



Career Success Preparation Program

Overview

The NorthBridge Career Success Preparation Program provides students with a library of resources to get them thinking about life after college and guide them as they begin their professional career. Employment seekers with the most significant disabilities have traditionally been excluded from consideration for employment due to the pre-set demands of competitive personnel practices. We provide a strategy to navigate these challenges and provide a possibility for any employment seeker to be successfully employed. The process comprises a set of pre-employment services designed to ensure that the employment seeker is the primary driver of the outcome received.

The overview includes the Career Discovery Process, Career Preparation, Job Observations, and Beyond the Job Offer Tasks.

Career Discovery Process¹

Getting to know the student and their strengths, needs, and interests

Knowing a person's skills and interests prior to conducting job development is critical to providing quality supported employment services. Making a "good fit" between the individual's skills and a job can minimize the training and supports that the individual will need after being hired. Taking short cuts, such as not adequately getting to know job seekers prior to job development, can result in dissatisfaction with the job placement, poor work performance, and job loss.²

The student will discuss their vocational goals including employment conditions, needs, and preferences. This will include informal conversations with job seekers, including family members and other people in their lives, and the NorthBridge coach to select career planning activities. The discussion will include:

- Transportation options
- Work schedule
- Hours
- Benefits
- Wages

¹ Information retrieved from The Essential Elements of Customized Employment for Universal Application, in association with WINTAC and Y-TAC, funded by RSA.

² Information retrieved from WINTAC, Core Features of Quality Supported Employment Services



- Workplace characteristics
- Impact of work on disability benefits³

Career Preparation

Initiate tasks to prepare for job applications and interview

After the Career Discovery Process is complete, NorthBridge will assist the student with the preparation of documents and profiles to apply for jobs. We start by helping students:

- Create their resume & cover letter
- Update their LinkedIn profile
- Prepare for the job application process
- Research and apply for volunteer opportunities
- Locate and access resources, in a field in which they are interested.

The next phase is interview etiquette, including mock interviews, taking initiative in reaching out to employers, and self advocacy when applying for jobs. We help students:

- Be proactive and apply for jobs by conducting mock interviews to stand out to potential employers.
- Prepare for competitive personnel interactions with employers by practicing interview responses, developing standard resumes, and through other techniques.
- Prepare questions for the interview, such as role advancement, benefits, flexibility, etc.
- Help with any last-minute questions and commitment letters. This may cover dress code, attendance policy, work breaks, payroll questions, direct supervisor contact, and other concerns.

NorthBridge staff possesses the expertise and knowledge to guide students in pursuing opportunities in their chosen career fields after receiving their degrees. Staff members are trained to assist students with postsecondary training or education, as well as knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in the postsecondary job training and/or education necessary for their chosen career in a technical/vocational program, community college, or apprenticeship.

Labor Market Survey⁴

The NorthBridge coach will assist the student with understanding the Labor Market Survey. It assists the student in gathering information necessary for selecting an employment goal that is compatible with the student's strengths, interests, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and informed choice.

³ Information retrieved from WINTAC, Core Features of Quality Supported Employment Services

⁴ Information retrieved from VRS Exhibit Q3A



The NorthBridge Coach and student will address the student's goals.

Job Observations

Common issues and ongoing communication on the job

Tips and Tricks

The student will evaluate the job descriptively, rather than evaluatively.

- Descriptive perspective focuses on detailing what occurs, rather than how the student feels about what has occurred.
- Note taking and documentation is essential.
- The coach will capture all interactions using descriptive notes that remove the evaluative perspective.

Beyond the "Job Offer"

Assist student with communicating their needs on the job

The coach will help the student on the job by assisting with self advocacy. These ongoing check-ins with the student's supervisor are essential to the student's success at the job.