

# Job Coaching Services and Benefits to Businesses and People with Disabilities

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## INTRODUCTION

Many individuals with significant disabilities who have been unable to secure employment or to maintain employment have achieved employment success by securing services from a Job Coach. Job Coaching services have been so successful in working with people with significant disabilities many community programs such as welfare to work, Veterans, older workers, transition, and others have begun to utilize the talents and skills of job coaches.

One unique arena for job coaching services has been the Americans with Disabilities Act. Employers are asked to examine possible accommodations to assist their efforts to recruit and hire people with disabilities and a potential accommodation available to them often is job coaching services. Some businesses have started offering co-worker job coaching as well as reaching out to community programs in an effort to advance the employment of people with disabilities people on the worksite.

## KEY POINTS

### What is a Job Coach?

A Job Coach is known by several professional titles such as employment specialist, job trainer, job consultant, and staffing specialist. He or she may come from a variety of backgrounds to include teaching, rehabilitation, or business and be responsible for assisting an individual with a disability in obtaining a job by creating a positive job match; maintaining a job through on-site assistance and other workplace supports; and advancing careers with career development. In many cases the job coach will spend time at the workplace to learn the job duties and industry standard and then assist the new employee to build proficiency over time.

### What are Job Coach Services?

Job coaches do a variety of duties in the course of assisting someone both on and off the job site. Below is a list of duties for a typical job coach.

- ◆ Gathers assessment data and assisting the person with a disability to develop a list of interests and potential skills.
- ◆ Gathers employment information by doing job analyses at business sites in order to match a person with a position.
- ◆ Provides one to one training on a job site.
- ◆ Provides job retention services to the employer and person with disability.
- ◆ Maintains evaluation data for performance reporting.

### Who do Job Coaches Support?

Job Coaches supports both the individual with a disability as well as the employer. These are the primary customers for a job coach. However, they will interact and provide consultation services to parents, community funding agencies, other community support programs.

## What supports do Job Coaches provide?

Supports will vary from person to person and it is the role of a job coach to provide some or all of the following supports for an individual.

- ◆ advocacy
- ◆ identification of interests and skills,
- ◆ identification of possible accommodations
- ◆ job development and marketing services to businesses
- ◆ one to one on site job coach to model behaviors and provide actual job training
- ◆ provide on-going job follow-up and retention services

## Who pays for Job Coach Services?

Funding sources of supported employment services are varied. Many programs who employ job coaches have been approved to be a vendor of services for the state Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. In addition, Mental Health & Mental Retardation state and local programs will provide funding for Supported Employment services to community rehabilitation providers. Programs such as Medicaid Waivers, Social Security Work Incentives and foundation funds are also available for use in funding job coaches.

## What questions do Businesses have regarding Job Coaches?

Businesses have many questions for job coaches. Some of the typical questions a job coach can expect to be asked by a representative from a business are:

- ◆ Who pays for the time and services of a job coach?
- ◆ Who is liable if a job coach gets hurt at the work site?
- ◆ How long will the job coach be on-site?
- ◆ Can the agency provide a background check on the job coach?
- ◆ What is the person's disability?
- ◆ How will I train a person with a disability?
- ◆ How can I accommodate a person with a disability and is it expensive?
- ◆ Who can help me with the cost of an accommodation?
- ◆ What happens if the person is not successful here at the job?

Job Coaches can expect to hear these as well as other questions from employers and should be prepared with answers.

## What are the benefits to Businesses who utilize Job Coaches?

Businesses want to know if they invest in a program which offers training from a job coach will help to increase their bottom line and productivity. Hiring people with disabilities is an investment for an employer as it is with their recruitment and hiring of all personnel. Therefore it is important to share the benefits with the employer. Here are some!

- ◆ Job Coaches reduce the time it takes businesses to locate workers by giving the business access to a pool of pre-screened candidates.
- ◆ The up-front work of a Job Coach will complement the screening and hiring process of the business.
- ◆ Training and staff support from the Job Coach will dovetail with the style of the company. The job coach will ensure this continues until the new employee is completely up to speed.
- ◆ Job Coaches can assist with the identification of other accommodations for the company and be a resource for their diversity efforts.
- ◆ Job Coaches can assist the employer with possible tax credits such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the Disabled Access Tax Credit for small businesses.
- ◆ Job Coaches will be at the business to provide on-going supports and job retention services.

## REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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