementation. Others do it once a year or less regularly. The more frequently you reflect on your progress along these characteristics, the more likely you are to become or remain consistent with VPS.

Rate the extent to which each characteristic is “very true,” “true,” or “not true” of your organization, using a score of 1, 2, or 3. An explanation of how to interpret your score is provided at the bottom of the Assessment chart.

Assessing Program Characteristics that Reflect the Effective Use of Vocational Peer Support

The chart on the next couple of pages assesses the extent to which your organization has incorporated VPS by identifying programmatic characteristics that foster vocational recovery and the use of VPS skills in your organization.

On the chart, rate your organization on the characteristics below using the following scale:

To what degree are the following statements true for your organization?
3: Very true 2: Somewhat true 1: Not true

Program Dimension	Description	Level of your Organization 3 – 2 - 1
Program Mission	The program has a mission that includes the belief that everyone also has the potential for vocational recovery.	
Organizational Values	Recovery values, such as respect for the whole person, partnership, choice, self-determination, and hope are the basis for the organization or agency.	
Program Values	VPS values, such as choice and hope for vocational recovery, also are reflected throughout the program in which VPS is being delivered. For example, there is an expectation (and not just the outside possibility) of vocational recovery for all service users.	
Policies	Program policies reflect the values of recovery and VPS. For example, a policy may state that service recipients have the right to choose whom they want to support them; or that service participants will be supported in considering, choosing, getting, and keeping the vocational roles they prefer.	

Assessing Program Characteristics that Reflect the Effective Use of Vocational Peer Support

Program Dimension	Description	Level of your Organization 3 – 2 – 1
Organization Evaluation	Organizational outcomes are person-driven and regularly include recovery outcomes (e.g. an increase in involvement in home, health, purpose, community).	
Program Evaluation	The program evaluates outcomes of vocational recovery (e.g., enrollment in educational program, completed application for state VR services, applying for a preferred job, keeping a past probationary period).	
Agency Leadership	The leadership of the organization reinforces the vision of recovery for all.	
Program Leadership	The leadership of the program reinforces the vision of vocational recovery for all across program components.	
Program Activities	Program activities reflect the culture and preferences of service participants.	
	Program activities are designed to support service participants as they consider, choose, get, and keep vocational roles and environments.	
	Program activities are designed to reflect the mutually supportive relationships of peer supporters who use VPS.	
Procedures	Program procedures require staff to honor the preferences of people who work with peer specialists who use VPS, and avoid the pitfall of assigning participants to services they have not chosen.	
	Program procedures provide steps for service participants to leave peer support services that use VPS as a legitimate choice.	
	Program procedures reflect VPS values and activities, such as choice about vocational goals, having a voice in creating vocational plans.	
	Program procedures detail for staff how to structure activities related to considering, choosing, getting, and keeping work and/or school.	
Documentation	Notes and other records that document VPS-related activities are part of the official agency overall record keeping system.	
	Record keeping includes mandated sections on considering, choosing, getting, keeping work or school, not only clinical or behavioral interventions.	

Program Dimension	Description	Level of your Organization 3 – 2 – 1
Setting	<p>The physical layout and décor of the agency reflect the demographics of the service participants served by peer supporters using VPS (i.e., culture, age, gender). Magazines, posters, decorations, etc. reflect the main message of overall and vocational recovery.</p>	
Staffing	<p>People in recovery are in the leadership ranks and are represented in all categories of agency positions.</p>	
Hiring	<p>Staff are hired based on either certification as peer support worker or willingness to get certification in peer support, and their willingness to be trained in VPS. Staff, who will be trained in and use VPS, are hired with input of persons in recovery/service recipients. Peer staff are hired based on experience and potential or current capacity for offering VPS.</p>	
Training	<p>Agency staff are trained at <i>exposure-experience</i> level in recovery-oriented service delivery and its interventions, and at least <i>exposure</i>-level training in VPS. Peer staff receive training in knowledge, skills, and tools of VPS: <i>expertise</i>-level training for direct supporters, <i>experience</i>-level for supervisors, and <i>exposure</i>-level for leadership.</p>	
Supervision	<p>Supervision includes coaching and support of peer staff, with attention to the skills and knowledge needed to provide VPS.</p>	
	<p>When possible, supervision is provided by more experienced peer support staff, who also are trained in VPS.</p>	
RATING YOUR AGENCY	ADD YOUR SCORES:	
	TOTAL POSSIBLE:	72

Understanding Your Score

Table 2. Assessing Program Characteristics: Understanding Your Score

Score	Implementation Interpretation
47 or more	High Implementation Agency infrastructure is currently very consistent with VPS practices.
25-46	Moderate Implementation Agency Infrastructure is currently moderately consistent with VPS practices.
24 or less	Low Implementation Agency infrastructure is currently not very consistent with VPS practices.

Strengthening Program Characteristics' Consistency with VPS Practices: What if we score "moderate" to "low" in program characteristics consistent with VPS principles and practice?

If your organization wants to improve its delivery of VPS, it can move forward on its own or with consultation and technical assistance. If you choose to move ahead on your own, you may find many of the same strategies outlined in the section on "Developing Readiness for Training" to be useful, especially around strengthening beliefs and the involvement of key personnel, including supervisors. You also may wish to develop a "Task Force" of participants who have completed VPS, their supervisors, and key personnel who have been exposed to the concepts and principles of the practice. The Task Force can be helpful especially in working through program characteristics having to do with program activities, procedures, documentation, setting, supervision practices, and hiring practices that will support a peer specialist's ability to use VPS as part of his or her repertoire on a regular basis.

There are many organizations that provide consultation about improving peer support services in general within mental health organizations. Some already have been mentioned in this Implementation Guide. You may find other local organizations with the expertise to provide consultation on improving the functioning of your peer support services. When considering consultation services, it is important to be confident that those providing technical assistance have peers on their team, are trained in peer support, as well as being experts in organizational change and development. As of this writing, Boston University's Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, the developers of VPS, provide the most knowledgeable consultation specifically about delivering VPS.

For Supervisors

Introduction to VPS Supervision

Who Should Supervise VPS-trained Staff?

Peer Support is a specialized, professional field that carries its own ethical standards, practices, and values. It is important that supervisors have their own training and experience in peer support practice, particularly as a peer support specialist, and that they have demonstrated knowledge of:

- The values and value of Peer Support
- Recovery from the impact of a psychiatric diagnosis
- Role/s of Peer Supporters
- Peer Support competencies
- Peer Support ethics

In addition, it is essential that supervisors of VPS-trained staff have training in Vocational Peer Support, so that they are skilled in, or at least knowledgeable about, the following:

- The approach and major concepts of VPS
- Vocational Recovery
- The values of VPS
- The framework of VPS
- VPS skills and competencies
- The tools that are available to support VPS practice

What is VPS Supervision?

Supervision of the VPS-trained peer support specialist is as an ongoing, collaborative, and mutually-supportive process. Both supervisor and supervisee can benefit from each other's experience, and both have expertise to bring to the table.

When should VPS Supervision and support be offered?

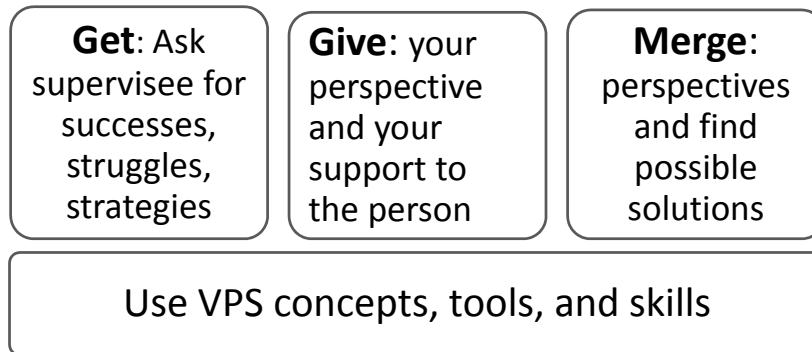
VPS supervision is appropriate in many circumstances and can be offered on a regular basis or when there is a problem to solve or an accomplishment to recognize. Consider o VPS supervision:

- In regularly scheduled appointments
- When specific questions arise
- Before, during, and after observing a peer support session
- When requested
- When issues with the employee arise
- When exemplary work is being done

Operationalizing VPS Supervision

To support the Peer Support specialist in the most concrete way, observe a peer support interaction and be available to facilitate feedback. *Facilitating* feedback is different from *providing* feedback, in that the supervisee is very much involved in the supervision.

We suggest using the following as an effective framework for providing supervision, which facilitates feedback: “Get-Give-Merge.”



To operationalize this framework, consider the following:

1. Get the input of VPS-trained staff in defining their roles and responsibilities.
2. ²Remind VPS-trained staff of their training and VPS tools that are available to them to support vocational recovery.
3. Keep the peer role *peer*, i.e., avoid confusing clinical and peer roles, such as asking VPS-trained peer specialists to provide medication management or case management.
4. Offer and reinforce the message that the provision of VPS is valued and appreciated.
5. Encourage mutual peer support of VPS-trained staff.
6. Support ongoing development of VPS and general Peer Support skills.

² Items 2-6 adapted from peersforprogress.org/take-action/manage-peer-support#recruitment

VPS Practice Checklist for Supervision: Introduction

What is the VPS Practice Checklist for? The purpose of the VPS Practice Checklist is to enhance the success of the VPS-trained peer in supporting vocational recovery. Supervisors may want to use this list to support staff capacity and provision of VPS supports, as well as a supervisory framework. Peer support staff using VPS in their work also may want to use this checklist to support and inform their own practice.

What is in the Practice Checklist? Each major VPS Module has its own Practice Checklist. Each Practice Checklist contains *statements* and *ratings* by which to evaluate practice.

- The *statements* describe an essential skill required to do the work of VPS for that Module.
- The *ratings* offer an opportunity to evaluate the use of the corresponding essential skill. The 5-point Scale goes from “all the time” to “never,” indicating how often the skill is utilized.

How can the Practice Checklist be used?

- **Before using VPS:** To prepare for VPS work by reviewing essential skills before meeting with the person.
- **During the use of VPS:** To share the Checklist(s) with the person served. VPS is a shared process, not one in which the paid supporter holds and directs the process.
- **After using VPS:** To review one's own work in providing Vocational Peer Support. Checklists are written from the perspective of the peer supporter.
- **In supervision:** To review the use of VPS skills in peer work, to support the peer worker to provide the best possible support of vocational aspirations, and for use in evaluation.

What else is important to know about using the Checklist?

- VPS skills are designed to *add* to the skills and knowledge that peer support specialists already have, not replace or displace general peer support competencies.
- Not all skills listed are intended to be used in every circumstance or with every person.
- VPS is person-directed and interacts with the person's starting point, needs, direction, and preferences.

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 1: Overviewing Vocational Peer Support and Vocational Recovery

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>When working with the person on Overviewing VPS and Vocational Recovery, I ...</i>	Rating
... oriented the person to the meaning of Vocational Peer Support.	
... discussed other experiences they have had with peer support and employment support.	
... identified the meaning of Vocational Recovery with the person, including his or her own definition of it.	
... described what a “scaffold” is and explored the person’s experience with scaffolding.	
... explored what kinds of scaffolds would be useful to the person.	
... shared snippets of my own Vocational Recovery Story as was useful to the person to foster understanding of VPS and hope for vocational recovery.	
... worked with the person to identify the benefits of VPS.	
... explored with the person his or her vision of vocational recovery.	
<p>If you’ve overviewed Vocational Recovery and Vocational Peer Support well, the person should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe his or her understanding of vocational recovery, • Describe his or her understanding of Vocational Peer Support, and whether he or she wants to use it, • Discuss with you desired scaffolds that might be useful as you move into the rest of VPS. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 2: Partnering for Vocational Recovery

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>When Partnering to foster a relationship within VPS work, I ...</i>	Rating
... reduced distractions that could get in the way of our work.	
... oriented the person to the what, the why, and the how of partnering, including each of our roles and again as we worked on VPS activities in order to facilitate full participation and understanding.	
... asked open-ended questions to invite the person’s perspective, sandwiching them between other responses as applicable.	
... paraphrased what the person said, felt, and/or experienced without adding judgment or opinion.	
... used silence to give the person room to express him/herself.	
... thought through the benefits and drawbacks of sharing my own vocational recovery story, including whether sharing it was primarily for the person’s benefit.	
... shared snippets of my vocational recovery story to inspire hope for a meaningful vocational life.	
<p>When I partner well with the person, the person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me that he or she feels heard and/or understood, • Describe how to participate in a part of the VPS process, • Give his or her perspective, experience, and opinions without fear of judgment. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 3: Building Motivational Foundations

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>When exploring and building Motivational Foundations for work and school, I...</i>	Rating
... described Motivational Foundations: Need, Beliefs, Information, Support.	
... showed and discussed examples of Building Motivational Foundations.	
... worked with the person to explore a Need for a vocational change.	
... discussed Beliefs about vocational change and vocational recovery.	
... reviewed Information he or she has and/or needs about the world of work and self in relation to work/school.	
... explored the level and types of Supports needed to make vocational change.	
... decided whether using a tool or having a discussion was the best way to explore each Foundation.	
... planned with the person ways to Build Motivational Foundations through gathering more information, resources, support, or experiences over time.	
... shared a snippet of my Vocational Recovery Story to inspire hope for Considering work, school, or other vocational activities and roles.	
<p>When I Build Motivational Foundations well, the other person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify at least two of the four Foundations, • Describe his or her own Need, Beliefs, level of Information, and/or Support for a vocational change, • Discuss his or her plan for Building Motivational Foundations if needed. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 4: Choosing: Supporting Choice in Work and School

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>“When supporting Choice in work and school options, I...”</i>	Rating
... oriented to the definition, benefits, and process of Choosing a meaningful vocational goal, and reviewed relevant examples.	
... explored past work, volunteer, military, and school experiences in order to identify preferences vocational decision-making.	
... listed with the person questions that will help the person to gather needed information about job, career, or school/training options.	
... worked with the person to brainstorm possible job or educational settings to research further, based on the person’s interests and initial criteria.	
... co-created a plan for gathering and tracking information about interesting options.	
... offered scaffolds as the person gathered and tracked information about vocational options.	
... supported the person to decide on a direction to head in, given all of the information we gathered.	
... shared snippets of my Vocational Recovery Story in order to inspire hope for Choosing a career, job, or training program.	
<p>When I scaffold the person to Choose a direction for work or school, the person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what Choosing is vs. Considering, Getting or Keeping jobs or school, • Describe his or her own preferences based on past experiences, • Gather information about options, • Make a decision about a vocational direction or identify that more information is needed. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 5: Getting into Work and School

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>“When supporting Getting into work or school, I...”</i>	Rating
... explored the meaning and value, to the person, of Getting into Jobs and School.	
... showed and discussed an overview example of Getting.	
... worked on a Getting Plan with the person for work or school.	
... identified the scaffolds that will be needed to move forward with Getting into a preferred position or program.	
... explored utilizing complementary vocational and other services to support getting into a job or school.	
... showed the Disclosure Example to illuminate possible pros and cons of disclosing a disability.	
... invited the person to explore concerns and hopes about disclosure.	
... supported the person to decide about whether, when, where, to whom, and how to disclose a disability.	
... shared a snippet of my Vocational Recovery Story in order to inspire hope for Getting into work or school settings.	
<p>If I scaffolded “Getting” well, the person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a few items in his or her Getting plan, • Identify at least one way of getting support from the peer provider, • List at least one concern and one hope about disclosing a disability, • Tell whether and how disclosure would happen at work or at school. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 6: Keeping Jobs and School

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>“When supporting Keeping jobs and school, I...”</i>	Rating
... explored the meaning of Keeping Jobs and School.	
... showed and discussed an Overview Example of Keeping.	
... explained the difference between explicit, implicit, and personally important expectations.	
... worked with the person to come up with a plan to get information on the expectations in the environment.	
... worked with the person and/or the employer or school to break down broad job or school expectations into skills and support needs, or worked with vocational services who helped with this.	
... identified ways the person can learn new skills and practice rusty ones.	
... discussed needs for people, place, thing, and activity Supports.	
... provided scaffolds needed to develop skills and supports.	
... explored reasonable accommodations and what they mean to the person.	
... shared snippets of my own Vocational Recovery Story in order to inspire hope for Keeping a job or school program.	
<p>If I have supported “Keeping” well, the person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe what Keeping is as different from Getting, Choosing, or Considering, • Identify what one of the expectations is of him or her at work or school, • List at least one way in which a skill or support, including potential accommodations, could be developed to Keep the job or training program. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 7: Coordinating with Vocational and Employment Service Providers

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>“When supporting the use of other vocational or employment support services, I...”</i>	Rating
... explored the meaning of Coordinating with vocational and employment service providers.	
... showed and discussed an example of the process.	
... worked with the person to weigh the benefits and risks of connecting with service providers in order to achieve vocational goals.	
... discovered more information about various employment and vocational service programs with the person, including benefits and risks of involvement.	
... supported the person’s decision-making about using peer and other services to support his or her vocational recovery.	
... scaffolded the person’s use of employment, education, or other services.	
... communicated with and supported negotiations with service providers and/or systems as desired by the person.	
... shared snippets of my Vocational Recovery Story to inspire hope about working with employment, education, and other service providers.	
<p>If I Coordinate with Vocational and Employment Service Providers well, the person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weigh the pros and cons of using another provider in addition to VPS/peer support, • Describe some of the differences between providers, • Decide whether or not to utilize peer support to enhance the experience of using another provider. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 8: Researching Information

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>“When supporting the gathering of quality information, I...”</i>	Rating
... discussed the meaning of Researching Information in VPS.	
... showed examples of the process of Researching Information.	
... worked with the person to get specific about research questions.	
... discovered quality Information Sources.	
... explored what types of information were the most useful.	
... provided scaffolds needed to gather, understand, and record information for future use.	
... evaluated the gathered information, looking at who, what, when, where and why the information is valid and useful.	
... shared snippets of my Vocational Recovery Story to encourage the person as he or she moved forward in the gathering of information.	
<p>If I have supported the gathering of quality information, the person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe what researching information is and why it’s important to his or her vocational recovery, • Define a research question, • Gather information from quality sources. 	

VPS Practice Checklist

Module 9: Supporting Informed Decisions about Benefits

Instructions: Give each statement below a **rating** indicating how often you did it.

5: all the time, 4: most of the time, 3: some of the time, 2: once in a while, 1: never

<i>“When supporting informed decisions about benefits, I...”</i>	Rating
... discussed the meaning of informed decision-making about disability benefits.	
... showed examples of the process to the person throughout.	
... worked with the person to find out what the person wanted and needed to understand about work and benefits.	
... shared information about Social Security Work Incentives as applicable and desired by the person.	
... went to the experts to validate and find out additional information.	
... provided scaffolds needed to support the person to gather resources, information, and verified personalized information about his or her benefits.	
... evaluated the gathered information, looking at who, what, when, where, and why the information is valid and useful.	
... shared snippets of my Vocational Recovery Story, in order to inspire hope for working while on benefits.	
<p>If I have supported the informed decision-making about disability benefits well, the person should be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe what informed decision-making about benefits is, • List his or her own questions about benefits and work, • Gather information from quality sources, • Work with the experts in figuring out his or her own benefits. 	

Tips for Supervisors of VPS-trained staff

Turnover

It is common for organizations to experience some level of turnover of staff, including peer staff. Experience tells us that it is easy for service participants and their vocational aspirations to get lost in the mix of staff changes. In the service of good program outcomes as well as good individual outcomes, it is advisable to pay close attention to the assignment and reassignment of people working with VPS-trained staff. Close supervision and support of the use of VPS skills in the context of organizational values and beliefs that support vocational recovery may decrease overall peer staff turnover.

Training other staff

The VPS curriculum is designed to train peer staff and is, in many ways, peer-specific. However, as we have mentioned previously, it may be useful for supervisors to participate in the training. This enables supervisors to be familiar with the conceptual pieces of VPS and to have the opportunity to develop skills that the peer specialists in their employ will be using.

In addition, it may be important to introduce other staff to the concepts and skills of Vocational Peer Support. Whether through a one-day overview of VPS or by inviting other key staff to the entire training, engaging your whole staff in getting to know what peer specialists do, and how they can work to support employment and education can be invaluable to the full integration of peer support staff, and to the support of the use of VPS in your organization.

Refresher trainings, or trainings of new staff may be an important avenue for capacity-building within the organization. *Refresher trainings* may be designed according to the needs of the organization and are built to focus on the specific skills and conceptual knowledge that the staff need to offer VPS. *Trainings for new staff* can be offered to new staff (and may be used simultaneously to refresh the knowledge and skill level of already-trained staff) in order to bring new staff up to capacity to deliver VPS.

When staffers should use VPS skills and Tools

It is not expected that peer staff use the concepts, skills and tools at all times or in all situations. Encourage the staff you supervise to look for opportunities to utilize VPS:

- To inspire hope for vocational recovery
- When a person is considering “what’s next” for him or her
- When a person is interested in thinking about work or school
- As people indicate an interest in working on setting or achieving vocational goals

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