Engagement and Discovery for Employment Success
Engagement and Discovery

Session Objectives:

1. Consider how some of the strategies from the engagement & discovery process in the disability field could also work in the mental health field.

2. Look at examples of how important engagement is on the part of individuals living with mental health issues when considering employment.

3. Identify ways to use strength based assessment information to support job development activities.

4. Review ways to keep a person living with mental health issues engaged and actively involved in the initial stages of employment.
Engagement and Discovery

Poll questions for participants:

1. How many of you have been involved in supporting someone with a Mental Illness to become employed?

2. How many have used specialized / customized techniques with this population vs. more traditional methods?
### Similarities in ‘Discovery’ For People with Developmental Disabilities vs. Mental Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discovery Activities</th>
<th>Developmental Disabilities</th>
<th>Individuals with Mental Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons centred &amp; strength based planning</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involves person directly &amp; supports</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering information through multiple formats</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Informal interviews</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Group meetings with friends, family and supports</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spending time in the community with the person</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Going to different environments</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Doing different activities</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Observing the person’s learning style</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transferable Skills</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about their hopes, dreams, and interests</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Differences in ‘Discovery’ For People with Developmental Disabilities vs. Mental Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discovery Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship building at the beginning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Getting buy in from the individual on why customized vs. traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Managing expectations and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Management and/or Wellness Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emergency Contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Signs, symptoms, triggers, etc…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Scenarios and Solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with disclosure or non-disclosure to employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with a Multi-disciplinary Team (MH Worker, Psychiatrist, OT, GP, etc…)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Activities similar however method of communication may not need to be augmented as much as with someone with a developmental disability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consider how some of the strategies from the engagement & discovery process in the disability field could also work in the mental health field.

A. Frequent / Regular & Engaging Meetings
B. Have a Clear Process and Timeline
C. Take a Holistic View
A. Frequent / Regular & Engaging Meetings

- The purpose is to build rapport and learn as much about the individual as possible.
- Meetings should be flexible (time, location, focus)
- Meetings should often be out of the office.
  - In different environments (safe, unknown, busy, quiet, etc...)
- Activity-based in the community depending on employment goal
- Have a wide focus. Try to really pull out interests and motivators for that individual. It might be music, art, sports, culture. You don’t need a direct job link immediately but instead focus on engaging the individual to let you discover things about them.
Engagement examples

During the discovery process with a young lady living with mental health issues, PNGI’s employment coordinator Marty got to know about one of her hobbies that helps her to relax and stay calm.

She likes to create unique and individual robots made from all recycled materials!

In an effort to learn more about this and how it helps her to relax, Marty asked if she might make a robot for us to have at our office. She was quite pleased to do this and she got busy working on it. Each time they met she would give updates on her progress and they would talk about how this activity helps her to stay calm.

These discussions helped Marty identify some key features for a future workplace so that she will be able to be calm at work as well. Just the process of talking about a job can be somewhat anxiety producing and so being able to keep her engaged while learning about her relaxing hobby was a great benefit.

In the end we were all very impressed with her artistic skill and the robot she produced for us.

We held a “Name that Robot” competition amongst our employees and the robot is now called “Electrifying Alice”! She has a featured spot in the offices of PNGI.

~ PNGI Employment Coordinator, Marty, with “Electrifying Alice”, the official PNGI robot!
PNGI Employment Coordinator, Mark, was a musical kind of guy. His preference was heavy metal guitar tunes, but he was open to all types of music. He had one of his guitars hanging on the wall in his employment office and it has come in handy on multiple occasions over the years.

One man who came in was very depressed, very withdrawn, and anxious about the prospects and the process of finding employment. He had been out of the workforce for many years due to a brain injury, and his self esteem was very low. Mark was finding it challenging to engage him or draw out answers to questions he was posing.

Finally after this fellow noticed Mark’s guitar on the wall and told him he used to be in a band before his accident. That was it... the guitar came off the wall and they started to jam. The next meeting Mark told him to bring his own guitar with him and they would both jam together. He did and as they played they cha0ed and talked about employment. They would do some employment work at the start of each meeting and then end with a jam session.

A few weeks later that fellow started his first paid job in over 20 years and Mark was there to support him through the process.
B. Have a Clear Process and Timeline

• Ensure you have a clear process and timeline that you can communicate to the individual right at the beginning so they can understand.

• Outline shared responsibility and involvement.

• Let the individual know the process will progress at a realistic and manageable pace.

• We will follow an order and build one step at a time. We want the individual to be comfortable and confident at each step.

• Throughout the process show the individual where they are at and what they have accomplished to date and what is happening next
Clear Process and Timeline, continued

• One visual used by The Provincial Networking Group (PNGI) is this:

The Provincial Networking Group Inc. 2009 Individualized employment services process. www.pngi.ca
Clear Process and Timeline, continued

- One visual also used by Open Door Group (ODG) is this:

The Open Door Group in 2009: Individualized employment services process. [www.opendoorgroup.org](http://www.opendoorgroup.org)
C. Take a Holistic View

• Some agencies use a “Discovery Story” model to summarize and compile all the information learned through the discovery process.

• Other tools such as a Wellness Action Recovery Plan (WRAP) or a Disability Management Plan, could be helpful to include for people with Mental Health issues.

• Be sure to involve other helpful people in that individual’s support network as part of the initial discovery process. It will be important to have such people involved along the way.

• Identify early potential issues that could impact future employment such as living situations, medication compliance, addiction issues, transportation, relationships.
Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP®)

• The Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP®) is a personalized wellness and recovery system born out of and rooted in the principle of self-determination.

• WRAP® is a wellness and recovery approach that helps people to:
  1) decrease and prevent intrusive or troubling feelings and behaviors;
  2) increase personal empowerment;
  3) improve quality of life; and
  4) achieve their own life goals and dreams.

• Working with a WRAP® can help individuals to monitor uncomfortable and distressing feelings and behaviors and, through planned responses, reduce, modify, or eliminate those feelings. A WRAP® also includes plans for responses from others when an individual cannot make decisions, take care of him/herself, and/or keep him/herself safe.

Website Link: http://copelandcenter.com
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Look at examples of how important engagement is on the part of individuals living with mental health issues when considering employment.

• People may have had negative past experiences regarding employment or have been told they would not be capable of working.
• They may have little actual employment experience.
• The process can seem very overwhelming.
• They may have some misconceptions about employment that need to be addressed.
There may be a great deal of anxiety around expectations of employment.

If the individual is not engaged, they may go along with the process (led by the employment support person) only to start to sabotage things or drop out when it gets to the point of actually starting a job.

If the person doesn’t feel engaged they may not speak up about it. They may just stop coming back, or make excuses as to why they can’t participate.
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Poll questions for participants:

1. How many of you have had a job seeker appear to start to sabotage or put up barriers once the reality of a new job was in front of them?

2. How many people have experienced job seekers who start but just don’t return?
Success Story From Open Door Group

Transportation Issue

- Meeting the individual where they are at
- Discovering capabilities and comfort levels
- How far are they willing to go outside of their comfort levels?
- Homework and/or exercises to figure out where their employment readiness is at and then work from there.
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Identify ways to use strength based assessment information to support job development activities.

• After Identifying Strengths
  
  o Which might have direct transferable employment skills?
    ➢ Who might pay for these skills?

  o Which might indicate some ideal conditions for employment or an important factor to consider in a future workplace?
    ➢ What workplaces would have these types of features / conditions?
Success Story: The Dark Table

“It takes a special type of person to do this job. Yes, they have to be legally blind. But they also have to have a gentle touch, a commanding voice, a sense of humour.”

Dark Table review: The Globe and Mail

In spring 2012, Moe Alameddine was preparing to open his Vancouver restaurant, Dark Table, located in Kitsilano. He had a location a manager and now he just needed staff.

Dark Table offer patrons a unique “dining in the dark” experience and employs blind and visually-impaired guide servers. For Moe, past serving experience and credentials were not on the top of his list. The success of his restaurant relied on having servers that had strong people-skills and who enjoy interacting with patrons.

We could immediately think of several candidates who had the skills and personality Moe was looking for, and who had faced barriers trying to find a traditional job. After an information session and in-person visit to the restaurant, Moe had his team and was ready to go!

Faces are blackened due to copyright- See Globe and Mail
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• Identify Support Network & Supportive / Helpful People
  • Often we get jobs through people we know, referrals, or introductions.
  • How can these supports help after the individual is employed?
  • Are there any connections to businesses or jobs that share discovered through the strengths based assessment. (Who do we know?)
• Networking Maps
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Poll questions for participants:

1. How many of ended up getting a job in the past due in part to who you knew or connections or referrals from helpful people in your support network?
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Review ways to keep a person living with mental health issues engaged and actively involved in the initial stages of employment.

- Research activities
- Environment testing
- Work simulations
- Situational Assessments
- Highlight how they are central to the process
- Celebrate progress!
Mike Ward, the owner of Reubin’s Diner in Kamloops, needed a new server. For Mike, a friendly attitude and a knack for customer service was paramount.

We teamed him up with Carol, who was seeking a meaningful, part-time role in her community where she would have the opportunity to socialize with people and develop her skills. Although Carol had limited work experience, (her last paid employment was when she was just 15 years old) she had great time management and problem-solving skills, ideal for Mike’s diner.

She began a part-time Customized Employment position at the diner, one which utilized these skills while meeting the employer’s needs.

Mike is extremely pleased with his new hire. “Carol is worth her weight in gold and we value her as a member of our team,” he says. “She always gets things done and the rest of the staff love having her around. I really forward to her coming in and some days wish she earlier!”

She does work that I don’t have time to do myself which is hugely valuable”.

“I love the atmosphere here at the diner and keeping busy,” says Carol. “Open Door Group checks in with me to see that I’m doing ok and they check in with Mike to see if he’s happy with my work. I feel like I’ve come a long way”.

“

“She’s worth her weight in gold”

Mike Ward - Owner, Reubin’s Diner
Engagement and Discovery

Situational Assessments

Situational Assessment Proposal

Submitted to:

Date:

By:

Employment Coordinator for PNGI

250-635-4479

What is a Situational Assessment?

Think of a more planned and purposeful work experience.

Situational assessments are usually shorter in duration, possibly only one or two times. They are conducted and supervised by our employment coordinator who will be with the person doing hands-on training and working with them.

It gives you the best chance to see a person’s abilities or needs first hand in a real work environment. These assessments really do help us assist the person in getting a job matched to them.

The Person:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

What We’d Like To Assess:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

The Fine Print

There isn’t much fine print:
- Our staff and the person being assessed are covered by our insurance and WSBC.
- You show our staff what you would like done and they will be responsible for training the person and ensuring things are done as you expect.
- You are under no obligation whatsoever to hire the person, this is an assessment only.

What’s In It For You?

We can provide you with some labour on a short term basis at no cost to you.

You can help us provide valuable employment support to a person currently not working… more jobs and employment income in our community is good for all businesses.

In the future if you need a reliable employee that you know has been thoroughly assessed for skill you will know who to call.

Possible Schedule:

Schedule 1

Schedule 2

Schedule 3

Schedule 4

Schedule 5
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Thank you

Questions?
Comments?

Next webinar in the series:
January 9, 2015
Job Finding: Successes and Challenges

www.psyrehab.ca