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PAS

FACTS

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Providing Effective Workplace Personal Assistance Services

USING WORKPLACE PAS TO EXPLORE NEW CAREER OPTIONS

Workplace Personal Assistance Services (WPAS) is a valuable tool that assists employees with significant disabilities to find and maintain employment. It is fast becoming the most effective method for employees with disabilities to achieve the needed level of production to become effective and efficient in the workplace. WPAS offers the opportunity for the workplace personal assistant to be exposed to different disabilities and all types of work environments. This really makes WPAS a win-win situation for both the employee and the Workplace Personal Assistant (WPA). It also enables the employer to add diversity to their workforce since the employee with the disability and their WPA may come from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

ATTRIBUTES OF AN EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE PERSONAL ASSISTANT

Many employees with disabilities place a higher value on the attributes of a WPA than on the skills they have. Like any employer, employees with disabilities still struggle to find WPA's who are reliable, punctual, and have a high degree of loyalty. A WPA who has these important attributes is a valuable asset to the employee who needs their support. The employee with the disability understands their WPA can gain the necessary job skills through training programs, but it is hard to instill the importance of reliability, punctuality, and loyalty.

ADVANTAGES OF BECOMING A WORKPLACE PERSONAL ASSISTANT

In addition to having the satisfaction of contributing to the success of the employee with a significant disability, there are many advantages and opportunities available to a WPA. For example: most businesses and employers will provide training opportunities for the WPA to gain or improve the necessary skills to better support the employee. Also, working on the job a WPA has the opportunity to gain an understanding of a business, which could eventually lead to a rewarding career. Because most employees with a significant disability are highly motivated they are usually very active in their communities. This gives the WPA a chance to be involved in many exciting and interesting events that will increase their business contacts. This is why a successful Workplace Personal Assistant can use this role as a springboard to gain opportunities for growth, opportunities to learn new skills, possible advancement and becoming more valuable to the company or business.



Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and
Training Center on Workplace Supports and Job Retention

ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF PROVIDING WORKPLACE PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

Many employees who have found a reliable and loyal WPA will hire them as a private contractor to provide services away from the jobsite. As a private contractor, the WPA will need to fill many administrative tasks to be able to meet certain Federal and State legal requirements. For example, as a private contractor, a WPA must learn how to negotiate a fair and equitable contract with the employee for duties away from the jobsite. They must also file certain Federal and State Income Tax forms to support the extra income above \$500. Most employees are knowledgeable about these requirements and can give their WPA resources they can use to fulfill these legal obligations. There are also some resources listed in the table below that can help a WPA find out information on these legal matters.

EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE WORKPLACE PAS SCENARIOS

Workplace PAS is important for employees with significant disabilities to be successful on the job, unfortunately not all WPAS work. Below we will give scenarios of WPAS who are both ineffective and effective in the workplace.

WPA One:

The employee with the disability has a WPA who is scheduled to work a 6 hour shift from 9-3 p.m. The employee has a meeting that has been called this morning by his manager for 10 a.m. There are papers that need to be collated by the WPA for the meeting. The WPA does not arrive at work until 9:45 a.m., and he did not even have the courtesy to call his employee with the disability to inform him of his late arrival. The employee is able to go to the meeting, but is not properly prepared because the handouts are not ready therefore making him seem inadequate and unprepared.

WPA Two:

The employee with the disability has speech impairment. He has been granted the opportunity from his company to address a grant committee to assist in procuring huge financial assistance, which would provide funding for a pilot WPA Agency. The employee with the disability knows that his message is powerful and wants to make sure all involved in the meeting fully understand his message, so he asks his WPA to be his voice. The WPA is not comfortable with public speaking or addressing groups, but he does understand that his job is to assist his employee with the disability in the mechanical aspects of his job and repeating his employee's words is a part of that. He quickly agrees, and with this support the employee's message is effectively delivered.

WORKPLACE PAS ACCOMMODATION

TOPIC	AGENCY	WEBSITE
Reporting your income to the State	State Department of Taxation	www.StateDepartment.Gov
Reporting your income to IRS	IRS	www.irs.gov
How to pay your own FICA	Social Security Administration	www.ssa.gov
WPAS as a career	Job Accommodation Network	www.JAN.org
Discrimination and workplace PAS as a reasonable accommodation	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	www.eeoc.gov
BPAO projects and how to use workplace incentives visit	BARC-RRTC Technical Assistance Center	www.vcu-barc.org