



dachverband
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4. Job Coaching

4.1. What is Job Coaching?

The support service of Job Coaching has a basically preventative element in the sense that it provides ongoing professional integration and offers support to people with disabilities/chronic illnesses – directly at the workplace. Guidance at the workplace consists of help with practical training, prevocational evaluation, entering the workforce, restructuring and retraining, changes in the workplace and when termination looms on the horizon.

Job coaches are available as contacts for people with disabilities/chronic illnesses as well as for businesses.

Job Coaching usually begins with the clients' entry into a business, i.e. directly at the workplace. As a rule, it is not a support service helping with the job placement, since job coaches usually encounter an already existing relationship between an employer and an employee.

Job coaches differ from mentors because of their status outside the business. Their activities are not part of the workday routine.

Job Coaching is a sub-area of professional integration.

4.2. Target Groups of Job Coaching – Who should take advantage of Job Coaching?

Guidance from a job coach becomes necessary for people with disabilities/chronic illnesses, who

⇒ are in continuous employment subject to social insurance contributions or

- ⇒ are undergoing a prevocational evaluation and their chances to obtain employment are greatly increased with this support or
- ⇒ who have some other kind of full coverage insurance.

Job Coaching also involves employers, superiors and coworkers in its process.

4.3. What are the Goals and Concrete Tasks of Job Coaching?

Guidance from job coaches encompasses help with the introduction into such business operations as for example

- ⇒ Orientation as to place: within the business, rides to get there etc.
- ⇒ Orientation as to time: daily routines, the start of the workday, ending the workday, regulating breaks, staying on schedule, training under limited resources of time, punctuality etc.
- ⇒ Organizational assistance: establishing suitable work sequences and adapting them to abilities, skills and achievements of the clients, introducing them to the workplace dynamics [hierarchies, allocation of responsibilities, contact persons, etc.]
- ⇒ “Interpretive” work for all parties concerned - improving communication in the workplace
- ⇒ Content-related, manual support / Training on the job: in consultation with employers, tasks are practiced, evaluated and implemented with coworkers and clients. However, job coaches do not undertake any independent, specialized training.

Another aspect of guidance provided by job coaches is of equal importance, and that is the personal support or coaching of the clients:

- ⇒ Social support: improving motivation, discussing and reflecting on performance profiles, improvements or possible declines in output.
- ⇒ Social competency training: instruction in social and cultural conventions, rules of communication and maintaining good manners even in crisis situations
- ⇒ Networking: Job coaches form a link, or liaison for the redirection to other supporting organizations [health related, financial matters, matters pertaining to family and accommodation etc.].

4.4. What Job Coaching has to offer to Businesses

Job coaches lend professional and competent support to businesses with questions related to professional integration. Employers are to receive yet another source for support from the job coaches.

The service of Job Coaching includes:

- ⇒ Information about the abilities and skills of the employees, about the legal framework, financial promotions and fundraising support as well as information about an employee's disability/chronic illness and any possible effects it may have in the workplace
- ⇒ Workplace analysis: Job coaches key in to the workplace set-up and the tasks at hand and explore the best use of existing facilities.
- ⇒ Information about workplace adaptation and support in implementing changes
- ⇒ Sensitizing the business environment/instructing coworkers
- ⇒ Information and support in the implementation of mentoring
- ⇒ Crisis intervention/resolution oriented guidance: Job coaches provide support during difficult situations at work.

4.5. Case Study

Michael M. is 25 years old and after several attempts secured a position in a garden center.

After his formal schooling he spent several years at home and this made him very unhappy. An aptitude profile was eventually established for him in the course of a professional orientation. This demonstrated his preference for working outdoors. In the time that followed, Mr. M. received intensive counseling from an employment assistant. With his guidance a job was finally found, and Mr. M. was employed by a garden center within the scope of a sponsored work program. His clearly defined job description includes helping the specialized staff and cleaning the equipment.

In the first few months of his employment, Mr. M. is now receiving guidance from a job coach who helps him familiarize himself with his assignments. The job coach is also the contact person for Mr. M.'s coworkers. On the one hand, they are quite interested in helping Mr. M. with adjusting to his new job. On the other hand, they would like him to become a fully functioning member of the team as fast as possible. During the analysis of the work sequence, which is another responsibility of the job coach, it was discovered that it was very important for Mr. M. to follow a very definite system when he

cleaned the equipment. Together with the supervisor and Mr. M., the job coach set up an instruction sheet which outlined the order in which certain pieces of equipment should be cleaned and looked after.

These days Mr. M. is a motivated – and according to the supervisor – an indispensable employee of the garden center.