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## Quality Supported Employment Services



### QUALITY SERVICES

Several public laws passed in the early 1990's recognize the absolute right of persons with significant disabilities to live and work as integral and valued members of society. The Americans with Disabilities Act (P.L. 101-336) sets as public policy the principle of full integration of persons with disabilities. No longer can individuals with disabilities be excluded from the education, employment, and cultural opportunities that exist in all communities across the country. The 1992 Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 102-569) and the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 101-476) provide persons with disabilities the rights of access to education, rehabilitation, and related services and supports critical to their achieving the quality of life envisioned by the ADA.

These significant pieces of legislation put the abilities and choices of persons with disabilities first in the planning and the delivery of services. Legislation has challenged rehabilitation professionals to assist individuals with disabilities as they work toward making *meaningful* and *informed choices* in establishing plans of services that emphasize community integrated employment

and related outcomes. This challenge to rehabilitation professionals coincides with the tremendous national growth in supported employment over the last decade.

People with significant disabilities are now seeking to achieve the promise of ADA and to utilize the services and supports established in public legislation. Yet, they are expressing concerns about the quality of services provided by local and state disability and rehabilitation agencies and the difficulties in achieving a clear sense of *informed choice* in the selection of services.

#### Defining Informed Choice

Webster's dictionary defines *choice* as "the act of choosing; selection; the right, power, or chance to choose; option; *choice* implies the chance, right, or power to choose, usually by free exercise of one's judgment." If the definition is explored further, the following information can be found:

- 1) *Option* suggests the privilege of choosing as granted by a person or group in authority that normally exercises power.
- 2) *Alternative* in the strict usage, limits a choice to one of two possibilities.
- 3) *Selection* implies a wide choice and the exercise of careful discrimination.

While this may seem a matter of semantics, it is interesting to think about these definitions in relationship to the services provided by supported employment programs. Are programs giving their customers the "privilege" of choosing based on professional authority? Do employment specialists simply provide two alternatives and force their customers to choose the one which may be the lesser of two evils? Or, are customers truly provided a selection of choices and assisted in carefully discriminating between their choices?

Fortunately, the ideas and suggestions of people with significant disabilities are beginning to impact the field of rehabilitation, including supported employment. Many programs are now using a customer-driven approach to supported employment, which is shaping service delivery practices. Supported employment customers are entering into partnerships with their rehabilitation counselors, supported employment service providers, employment specialists, and employers to define quality service indicators. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the importance of these partnerships is through the eyes of John, a supported employment customer, who is attempting to obtain employment.

### **John's Case Study**

John is a young man who experiences a dual sensory disability and moderate difficulties in learning new skills as a result of a brain injury. He has expressed an interest in obtaining employment in his community. John's sister assisted him in applying for state vocational rehabilitation services, and he sub-

sequently was determined eligible to receive services with a recommendation for supported employment. In an initial meeting, John's rehabilitation counselor discussed the rehabilitation services that he would need to obtain employment. The counselor concluded the meeting by telling John the name of a local supported employment program that would provide him the necessary supports to obtain and maintain employment.

Following the meeting, a friend of John's told him the name of another supported employment provider that had been very successful in assisting several people with dual sensory disabilities to get and keep a job. At church, a woman gave John the name of a third supported employment agency where she knew the president and was willing to put in a good word for him. With the names of three supported employment organizations, John was more confused than ever. He didn't know which service provider would be the best agency to assist him in finding a job.

Remembering how his sister found a college, John called his rehabilitation counselor and asked if she could arrange for him to visit the supported employment providers that she identified, as well as the other two organizations that friends had recommended. After the rehabilitation counselor assisted John with setting up three interviews, the two of them developed a list of questions that would assist him in making an informed choice. During each of the three informal meetings, John asked the following six questions.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How many job coaches do you employ, and how many customers do you assist in finding jobs each year?
2. What types of jobs are being developed by your agency?
3. What is the average weekly wage for your customers?
4. What is the ratio of supported employment staff to customers ?
5. How long do your customers keep their jobs?
6. What long term supports do you offer customers?

The answers to these questions gave John and his rehabilitation counselor information that was helpful in making informed decisions regarding appropriate and cost effective services. However, there were several missed opportunities for John to have greater control over his rehabilitation process. Specifically, John's counselor initially made many decisions for him rather than with him.

Practicing a customer-driven approach to assuring quality services requires proactive practices. This means that counselors and other professionals who work with supported employment customers provide a **full and detailed presentation of all available options as well as information about the performance and outcomes of each option**. John's example focuses on the customer-counselor partnership. He acted as a self-advocate by taking the initiative to use a customer-driven approach in selecting a service provider. The counselor reacted positively to his initiative; however,

many quality steps were omitted, because a customer-counselor partnership was not established initially.

The partnership begins when the customer enters the rehabilitation service system. John's counselor identified that he would need supported employment services and pre-selected a specific provider agency without informing him of the full array of community options. She should have begun the relationship by describing supported employment and the services that are available with this approach. Then, the counselor and John could identify which supports would be necessary to meet John's career goals. Next, the counselor should have identified the supported employment programs in the community who could provide those needed services and the track records of each organization. Finally, John could interview each service provider using his list of informal questions in order to select a provider.

The information in this chapter will address the importance of assessing quality and the purpose of quality indicators. In addition, a proactive process that can guide customer relationships will be presented to include:

- the customer--counselor relationship,
- the customer--service provider relationship,
- the customer--employment specialist relationship, and
- the customer--employer relationship.

All members involved in supported employment services must be committed to creating and maintaining an information base and cooperative partnership which supports a customer-driven approach to service delivery.



## ASSESSING QUALITY

Traditionally, supported employment programs develop standards, objectives, and processes in an effort to build and promote quality supported employment services. Program managers and staff design standards and indicators to assist in gauging the success of their program services. The typical areas for assessment include: philosophy, mission, administration, fiscal management, image, community resources, personnel, job or career development, job training and support, long-term supports, and employee relations.

Most supported employment organizations recognize the need for assessing quality and are committed to providing excellent services. Yet, many supported employment personnel report that collecting and analyzing data on quality indicators is an unrealistic expectation. For this reason, some programs have stopped assessing the overall quality of their service organization. Typically, the primary reason for organizational assessment is to meet an agency need for supported employment provider certification. This certification is required to become a local vendor for supported employment and to qualify for state or local funding.

Collecting and analyzing data on supported employment service outcomes does not have to be difficult or time consuming. In fact, the quality of a supported employment program can be measured by addressing four simple features, as described in the following table.

### SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FEATURES

1. Serving Persons with Significant Disabilities
2. Customer-Driven
3. Meaningful Employment
4. Maximizing Integration and Community Participation

#### **Persons with Significant Disabilities**

The 1992 reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 102-569) clearly describes the intended recipients of supported employment services. Supported employment was never intended to serve the typical vocational rehabilitation customer. Rather, this service option was created for those persons with significant disabilities who traditionally were not able to obtain competitive employment through vocational rehabilitation services. P.L. 102-569 further describes customers of supported employment as those individuals who have obtained intermittent employment but have not been successful in maintaining competitive employment and who need long term supports to achieve competitive employment success.

Supported employment service providers need to work with potential customers and rehabilitation counselors to ensure that the organization is marketing their services to the appropriate customers. Employment service organizations can analyze this quality indicator by determining who is accessing their services. What are the customers' primary and secondary disabilities, functional capabilities, and prior

work histories? In addition, organizations should compare their supported employment customers with those customer's receiving general or transitional rehabilitation services. This will provide a clear indicator as to whether the program is serving individuals with the most severe disabilities. The following table presents a checklist of several different questions that supported employment service providers can ask when determining if their organizations are serving persons with the most severe disabilities.

<b>PERSONS WITH THE MOST SEVERE DISABILITIES</b>
1. What are customers' primary and secondary disabilities?
2. What are customers' functional capabilities?
3. What are customers' prior work or service histories?
4. What other characteristics make the customer more or less employable?
5. How do supported employment customers compare with those of other services?

### **Customer-Driven**

A critical factor in assessing the overall quality of a supported employment program is analyzing outcome data to determine if services are truly customer-driven. Those organizations that are customer-driven shape their service delivery practices by the wants and needs of their customers. Therefore, the customers are in a position to control their rehabilitation outcomes.

Reading this manual will provide

programs with different ideas on how to analyze this feature of supported employment. However, service providers can ask themselves a few basic questions to determine if their services are customer-driven. The following table presents these questions.

<b>CUSTOMER-DRIVEN</b>
1. Who selected the service provider?
3. Who selected the job coach?
4. Who selected the job?
5. Does the customer like the job?
6. Is the customer satisfied with the services?
7. Is the customer able and willing to retain the job?
8. Will the customer be assisted in finding new employment in the event of a job separation?

### **Meaningful Employment**

The goal of supported employment was never to simply find jobs for persons with significant disabilities. Rather, the focus of quality supported employment dictates that services result in meaningful employment outcomes for the organization's customers. Key to determining if customers are obtaining meaningful employment outcomes is determining if the jobs that customers are accepting are *career-oriented*. Most people with disabilities are not interested in dead-end positions. As with other members of the labor force, people with disabilities are interested in jobs where they can build their resumes and/or employment positions where they can grow

with a company.

Supported employment programs can analyze several different areas to determine if they are assisting their customers in obtaining meaningful employment. For instance, individuals with disabilities need a decent wage, company benefits, and a work schedule that matches with their community interests and supports. The following table presents several questions that supported employment organizations can ask themselves to determine if the services that they are providing related to this component are high quality.

### MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

1. What are the customers' earnings?
2. What are the customers' work hours?
3. What are the customer's current fringe benefits and future fringe benefits?
4. Is the job career-oriented?

### Maximizing Integration and Community Participation

Integration and community participation are important outcome measures of quality services. The idea that persons with severe disabilities can, and should, work in regular business environments is the guiding philosophy behind supported employment. Work is a highly valued activity in the American culture and offers wage earners numerous benefits. Having a job and paying taxes can enhance an individual's status in the community while offering the employee an opportunity to interact with co-workers and to develop a host of relationships at work and in the community.

There are multiple factors that can be

examined when determining if a particular job or employee are integrated in the workplace and participating in the community. Analyzing a business site to determine if the company offers an opportunity for integration is important. In addition, the employee work area, work hours, and satisfaction level plays an important role in assessing a customer's integration and community participation. A negative answer to any of the following questions could be an indicator that intervention is necessary to improve the overall quality of the employment situation and consequently, the organization's services.

### MAXIMIZING INTEGRATION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

1. Does the company offer opportunities for physical and social integration?
2. Does the employee's work area facilitate physical and social interactions?
3. To what extent is the customer integrated?
4. In what activities does the customer engage in the community?
5. Is the customer satisfied with work and community integration?

### Evaluation Tools

Development of effective evaluation tools for determining quality supported employment services is an important area where much work remains. The evaluation tools that are used by supported employment provider agencies should present a clear picture on how to assess success and quality of services. Examples of different evaluation tools range from simple checklists to formal audits and program

reviews. In addition, customer interviews and surveys are providing another important source of data in the program evaluation process.

There are a number of points that appear to be very important in the creation and implementation of a viable evaluation tool. The following list presents some points to remember when supported employment personnel begin to work on developing an instrument that is not bureaucratic, cumbersome, or an extravagant use of paper (Kregel, 1992).

### **GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION TOOL**

1. The instrument must be clear and easy to read.
2. The instrument must be easy to administer, score, and interpret.
3. The items must be directly related to objectives presented in this chapter and throughout this handbook.
4. The items on the survey must be able to discriminate between effective services and quality services.
5. The items must be sensitive to detect program improvement.

### **Impact of Program Quality**

The quality of a program's services can mean success or failure for both the customer and provider. Organizations which are truly concerned about the quality of their services and want to continue growing, need to conduct follow-up marketing assessments measuring the satisfaction among customers. It is through these assessments that supported employment customers are invited into the process to identify the areas which are working, areas needing

improvement, and/or areas that need to be created and made available to the customer-base.

Quality programs will want to identify the customer's aspirations and needs and to create the necessary services. This must be done on an on-going basis rather than developing service options solely based upon the professional judgements in isolation from the customer-base. As the private sector is beginning to notice and consider persons with disabilities as a significant marketing segment of our society, so must disability organizations, rehabilitation agencies, and supported employment service providers. Vital to the success of supported employment will be the ability of provider organizations to change from an elite centralized form of decision making to an information-sharing, mutually supportive, customer-driven approach to service delivery.

### **Customer Control**

Supported employment customers can avoid having a process "done to them" by exercising their power and using it to select the type and conditions of services. These new customers of supported employment are becoming active participants in making decisions about their future. As the 1992 Rehabilitation Amendments outlined: individuals with severe disabilities are presumed capable of working and must be given the opportunity to make choices as they seek meaningful careers in integrated community settings.

As with any business seeking to expand its customer-base, supported employment must offer quality goods and services. If supported employment providers and rehabilitation agen-

cies want to be successful, they need to continue their program reviews and evaluations of customer satisfaction. In addition, provider organizations must plan and implement programs and services which reflect excellence.

## **P**URPOSE OF QUALITY INDICATORS

The 1992 Rehabilitation Act Amendments call for rehabilitation agencies to compile information about available services and service providers in the community. Supported employment and rehabilitation agencies must provide this information to their customers to assist them in making informed choices about potential providers of supported employment and other related services. Customers, rehabilitation counselors, and service providers, must work together to ensure that customers are directing their careers by choosing an organization, type of supports, and how those supports will be provided.

This information should be shared with supported employment customers as employment plans are being developed and decisions are being made. One way to accomplish this task would be for rehabilitation counselors to develop a chart with data contrasting all the local supported employment service providers. Using this information, a customer would be able to narrow down his or her provider options. The customer may also choose to interview supported employment agencies as John did when he was choosing between service providers. Additionally, the customer may want to ask for the service provider's marketing materials, such as a brochure written by customers regarding their satisfaction with the or-

ganization. The counselor and customer could analyze all the data and information in the program areas of importance (i.e., disability experience, career development experience, longevity of employment, etc.) and make a decision about which program has the supports and services desired and needed by the customer.

This type of information is not only valuable to customers as they make service delivery decisions, but it is equally important to rehabilitation counselors who are concerned about the cost, quality, and outcomes of services. With constant pressure for quality outcomes, counselors must know more about each supported employment provider. They should conduct evaluations of the supported employment agencies that their customers use and determine such things as:

- What range of services are offered?
- Does the organization conduct situational assessments?
- Are the employment specialists skilled in systematic instruction?
- Do they collect program data?
- Is data used to make decisions?
- Do customers receive twice monthly follow-up visits, as well as other long term supports?

## **P**ARTNERSHIPS & QUALITY

A customer-driven approach to supported employment practices and outcomes will require all key participants to rethink the quality indicators of supported employment. If people with significant disabilities cannot access employment, or if they have negative supported employment experiences such as



underemployment, neglect of career interest, and/or isolation from their friends and co-workers, then the quality of the supported employment program will be extremely low.

There are many different techniques and resources for evaluating the quality of a supported employment organization. Some of the preferred sources include:

1. Interviews with supported employment customers.
2. Observation notes from meetings.
3. Written agreements with local businesses.
4. Staff development plans.
5. Staff interviews.
6. Minutes from organizational and board meetings.
7. Fact sheets and other promotional materials.
8. Employer contact sheets.
9. Letters from co-workers.
10. Annual reports.
11. Review of business files.
12. Copies of satisfaction survey results.

Yet, these sources will only provide part of the picture. As stated earlier, the provision of quality services will depend upon four key partnerships. Therefore, clearly defining the indicators of a successful partnership will provide a thorough picture of a high quality customer-driven approach to supported employment. The customer-counselor, customer-service provider, customer-employment specialist and the customer-employer partnerships are each highly interdependent upon the outcomes of the other partnerships. Each partnership plays a unique role in a customer-driven relationship in the supported employment process. The following are the quality indicators for customer-driven relationships with the rehabilitation counselor, the service

provider, the employment specialist and the employer as they support the customer in five major areas: 1) Individual Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP), 2) Organizational Marketing, 3) Customer Profile, 4) Job Development, 5) Job Site Training, and 6) Long Term Supports.

## **I**NDICATORS FOR SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

### **Partnership for the IWRP**

The Individual Written Rehabilitation Program known to most employment specialists and supported employment customers as the IWRP, is the beginning point for the development of strong partnerships. The process for making an excellent employment outcome will require incorporating customer-driven values and strategies into the IWRP or another similar plan (if rehabilitation services are not obtained through the State Vocational Rehabilitation [VR] Program). Even the best written plan can fail if it is not correctly put into place. Going through this process the rehabilitation counselor, supported employment service provider, and the employment specialist should assist the customer, as necessary, in carefully considering the opportunities and ramifications of available service options, supports, and career areas. Each partner will play an important role in the development and implementation of the IWRP.

**Rehabilitation Counselor.** The counselor should assist the customer in determining his or her employment goals. In addition, a strong counselor-customer relationship would include the counselor supporting the customer in analyzing information regarding supported

employment service provider selection. The partnership requires the counselor to listen to the customer's wants and needs and to respect the customer's right to make changes in the IWRP. It will be important for the counselor to encourage independent thinking among all customers and to focus on the customers' abilities.

***Supported Employment Service Provider.*** The supported employment service provider furnishes organizational information to VR and potential customers related to such organizational outcomes as business relationship, average wage of customers, and number of employment specialists. In addition, the service provider can present opportunities for the customer to tour and ask questions about the organization. A critical feature in this relationship will be the service provider agreeing to participate in vocational planning meetings with customers and rehabilitation counselors.

***Employment Specialist.*** The employment specialist will need to meet with customers and rehabilitation counselors to review the IWRP. Additionally, the employment specialist should agree to participate in informational interviewing sessions that are directed by the customer. The customer and counselor will be interested in obtaining information related to the employment specialist's experiences with disability service issues, supported employment, and the business community.

### **Partnerships in Organizational Marketing**

A good market-based plan will actually identify the scope and range of activities performed during job development or the job hunt process. Each partner in the employment pro-

cess will have unique information and a specific area of expertise that the customer will need to access. Therefore, it is critical for all partners to play an active role during organizational marketing.

***Rehabilitation Counselor.*** Prior to disseminating VR marketing materials to the local business community, the counselor will want the customer to review all materials and to approve their content. In addition, it will be important for the customer to participate in meetings to develop the VR marketing plan and to establish value statements. The counselor and customer will need to work together to improve business involvement in disability-related issues. Regular interaction between the counselor and customer will provide an opportunity for the customer and the VR counselor to evaluate marketing efforts.

***Supported Employment Service Provider.*** Service providers must include their customers when conducting planning meetings for organizational marketing. The service provider will want to encourage customers to attend civic functions, business meetings, and parent groups to make community presentations with and without supported employment personnel. Customers who are active in organizational marketing efforts will be informed members of the organization's evaluation team as data is regularly analyzed and marketing plans are developed.

***Employment Specialist.*** When conducting organizational marketing, the employment specialist will want to recruit customers to make presentations with them in the community. In addition, the employment specialist will want to request that satisfied customers talk about services to other potential customers.

Customers can be a tremendous resource for identifying new customer markets and community business for the employment specialist and the organization.

**Employer.** Employers can begin to play a role in the customer-driven relationship during organizational marketing by agreeing to attend focus group meetings. In addition, employers and business employees can make community presentations. These presentations can cover such issues as ADA, business accommodations, and supported employment supports and services. Finally, employers can be an enormous resource for assisting in the development of organizational marketing materials.

### **Partnerships for Customer Profile** =====

In most cases, it is possible to decide whether an individual should be referred for supported employment services based upon the information obtained during the referral and application process to vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. Yet, in many cases additional information may be needed to ensure choice and a customer-driven approach to service delivery. The following describes the individual roles for partners in the customer profile component of supported employment.

**Rehabilitation Counselor.** The customer must be given opportunities by the counselor to explore interests and strengths in a variety of work and community sites. The counselor can assist in this process by identifying potential situational assessment sites in the community, and providing information to the customer and service provider. It will be important for the counselor and customer to spend time together during this process in order

to establish a relationship.

**Service Provider.** Service providers will want to work with the customer, VR, and the businesses community to identify non-traditional business work sites for situational assessment opportunities. In addition, service providers must adopt a philosophy that views the customer as the person directing the process as an accurate customer profile is developed. It will be important to ensure that data is recorded and shared with the customer, as well as the VR counselor.

**Employment Specialist.** The employment specialist must be committed to working with the customer and together identify possible employment opportunities in the business community. This will require the employment specialist and customer to spend time together ascertaining the customer's real desires, concerns, and personal strengths. Additionally, the employment specialist will need to work with the customer and counselor to identify appropriate business sites for community situational assessments.

**Employers.** Employers can provide an enormous amount of support to all partners when they agree to participate as community situational assessment work sites. In addition, employers can serve as a resource by assisting service providers and VR in identifying new community employment assessment work sites. Developing a strong partnership with employers will help ensure that a complete customer profile is obtained.

### **Partnerships for Job Development**

When job development or the job search is customer-driven and mirrors the

organizational marketing plan, increased satisfaction will be felt by all partners. Supported employment service providers and the employment specialist will want to ensure that the employer's business needs are being met as the supported employment customer seeks to obtain the job of his or her choice. Each of the following partners will have an unique set of expertise for job development support.

**Rehabilitation Counselor.** The customer and the VR counselor should agree on a plan for contacting employers. Responsibilities should be divided between the customer, counselor, family, and employment specialist. In many cases, a customer will want to make the initial contact with a potential employer. The customer can then provide feedback to the counselor and employment specialist for a follow-up visit. The counselor can provide assistance to the customer in developing a functional resume to use when applying for a job. Joint meetings with counselor, customer, and service provider should be regularly scheduled to review roles and progress.

**Service Provider.** Service providers will need to develop plans for business networking, with input from ~~the customer.~~ These plans will assist partners in building relationships and increasing contacts in the community. A customer-driven service provider will encourage customers to take an active part in employer development activities by identifying people who may be aware of employment openings. It will be important for the service providers to meet regularly with the VR counselors and customers and to continually provide the customer with options about career possibilities that are available in the local

community.

**Employment Specialist.** An employment specialist and customer will want to work together to identify potential business interview sites. Customers and employment specialists should practice interviewing and talking with businesses in the community. In addition, the employment specialist, customer, and VR counselor should review contacts and share job leads. Choice can be an active process, when the employment specialist prepares a list of positive, as well as negative points regarding potential job openings to guide the customer in job or career decisions.

**Employers.** A quality employer partnership will lead to the business community taking leadership positions on advisory committees for VR services and supported employment organizations. In addition, employers can make time for customers to visit employment sites in order to analyze work sites and occupations. Employers can be a valuable resource in exploring other community businesses needing workers.

### **Partnerships for Job Site Training and Support**

The job site training component of supported employment is an active time for all partners in a customer-driven relationship. It is during this phase of supported employment that the customer, employer, and employment specialist will have their greatest amount of contact. While the rehabilitation counselor is not directly involved, he or she needs to be aware of the training process to monitor and to facilitate successful employment outcomes.

**Rehabilitation Counselor.** The counselor can assist the customer by identifying

potential supports and technology resources. In addition, the counselor, customer, and service provider should agree on a plan which includes: review of progress, up-date on service information, collection and reporting of data, and joint visits with the customer and employer. The counselor must begin to assess the customer's satisfaction with the employment position, the employment specialist and the service provider.

**Service Provider.** The supported employment service provider should agree to track progress with customers and to regularly update the VR counselor. Service providers can encourage the involvement of customers in the development of job analyses, task analyses, job modifications, and instructional programs. In some cases it will be important for the service provider to work with VR, the customer, and community to assist in identifying possible technology resources. Service providers, customers, employers, and counselors will need to work together to explore community and workplace supports.

**Employment Specialist.** Together, the employment specialist and customer will identify necessary training and support needs for employment success. The employment specialist committed to a customer-driven approach will assist the customer in developing relationships with co-workers from the first day of employment. In addition, the employment specialist and customer will agree on a fading schedule for employment specialist support. All partners will agree to review satisfaction of job training and work progress.

**Employer.** Many employers will agree to participate with the new employee and the

employment specialist to explore the development of a co-worker or mentor relationship at the worksite. Employers, customers, and employment specialists will meet to review progress and satisfaction. The community employer will be a valuable resource with the identification of possible work site modifications and technology supports.

### **Partnerships for Long Term Supports** ■■■

An overriding goal of the long term supports component of supported employment is ensuring that the customer's evolving interest and career advancement opportunities are being considered. When this becomes the goal, then all partners support steady employment rather than staying in any one job. The employment specialist will continue to make twice monthly visits to the customer. Together all partners assist in analyzing, identifying and implementing long term supports.

**Rehabilitation Counselor.** The counselor will work with the service provider and customer to prepare a long term support plan. This plan will include potential supports and possible funding options. Counselors and customers will need to meet to explore customer satisfaction with the job and the supported employment service. The rehabilitation counselor should share with the customer and service provider the availability of post-employment services, if required by the customer.

**Service Provider.** The service provider should assist customers with identifying long term support services and funding for each available option. The service provider can pro-

vide supports to the customer by assisting with complicated processes, such as funding supports that are available through the Social Security Administration.

**Employment Specialist.** The employment specialist and customer will want to regularly assess employment stability and satisfaction. Together, this partnership can explore potential career growth opportunities and options. The employment specialist, customer, and counselor will need to develop a plan for

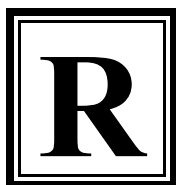
on-going supports which includes: type of supports, provider of supports, and funding for supports. The employment specialist and customer must agree on the support schedule and techniques for delivering support services.

**Employer.** The employer, customer, and employment specialist will need to meet to determine job satisfaction and long term supports. During such a meeting options for follow-up and supports through co-workers would be discussed.



## SUMMARY

This chapter has attempted to describe the challenge inherent in attempting to identify quality supported employment services. While the handbook has focused on how to develop and deliver a customer-driven employment service, Chapter 8 has described the specific features of a quality service organization. Specifically, these features include: 1) organizational services developed for persons with significant disabilities, 2) development of a customer-driven approach to services, 3) assisting customers in accessing meaningful employment outcomes, and 4) maximizing the integration and community participation for customers. However, it will be those supported employment service organizations that are able to address these four features while building successful partnerships that will have truly succeeded in achieving a high measure of quality supported employment services.



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