

Worksupport Connections

September, 2005 – Vol. 1, #2

Rehabilitation Research & Training Ctr.
on Workplace Supports & Job Retention



To successfully navigate the service arena in route to employment, individuals must know how to use self-advocacy skills to describe their interests and needs. With the new option of acquiring employment services through One-Stop Career Centers, it is even more important for a customer with a disability to develop and effectively use self-advocacy skills. This informational fact sheet offers tips and strategies to foster a better working relationship between a customer with a disability and the One-Stop Career Center.



SELF-ADVOCACY: OPENING THE DOOR TO ONE STOP CAREER CENTER SERVICES?

An individual with a disability needs to be an effective self-advocate to get the most out of One-Stop services. In the chart below, effective self-advocacy methods, along with corresponding positive actions, are contrasted with poor self-advocacy methods and their results.

Self-Advocacy is:

- Being Responsible
- Taking charge
- Knowing needs
- Getting information
- Making good decisions

Positive Actions:

- Be prompt / Complete assignments
- Apply for jobs / Follow through
- Be positive / Cite supports needed
- Learn about resources / Use available resources
- Make right choices / Stick to decisions

Self-Advocacy is NOT:

- Being too aggressive
- Being controlled
- Knowing it all
- Depending on others
- Blaming others for bad decisions

Negative Actions:

- Forceful behavior / Overbearing
- Being manipulated / Giving up ones rights
- Boasting / Obnoxious behavior
- Laziness / Procrastinating
- Not taking responsibility / Immature behavior

Visit the RRTC on Workplace
Supports and Job Retention at:

www.worksupport.com

SELF-ADVOCACY SCENARIOS

1

A customer with a disability who knows the type of job he/she wants will get a better response from One-Stop staff than a person who does not provide information on job preferences. An assertive, informed customer clearly articulates personal desires and service expectations. A proactive customer will eagerly accept responsibility for being part of the process by reading job ads, using internet employment tools, and dressing appropriately for job interviews. Such attributes will let the One-Stop staff know an individual is serious about using services to gain employment.

2

A customer with a disability who is unprepared and who has no idea of the type of job he/she wants will not be satisfied with One-Stop services. This individual will be perceived as not being serious about employment. When this happens, the customer will likely be encouraged to return to the traditional VR service delivery system. An unwillingness to be a proactive part of the employment search process will label the customer as uncooperative and may give the One-Stop a reason for not providing further services.

RESOURCES

One-Stop customers with disabilities may have questions when seeking services. These websites can assist you when obtaining One-Stop Career Center services.

- ★ U.S. Department of Labor -- www.dol.gov
- ★ U.S. Social Security Administration -- www.ssa.gov
- ★ Career One-Stop -- www.careeronestop.org
- ★ VCU-RRTC on Workplace Supports -- www.worksupport.com
- ★ Job Accommodation Network/ West Virginia University -- www.jan.wvu.edu
- ★ Americans with Disabilities Act Technical Assistance Centers -- www.adata.org
- ★ National Council on Independent Living -- www.ncil.org



LOCATING A LOCAL ONE-STOP?

You can find the location of your local One-Stop by contacting America's Service Locator from the U.S. Department of Labor, on the Web at: www.servicelocator.org, or call toll free by phone at (877) US2-JOBS [877-872-5627]. You can also contact your state, county, or local department of labor or employment listed in the government section of the phone book.

FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THIS FACT SHEET CONTACT:

Valerie Brooke, Director of Training
vbroke@vcu.edu

Howard Green, Business Liaison
jhgreen@vcu.edu

**VCU-RRTC on Workplace Supports
and Job Retention**
(804) 828-9548 VOICE
(804) 828-2324 TTY