



VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

A Taste of Customized Employment

Chris Clause
Assistant Field Operations Manager

May 21, 2018

Missouri Department
of Elementary and Secondary Education

Training Objectives

2

- Why this topic?
- Relationship between CE and SE
- Develop common language
- Begin thinking about how CE fits into what we already do



(Re)Introduction to CE

3

- <http://www.wintac.org/>
- “The Essential Elements of Customized Employment for Universal Application”
- “Recommendations for Customized Employment Practices”



The Essential Elements

4

- Four Sections
 1. Overview of Customized Employment
 2. Conducting Discovery
 3. Planning for Customized Employment
 4. Employment Development Representation



What is Customized Employment?

5

- “Customized Employment means individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers that meet the needs of both.”
 - Federal Register, June 2006



What is Customized Employment?

6

- **"Customized Employment" (CE) is defined in final WIOA regs, Federal Register, 361.5 (c) (11), as:**
- **Competitive integrated employment**, for an individual with a **significant disability**, that is:
 - Based on an individualized determination of the unique strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability;
 - Designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the business needs of the employer; and
 - Carried out through **flexible strategies**, such as -
 - **Job exploration by the individual**; and
 - **Working with an employer to facilitate placement, including -**
 - Customizing a job description based on current employer needs or on previously unidentified and unmet employer needs;
 - Developing a set of job duties, a work schedule and job arrangement, and specifics of supervision (including performance evaluation and review), and determining a job location;
 - Using a professional representative chosen by the individual, or if elected self-representation, to work with an employer to facilitate placement; and
 - Providing services and supports at the job location.



What is Customized Employment?

7

What about Supported Employment?

- Although Customized Employment is considered part of Supported Employment (SE) in WIOA regulation, CE is delineated as a separate **set of tools and strategies** to achieve competitive integrated employment



Employment Matrix

Some job seekers do not need Supported Employment or Customized Employment

Some job Seekers will need Supported Employment to obtain and retain a job

Some job seekers need Customized Employment to obtain a job but do not need Supported Employment to retain the job.

Some job seekers need Customized Employment to obtain a job and Supported Employment to retain the job.



The Essential Elements.....

9

1. Negotiation of Job Duties
2. Individualization, involving a job for one person.
3. Negotiated pay of at least minimum wage



The Essential Elements.....

4. CE occurs in businesses in the community or in businesses owned by the individual.
5. CE facilitates mutually beneficial voluntary employment relationships.
6. Job development “agents” are used as necessary to represent the employment seeker.



The Essential Elements.....

7. A qualitative “no fail” process that presumes that all individuals can work.
8. Customized self-employment or customized wage employment, as chosen by the individual.
9. CE is best used to meet the employment needs of employment seekers with disabilities who have not been or are unlikely to be successful with traditional, demand-side employment.



Section #2: Discovery

1. Determination of the individual's strengths, needs, and interests should be the result of a qualitative approach to discovery.
2. The Discovery process used should include the recognized strategies of qualitative research.
3. Discovery facilitation should strive to view the employment seeker descriptively rather than evaluatively.



Section #2: Discovery

13

4. Discovery should include interviewing the employment seeker, the family/natural supporters, and friends.
5. Discovery should include observations of and participation with the employment seeker in typical aspects of their lives.
6. Discovery should include an “optimistically” focused review of records pertaining to the employment seeker.
7. Sufficient time is an essential component of quality Discovery.



Section #3: Plan for Customizing Employment

1. The planning meeting should be held in a timely manner following Discovery.
2. With assistance as necessary, the employment seeker should approve all aspects of the planning meeting and plan for customizing employment.
3. The planning meeting must be facilitated by an individual who participated in the Discovery process.



Section #3: Plan for Customizing Employment

4. Those attending the planning meeting should be individuals who know the employment seeker.
5. Those attending the planning meeting should be provided copies of the Discovery document.
6. The planning meeting should be attended by the job development or employment specialist who was involved in the Discovery process.



Section #3: Plan for Customizing Employment

7. The goal is to have at least as many individuals invited to the meeting who are paid as those who are not paid.
8. The planning meeting should provide a recap of the employment seeker's strengths, needs, and interests.
9. The planning meeting should generate a list of job tasks that fit the employment seeker to be offered to potential employers.



Section #3: Plan for Customizing Employment

17

10. The planning meeting should include a listing of specific employers, consistent with the employment seeker's strengths, needs, interests, and vocational themes.
11. A copy of the plan for customizing employment should be provided to both the employment seeker and funder.



Section #4: Employment Development Representation

18

1. The primary customer of the job developer or employment specialist in CE is always the employment seeker.
2. Employment specialists and the employment seeker, with supports as necessary, should determine the individual's essential and ideal features of employment.



Section #4: Employment Development Representation

3. Employment specialists should prepare and practice an initial presentation designed to explain the concept of CE and the present the employment seeker to potential employers.
4. Employment specialists should use all connections possibly associated with the employment seeker.
5. Employment specialists should avoid job openings and the typical personnel process when approaching potential employers.



Section #4: Employment Development Representation

20

6. Employment specialists should develop strategies for assisting employers to identify specific areas in which the business might benefit.
7. Employment specialists should emphasize an informational relationship with potential employers rather than attempt to persuade.
8. Employment specialists should develop a customized job description with an employer.



Section #4: Employment Development Representation

9. Employment specialists should ask for permission from the employment seeker to disclose personal factors.
10. Employment specialists should negotiate a support plan with employers that offers access to natural supports.



Customized Employment in Kentucky

22

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIkaHkQKukQ>



What's Next?

23

- Don't wait!
- Systemic approach being developed for Missouri
 - Pilots later in 2018
 - Goal of statewide implementation in 2019



Contact Us

vr.dese.mo.gov

chris.clause@vr.dese.mo.gov

