



Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

**Communication Strategies for
Providers & Messages for Families**

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

Communication Strategies for Providers, Messages for Families



Introduction

Effective communication is vital for agencies supporting individuals with disabilities who are transitioning from sheltered workshop employment to competitive integrated employment (CIE). Involving individuals with disabilities, their families, agency staff, employers, and community members is integral to this process. A positive, informed communication plan can pave the way for successful and fulfilling transitions while serving as a commitment to individualized support.

The plan promotes collaboration, addresses concerns, builds trust, and creates a supportive environment for individuals with disabilities and their families.

Clear communication aligns efforts and expectations, helps stakeholders understand their roles and contributions, and reduces confusion and resistance. Transparency builds trust among individuals, their families, and agency about the process, challenges, and available support and resources.

This resource contains five key messages and supportive strategies for community assistance providers that play a crucial role in the transition from sheltered workshop employment to CIE. The messages are tailored for families. The plan acknowledges the crucial role families play, promotes collaboration, addresses concerns, builds trust, and creates a supportive environment for individuals with disabilities and their families.

Additionally, the **Addendum** includes useful resources for providers organized across two broad categories: (1) **agency staging and preparedness** and (2) **professional staff development**.

“[Essential Resources for Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment](#),” a complementary guide, is a trove of information and resources that providers can distribute and use with families and individuals in one-on-one conversations or in a variety of venues.



Summary of the Top Five Communication Strategies

1. Deliver a positive outlook on the transition to competitive integrated employment.

The first strategy centers on instilling a positive outlook by emphasizing the transformative impact of CIE on social inclusion, career growth, and overall quality of life. Aligning with Indiana's commitment to the Home and Community-Based Integrated Settings Rule and Employment First Legislation, the plan underscores Indiana's dedication to complying with regulations and promoting community-based employment for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the plan highlights the connection between transitioning to CIE and upholding disability rights, ensuring a full array of options for informed choices.

2. Provide families with clear information and address their concerns.

This strategy delves into the common concerns and skepticism families may have regarding the transition. By highlighting the importance of CIE, addressing safety and well-being concerns, discussing employment challenges and social interaction, and balancing work and family responsibilities, the plan seeks to provide comprehensive information that empowers families to make informed decisions. Information dissemination, combined with family-centered dialogue, can mitigate barriers preventing a seamless transition to CIE.

3. Define customized employment and explain why it's important.

Recognizing the need for families to comprehend the significance of customized employment, the plan emphasizes CIE as industry best practice endorsed by key entities. It reassures families that customized employment caters to individual strengths, addressing concerns about productivity and job demands.

4. Acknowledge unique needs and commit to individualized job placement and support.

To dispel misconceptions and build trust, the plan communicates the agency's commitment to individualized job placement and support. It stresses the positive impact of tailored employment services on the success of individuals with disabilities. Clear commitment statements reinforce the agency's dedication to meeting unique needs through individualized employment services.

5. Reimagine work and daily life.

Recognizing concerns about disruptions to daily routines, loss of existing relationships, and a created void in meaningful activity or schedules, this strategy encourages families to reimagine work and daily life in the absence of sheltered employment programs. It aims to address and alleviate worries through open dialogue and a proactive approach to information dissemination. Families will benefit from explicit messaging followed by proactive action, so that they and their loved one will not be abandoned. Rather, person-centered transition will reflect the individual's informed and preferred goals.



The Top Five Communication Strategies: Details and Sample Messages

1. Deliver a positive outlook on the transition to competitive integrated employment.

Help families understand the positive outcomes and benefits associated with transitioning to CIE. Emphasize the increased social inclusion, career growth, and improved quality of life that come with this transition. Families and individuals may not be aware of the shifts in policy that affect this transition.

- **Compliance with Home and Community-Based Integrated Settings Rule:** Indiana is aligning with the home- and community-based integrated settings rule. The state recognizes the need to move from working in a sheltered workshop to CIE to comply with regulations and improve the employment rate for people with disabilities.

- **Employment First Legislation in Indiana:** Indiana implemented Employment First legislation in 2017, emphasizing that employment in the community is the preferred outcome for people with disabilities. This legislation supports the right of everyone, regardless of disability, to work in the community in an inclusive environment where everyone is equally involved and supported to earn a living wage.
- **Disability Rights and Informed Choices:** Transitioning to CIE is a disability rights issue, ensuring individuals have a full array of options related to their individual interests. Acknowledge that limiting options through sheltered work hinders informed choices. Highlight the importance of gaining experience with different options.
- **Addressing Concerns and Questions:** Anticipate and address concerns such as worries about education and experience, fear of losing friends, lack of transportation, and questions about making CIE work for the whole family. Provide examples of successful transitions and emphasize the positive impact of meaningful work on dignity and social inclusion.

1

Positive Framing Examples



- “We believe in the positive benefits of competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. People with significant disabilities, with the right support, including naturally occurring supports, can and should be expected to contribute to their communities through employment, in a manner like their peers without disabilities. Let's explore how competitive integrated employment can work for your family. At the same time, we acknowledge the value your son/daughter places on existing friendships and will help develop a plan to maintain those relationships, and make new relationships with others in the community and at work.”
- “Instead of focusing on eliminating choices, let's consider alternatives to fill the gap left by sheltered programs. Our goal is not to take away an option without building other opportunities. We understand the fear of the unknown, but we want to help you see the positive benefits of CIE. We aim to maintain existing relationships while opening opportunities for additional valued roles in the community.”
- “While challenges exist when funding is redirected from sheltered workshops into supporting individuals to attain competitive integrated employment, our focus is on person-centered planning for a meaningful week. We want to ensure positive outcomes, maintain relationships, and introduce new valued roles in the community. This is an exciting opportunity for the family and your loved one to imagine what an ideal day and week might look like.”

Provider Strategies

- **Showcase existing partnerships** with inclusive employers to build confidence in the potential success of the transition. Share positive experiences of employees with disabilities to address concerns.
- **Provide workshops and training sessions for families** to understand opportunities, rights, and resources in competitive employment settings. This empowers families to actively support their loved ones during the transition.
- **Educate families about the Vocational Rehabilitation-to-waiver transition process.** Clarify the ongoing support services, emphasizing the interaction between Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and waiver budgets and the possibility of reopening VR services.

2. Provide families with clear information and address their concerns.

Families often express concerns about the transition to CIE. These concerns may include doubts about success, fear of the unknown, and general psychological distress. Questions such as, "Can CIE really work for my loved one?" and "How can they maintain Social Security benefits while working?" are common. Comprehensive benefits counseling will be provided to address these concerns, ensuring families make informed decisions.

- **Importance of Competitive Integrated Employment**
 - Highlight the significance of CIE and explain why it is important for individuals with disabilities.
 - Address the skepticism by providing clear information on available workplace support within the CIE framework.
- **Safety and Well-Being**
 - Proactively address concerns about safety in community-based jobs, management of medical conditions, and transportation to and from work.
 - Provide detailed information on workplace support available in CIE to alleviate uncertainties and fears associated with these aspects.
- **Employment Challenges and Social Interaction**
 - Address concerns related to work demands, potential discrimination from employers or co-workers, communication challenges, and the suitability of the job for individuals with specific conditions.
 - Offer evidence-based data, success stories, and testimonials to showcase positive outcomes in similar situations.

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- **Balancing Work and Family Responsibilities**
 - Assure families that information will be provided on managing family responsibilities while working in CIE.
 - Highlight the agency's commitment to fostering transparency through ongoing communication.
 - Emphasize the importance of fostering transparency through comprehensive information dissemination to build trust in safety measures associated with CIE.
 - Proactively address skepticism by providing clear and detailed information on available workplace support within the framework of CIE.
 - Initiate proactive information dissemination and problem-solving mechanisms to alleviate uncertainties and fears associated with the unknown aspects of CIE.

Provider Strategies

- **Ensure your agency has a qualified benefits liaison** to offer benefits awareness and counseling for informed consent during the transition. Stress the importance of benefits counseling as integral to the informed decision-making process, with service providers having professional connections to ensure a thorough benefits analysis for each individual. Facilitate accurate information flow to individuals and families through the expertise of the benefits liaison.
- **Educate families about the VR-to-waiver transition process.** Connect ongoing support services by explaining and emphasizing the interaction between VR and waiver budgets. It is important families know there is a continuum of services. Clarify that VR can reopen cases repeatedly to provide services after closure as necessary, ensuring sustained support and adaptability. Acknowledge the continuous career growth and evolving interests that individuals may have in the context of CIE.
- **Clearly explain the waiver transition between** the support systems of VR and waiver budgets during the waiver handoff (successful VR closure). Pay careful attention to the verbiage used in describing long-term support services through case management coordination and agency follow-up. Develop an ongoing support plan and ensure sufficient agency resources to make this happen.
- **Use transparent communication channels** such as webinars, fact sheets, and brochures to build trust among families. Encouraging ongoing, consistent, clear, and accessible communication helps to avoid assumptions and ensure families are well-informed.
- **Create platforms for open discussions, questions, and sharing thoughts,** such as town hall meetings, focus groups, or one-on-one sessions with agency representatives. Engaging in personalized communication recognizes the uniqueness of each family's situation.

Positive Framing Examples



- “We understand you, your family, and your son/daughter may be skeptical about competitive integrated jobs and that you have legitimate concerns. Change, even positive change, is usually stressful. To help ease your concerns and anxiety, we want to provide clear and consistent communication.”
- “You may be concerned about workplace support when a person works in competitive, integrated employment. Our employment team will work directly with you and your loved one to identify an ideal community job, including tasks to be completed. Once this is identified, our employment team will start the job search and consult with you and your loved one along the way. Deciding to accept a job is ultimately the choice of the individual, but your support is an absolute necessity. Helping a person find a job with co-workers who are accepting is important to both of us. Together, we will discuss workplace support before moving forward.”
- “Planning for workplace support includes arranging reliable transportation, developing a plan to manage medical issues while at work, and supporting ways to help a person communicate with others. Any concerns about physical safety will be proactively addressed.”
- “We want to be transparent throughout this transition. You will have opportunities to learn about the transition process, its goals and benefits, and how service agency personnel work together collectively. This will include webinars, fact sheets, brochures, and one-on-one meetings.”
- “Benefit specialists, called Benefits Information Network (BIN) liaisons, analyze each person’s individualized government benefits; plan what benefits the person should seek or use in the future; and help them outline how to obtain, maintain, and properly use these benefits while maintaining employment, personal savings, and other financial and medical services.”

Define customized employment and explain why it's important.

Families supporting an individual with significant impacts of disability need a clear understanding of customized employment. They should understand that customized employment is a recognized industry best practice for these job seekers. The Office of Disability Employment Policy, the Workforce Integration and Opportunity Act, Vocational Rehabilitation, and subject matter experts within the industry have acknowledged its significance for decades. This messaging is crucial for families who may worry that their adult son/daughter lacks the ability to contribute meaningfully to an employer.

Research has consistently shown that customized employment is not only a viable option but also a transformative approach for individuals with disabilities. The balanced reciprocity it establishes between employer needs and individual contributions is a win-win outcome. Families, who might be preoccupied with concerns about productivity and job demands, need reassurance that customized employment caters to the unique strengths and capabilities of their loved ones.

Service provider staff, particularly those in the roles of employment specialists and job developers, must comprehend that successful implementation of customized employment requires the development of specialized skill sets, including marketing and negotiation skills. Agency leadership is equally pivotal in recognizing this, in ensuring the availability of professional development opportunities for skill and content knowledge acquisition, in selecting employment staff who are strength-based optimists, in developing strategic mentorship networks, and in developing a system for ongoing and escalated practice expertise.

- **Customized employment as an industry best practice:** Endorsed by key entities such as the Office of Disability Employment Policy, the Workforce Integration and Opportunity Act, Vocational Rehabilitation, and subject matter experts worldwide, customized employment is an established best practice alongside the larger umbrella of supported employment. This includes the original Dartmouth model of Individual Support and Placement (IPS), currently being piloted and expanded in Indiana.
- **Zero exclusion standards:** The practice of customized employment provision recognizes that each person possesses unique and transferable skills for the workplace. Customized employment is an individually negotiated job arrangement that matches a job seeker's strengths with an employer's identified needs. Both the needs of the job seeker and employer are considered. Customized employment allows individuals with significant impacts of disability to make meaningful contributions in the workplace. Customized employment stands on the philosophy that everyone has strengths, skills, and "genius" that can be used in a job, and that it's just a matter of working with the person and an employer to match genius with need.

- **Customized employment recognized in statute:** Customized employment is referenced in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), and the federal code (29 U.S. Code § 705), further establishing its strategies and use as a viable method for individualized job placement, especially for people with significant impacts of disability.

According to U.S. Code noted above, customized employment strategies include:

- job exploration by the individual as well as
- working with an employer to facilitate placement, which can include:
 - 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;
 - representation by a professional chosen by the individual, or self-representation of the individual, in working with an employer to facilitate placement; and
 - providing services and supports at the job location.

3

Positive Framing Examples



- “We recognize you may be concerned about your loved one being able to meaningfully contribute when working with a community-based employer. You may also have many other concerns, including workplace safety, support in the workplace, your loved one’s emotional well-being, or their ability to communicate with coworkers. Through customized employment, we can address those needs and concerns.”
- “Customized employment is a method for finding good-fitting work for people with disabilities, including people with significant mental health issues. The customized employment process results in an individually negotiated job that matches a person’s strengths with an employer’s identified needs while also considering the individual needs of the employee. Customized employment allows individuals with significant disability to make meaningful contributions in the workplace. Sometimes referred to as job creation, customized employment is referenced in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Office of Disability Employment Policy, and the federal code (29 U.S. Code § 705).”

Positive Framing Examples



- “Our agency is committed to providing customized employment when needed. Our staff are trained in delivering effective instructional techniques, conducting task analysis to develop a training plan for a task or tasks, completing workplace assessments to identify what an employer needs, leveraging natural supports, teaching self-management skills, identifying effective accommodations, facilitating advanced job negotiation, and a host of other competencies. Customized employment includes developing a set of job duties, a work schedule, an agreed upon wage, and other performance criteria that all parties agree upon. We’re not talking about simply filling an open and advertised position—we are talking about job creation.”
- “Rather than trying to force fit someone with a disability into a job without consideration of the strengths and skills they already have, an employment specialist works with the individual with a disability and their stakeholders along with the potential employer to customize a job using the person’s skills and strengths. Everyone has strengths, skills, and “genius” that can be used in a job. It’s a matter of working with the person and an employer to match genius with need.”

Provider Strategies

- **Showcase existing partnerships** with employers who have hired a person for a customized job to build confidence in the potential success of individualized job negotiation. Share positive experiences of employees with disabilities to address concerns about job performance and to encourage high family expectations.
- **Develop and disseminate success stories** featuring individuals working in a customized job. Additionally, augment this with employer testimonials regarding the value of created jobs. If your agency does not have a success story or employer testimonial, collaborate with your agency’s larger community of practice (other agencies) or Vocational Rehabilitation to identify success stories you can use.
- **Develop and disseminate a customized employment fact sheet**, citing studies and research findings that support the effectiveness of customized employment in fostering meaningful work for individuals with disabilities. If your agency is in or among rural community(ies), mention the proven effectiveness of customized employment strategies, including self-

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

employment, in these communities. Your fact sheet would include self-employment resources, including VR, for people with disabilities.

- **Pay attention to staff competency needs.** Research indicates customized employment strategies require a more advanced staff skill set, including:
 - systematic instructional techniques,
 - fundamental training methods (fading, chaining, prompting),
 - task analysis,
 - instructional plans,
 - workplace assessments,
 - use of natural supports,
 - self-management training,
 - accommodation identification,
 - advanced job negotiation,
 - marketing skills,
 - job development techniques,
 - negotiation capabilities,
 - effective communication with employers,
 - job teaching, and
 - long-term support planning.

It behooves agency leadership to develop internal systemic training and mentoring portals to ensure staff are competent in delivering customized strategies.

4. Acknowledge unique needs and commit to individualized job placement and support.

Families seek assurance regarding the commitment to individualized job placement, as misconceptions about inflexibility in employment options may influence their decision to discount CIE. Research indicates families fear that community rehabilitation provider agency staff do not have the expertise required to support competitive employment outcomes. It is important to convey to families that individualized service provision is a cornerstone of the agency's approach, requiring proactive steps such as maintaining a well-trained and sufficient staff to uphold this commitment. CIE does not have to lead to a loss of essential services for the individual. Instead, service delivery should adapt to the changing needs of a person pursuing CIE's person-centered goals.

Assuring families of your commitment to individualized job placement and support is vital for fostering trust and dispelling misconceptions. Research consistently highlights the positive impact of tailored employment services on the success of individuals with disabilities, reinforcing the importance of this commitment. Express a clear commitment to individualized

job placement and support, whether through supported or customized employment strategies. This commitment underscores the agency's dedication to meeting everyone's unique needs. Always frame conversations with families to highlight the agency's emphasis on individualized employment services.

- **Education and individualized planning** are integral components of a more holistic approach for assisting people with disabilities and their families/guardians throughout the transition from employment in a sheltered workshop to CIE. Individualized planning, as illuminated by current research and expert perspectives, not only alleviates safety fears but also paves the way for a more inclusive and equitable employment landscape.
- **Address safety-related concerns.** An important strategy aimed at easing the transition from sheltered employment to CIE for individuals with disabilities revolves around dispelling safety-related apprehensions. This strategy hinges on comprehensive education and individualized planning, ensuring the safety of individuals during their transition to CIE. A central aspect involves meticulous assessment of the safety needs of individuals with disabilities. This encompasses identifying necessary accommodations, analyzing potential work environments, and aligning them with the person's specific requirements.
- **Include stakeholder education as an integral part of individualized services.** Research indicates how important it is that stakeholders receive education on current practices and information about CIE, including instruction on how to most successfully support everyone as they transition to CIE. Stakeholders can include VR, community service providers, people with disabilities, parents, guardians, and waiver case managers. Individualized support is a team responsibility. Obtaining and positively maintaining individualized plans through VR and waiver services can ensure that an individual's voice, preferences, strengths, and desires are at the center of all stakeholder efforts toward employment.
- **Transportation and benefits planning** materialize throughout research as two key areas reflecting family concerns, and both can be remediated through individualized service delivery. Transportation costs may be considered as an impairment related work expense (IRWE), a work incentive that helps many workers with disabilities who receive Social Security benefits keep more of their paycheck without it impacting their benefits.
- **Networking** can include introducing community employers to service providers and families; including employers on individualized employment teams; facilitating job search practices

4

Positive Framing Example



- “We are committed to individualized job placement and support, either through supported or customized employment strategies. Our agency recognizes the unique needs of everyone, and our well-trained staff is dedicated to ensuring a tailored approach for every person we serve.”

such as inclusion in employment fairs, reverse job fairs, training on universal design in employment, and supporting collective networking through employer-to-employer mentoring.

- **Build trust.** Note that families and individuals may harbor a distrust of professional service providers, including those with both sheltered employment settings and CIE settings. This can pose a substantial barrier to CIE. Family and individual concerns may be related to safety or to emotional/psychological concerns. During or following a conversion away from 14c employment settings, many families distrust that professional CIE services will be sufficient to ensure the safety and welfare of their adult child. They may perceive that their loved one is being abandoned in the switch to CIE.

Provider Strategies

- Provide workshops and training sessions to help families **understand opportunities, rights, and resources in competitive employment settings.** This empowers families to actively support their loved ones during the transition.
- **Educate families about the VR-to-waiver transition process.** Clarify the ongoing support services, emphasizing the interaction between VR and waiver budgets and the possibility of reopening VR services. Acknowledge the continuous career growth and evolving interests individuals may have in the context of CIE. Clarify that VR services can be reopened repeatedly after closure, ensuring sustained support and adaptability. Clearly explain the interaction between the support systems of VR and waiver budgets during the waiver handoff. Pay careful attention to the verbiage used in describing long-term support services through case management coordination and agency follow-up.
- **Be transparent when planning for CIE to ensure informed choice-making.** Families benefit from understanding the careful, thorough, and deliberate information-gathering strategies used by employment professionals prior to reaching consensus about an individualized, ideal employment outcome. Share the content of the Indiana Discovery narrative profile as services are provided, collecting family/individual feedback and contribution along the way.
- **Help families better understand the connection between SSDI, SSI, maintaining Medicaid, and employment.** An individual who receives funding and health care from these sources *can* obtain and maintain CIE and be paid a competitive wage while working the number of hours they are able to, something that must be individualized per person. Families are more at ease when knowing that CIE and benefits are not a “one or the other” proposition. Both can occur simultaneously. Provide robust and accessible information through a benefits counselor or other content expert.
- **Adjust your agency’s business model.** There is no obstacle preventing a 14(c) agency from adjusting its business model to support individualized CIE. This adjustment may include professional development updates, staff training, reimagining staff roles, refining the

mission statement, and developing alternative funding sources. Agencies can make this transition. Adapting program practices and procedures in a person-centered manner rather than limiting services promotes inclusion, community participation, and a higher quality of life for people with disabilities. Programs dedicated to improving the overall well-being of those they support must invest in themselves by reimagining service delivery and enhancing staff skill competence.

- **Build relationships with local employers aimed at disability education.** Family reluctance toward competitive, integrated employment may be heightened due to the perception that employers are naïve to disability issues and reluctant to individualize accommodations needed for success. Factors facilitating successful competitive employment include knowledge of business needs, enhanced marketing methods, and assisting in the education of employers around issues related to the worker with a disability, including the cost, variety, and availability of accommodations. Engaging the business community will assist an agency when individualizing job placement and support arrangements.
- **Provide examples of individualized information gathering relative to CIE goals.** Engage the supportive family members in reviewing and endorsing an individual’s eventual Discovery profile and resultant job recommendations and ideal work conditions.

5. Reimagine work and daily life.

Families often express concerns about the potential disruptions to their adult child's daily routine when transitioning from 14(c) sheltered employment programs to CIE. Many are accustomed to a structured Monday through Friday, 9 am to 4 pm schedule, with provided transportation. It is crucial to address these concerns by encouraging families and their loved ones to reimagine work and daily life in the absence of 14(c) employment.

Positive Framing Examples

- “As we embark on this transition, it's important for you and your loved one to reimagine what a meaningful week looks like outside of sheltered employment. We are here to help you figure out your goals, explore what your days will look like, and identify the supports you'll need to make it happen. Let's look at how new ways to provide day programming creatively and flexibly, emphasizing relationship building and community resource exploration to facilitate an ideal weekly routine for you or your loved one.”
- “There are benefits to relationship-building and community resource exploration in enhancing the quality of life for individuals transitioning to competitive integrated employment. We'd like to work alongside you and your loved one to re-imagine what they consider an enviable life.”

- **Acknowledging the role of sheltered employment and day services:** Most sheltered workshops have doubled both as workshops and day centers, where multi-faceted care is provided by community service providers. This may have included recreation, personal care, continued education, community access, and daily activities. Many caregivers have depended upon these day services to provide regular and often extensive caregiving needs of their family member or person who needs care, so that parents, siblings, other family members, and guardians may obtain and maintain employment for their own care, and the care of their families. Providing physical, mental, emotional, and other ongoing care for a family member or house member with significant disabilities can be incredibly difficult for many families and guardians, and having trained day service providers who can provide such services in a place that can be funded via state and federal funds has brought much stability and necessary care to the person with significant disabilities and their caregivers.
- **Empowering families to envision a meaningful week outside of 14(c) employment:** Research indicates that individuals with disabilities thrive when their personalized daily routines align with their goals and preferences. Person-centered planning focuses all planning on the person with a disability and their needs, interests, passions, skills, desires, and autonomy. This means all decisions about employment and service design must be made individually, since employment, activities, services, and supports will look different for each person involved in CIE.

Positive Framing Examples



- “In the transition to new employment, you and your family may need to reimagine and recreate your days and your weekly schedule in a way that’s more inclusive. That means services can facilitate and support your employment in the community, involve people with and without disabilities, and provide for your individual needs. You should be able to choose from the same types of activities, events, and services that may be available to anyone in your community, meaning people with and people without a disability. Throughout your life, you should be able to choose what you want to do based on your preferences and the options available in your community. Your interests may change over time, but whether you want to participate in hobbies, social media, adult education, higher education, outings with co-workers, religious or spiritual programming, and or other community activities, as an adult with a disability, you should have access to day services and activities that embrace inclusion with peers without disabilities and are appropriate for your age. These services will focus on activities you identify as meaningful and will look and be different for each person.”

Provider Strategies

- **Coordinate with the Bureau of Development Services regarding waiver revisions** to open avenues for reimagining day services. Emphasize the potential benefits for individuals and their families in terms of meeting primary needs.
- **Describe the ideal schedule for individuals not engaged in CIE**, focusing on the exploration of areas of interest. Promote flexibility in choosing activities and maintaining culturally valued activities and opportunities.
- **Encourage families to actively participate in detailing life domain goals and in identifying necessary supports.** Illustrate the flexibility and individualization offered by CIE, emphasizing the agency's commitment to assisting them in creating an ideal weekly routine, followed by proactive coordination and implementation steps toward identified life domain goals.
- **Train staff as Charting the LifeCourse ambassadors.** Developing internal agency capacity for enhanced partnership with families and their loved one, such as Charting the LifeCourse provides, will more efficiently and effectively assist your agency in helping the people you support to reach their identified life domain goals.
- **Identify and implement use of person-centered planning tools.** Deciding upon both the process for assisting families to reimagine a meaningful week and the tools for eliciting such a description is imperative. These tools and processes may include the:
 - Positive Personal Profile (TransCen),
 - Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH),
 - Essential Lifestyles Planning (ELP), and
 - Personal Futures Planning (PFP).



Conclusion

This communication plan and the accompanying strategies can empower families, alleviate concerns, and foster a positive outlook as individuals with disabilities transition to CIE. Through transparent communication, collaboration with providers, and a commitment to individualized support, the plan paves the way for successful and fulfilling transitions. By integrating these messages and supporting strategies, you can ensure a seamless and well-informed transition for individuals with disabilities and their families.

Please refer to the **Addendum**, which features associated resources to further support successful transition. These resources focus on targeted strategies to elevate technical expertise, reduce bias, and cultivate a proactive and adaptive mindset, ensuring successful navigation through the transition to CIE.

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

Leadership preparation for systemic and organizational change requires planning. The Addendum supports this preparation by offering resources organized across two broad but key categories: (1) **agency staging and preparedness** and (2) **professional staff development**.

[Essential Resources for Transitioning to Competitive Integrative Employment](#) is a complementary list of resources specifically for individuals and families who are preparing for or are in the midst of a transition to CIE. You can distribute this document to individuals you are working with and to their families, caregivers, and support staff. The resources can be a valuable tool for individuals with disabilities who are transitioning from sheltered workshop employment to competitive integrative employment.



References

- Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (2016). Final Report. https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/odep/topics/pdf/acicieid_final_report_9-8-16.pdf
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended, Title 42 and 47 (2008). <https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/ada/>
- Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators. (n.d.). How were the competencies established? <https://www.acreducators.org/how-were-the-competencies-established.html>
- Avellone, L., Taylor, J., Wehman, P., Inge, K., & Brooke, V. (2023). State-Level Analysis of Subminimum Wage Use for Individuals with Disabilities in the United States: Implications for Policy and Practice. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 1.
- Barth, S., Lewis, S. & Simmons, T. (2020). Medicaid services for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities-Evolution of addressing service needs and preferences. *Health Management Associates*. <https://www.macpac.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Medicaid-Services-for-People-with-Intellectual-or-Developmental-Disabilities-%E2%80%93-Evolution-of-Addressing-Service-Needs-and-Preferences.pdf>
- Blick, R. N., Litz, K. S., Thornhill, M. G., & Goreczny, A. J. (2016). Do inclusive work environments matter? Effects of community-integrated employment on quality of life for individuals with intellectual disabilities. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 53-54, 358-366.
- Boeltzig-Brown, H. (2017) KFI. Flexible scheduling and creative staffing. Promising practices in community life engagement series, Guidepost #1. Boston, MA. University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion.
- Bonaccio, S., Connelly, C. E., Gellatly, I. R., Jetha, A., & Martin Ginis, K. A. (2020). The participation of people with disabilities in the workplace across the employment cycle: Employer concerns and research evidence. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 35(1), 135–158. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-018-9602-5>
- Butterworth, J., Fesko, S. L., & Ma, V. (2000) Because it was the right thing to do. Changeover from facility-based services to community employment. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 14 (1), 23 – 35.
- Butterworth, J., Hiersteiner, D., Engler, J., Bershinsky, J., & Bradley, V. (2015). National Core Indicators: Data on the current state of employment of adults with IDD and suggestions for policy development. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 42 (3), 209 – 220.
- Carter, E. W., Bendetson, S., & Guiden, C. H. (2018). Family perspectives on the appeals of and alternatives to sheltered employment for individuals with severe disabilities. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 43(3), 145–164.
- Cassidy, P., Hartman, M., & Griffin-Hammis Associates (n.d.). Discovering Personal Genius™: Going where the career makes

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- sense. *ACRE CE Training Series*. <https://www.griffinhammis.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/DPG-PPT.pdf>
- Cimera, R. E. (2011). Does being in sheltered workshops improve the employment outcomes of supported employees with intellectual disabilities? *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 35(1), 21-27
- Cox, M. E. & Land, K. A. (2019). The power of the employment specialist: Skills that impact outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 50(3), 273–278.
- Crandell, D. (2022). *Twenty-two cents an hour: Disability rights and the fight to end subminimum wage*. Cornell University Press.
- Crawford, M., & Goodman, J. (2013). Below the minimum: A critical review of the 14(c) wage program for employees with disabilities. *Hofstra Labor & Employment Law Journal*, 30(2), 13.
<https://scholarlycommons.law.hofstra.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1556&context=hlelj>
- Curda, E. H. & United States Government Accountability Office (2021). Subminimum wage program: Factors influencing the transition of individuals with disabilities to competitive integrated employment. *GAO Reports*, i-48.
- Dague, B. (2012). Sheltered employment, sheltered lives: Family perspectives of conversion to community-based employment. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 37(1), 1–11.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289115926_Sheltered_employment_sheltered_lives_Family_perspectives_of_conversion_to_community-based_employment
- Disability Employment TA Center (n.d.). The ADA and the end to sheltered workshops. *Newsroom*.
<https://aoddisabilityemploymentcenter.com/the-ada-and-the-end-to-sheltered-workshops/>
- Donnellan, A. M. (1984). The criterion of the least dangerous assumption. *Behavioral Disorders*, 9(2), 141–150.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43153291>
- Erickson, W. A., von Schrader, S., Bruyère, S. M., & VanLooy, S. A. (2014). The employment environment: Employer perspectives, policies, and practices regarding the employment of persons with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 57(4), 195–208.
- Forster, S. (2010). Age-appropriateness: Enabler or barrier to a good life for people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities? *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability*, 35(2), p.p. 129-131.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44685355_Age-appropriateness_Enabler_or_barrier_to_a_good_life_for_people_with_profound_intellectual_and_multiple_disabilities
- Francis, G., Gross, J., Turnbull, A. & Turnbull, R. (2014). Understanding barriers to competitive employment: A family perspective. *Inclusion*, 2(1), p.p. 37-53.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281321606_Understanding_Barriers_to_Competitive_Employment_A_Family_Perspective
- Fraser, R. T., Johnson, K., Hebert, J., Ajzen, I., Copeland, J., Brown, P., & Chan, F. (2010). Understanding employers' hiring intentions in relation to qualified workers with disabilities: Preliminary findings. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 20, 420-426.
- Friedman, C., & Rizzolo, M. C. (2020). Fair-wages for people with disabilities: Barriers and facilitators. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 31(3), 152–163. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1044207320919492>
- Gehman, T. (2015). *The Culturally Valued Analogue: A Brief Introductory Overview*. https://www.academia.edu/20164456/The_Culturally_Valued_Analogue_A_Brief_Introductory_Overview
- Gilson, C. B., Carter, E. W., Bumble, J. L., & McMillan, E. D. (2018). Family perspectives on integrated employment for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 43(1), 20–37.
- Giri, A., Aylott, J., Giri, P., Ferguson, W. S., & Evans, J. (2022). Lived experience and the social model of disability: conflicted and inter-dependent ambitions for employment of people with a learning disability and their family carers. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 50(1), 98–106.
- Grossi, T. & Andresen, J. (2023). *Day and Employment Services Outcomes System Report 2023*. Indiana Institute on Disability and Community. Indiana University. <https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/what-we-offer/Indiana-DESOS-Report-Fall-2023.pdf>
- Gross, J., Francis, G., & Gage, S. (2021). Family Employment Awareness Training (FEAT): A research-based program for promoting high expectations for employment and knowledge of resources. *SSI Youth Solutions*.
https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/pdf/SSI_Youth_Gross_Final_Proposal.pdf

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- Hall, A. C., Butterworth, J., Winsor, J., Kramer, J., Nye-Lengerman, K., & Timmons, J. (2018). Building an evidence-based, holistic approach to advancing integrated employment. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 43(3), 207–218. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1540796918787503>
- Henn, J. & Henn, M. (2007). Facilitating integrated employment outcomes for individuals with significant disabilities: Parents' perspective. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 26, p.p. 1-3. https://wintac-s3.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/topic-areas/ta_511/Henn-2007-Facilitating-integrated-employment-outcomes.pdf
- Henry, A. D., Petkauskos, K., Stanislawzyk, J., & Vogt, J. (2014). Employer-recommended strategies to increase opportunities for people with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 41(3), 237-248.
- Indiana Disability Rights (2016). Sheltered workshops in Indiana. Fact sheet. <https://www.in.gov/idr/files/Sheltered-Workshop-FS-LP-12MAY17.pdf>
- Indiana Senate Enrolled Act No. 290 (2017). <https://www.in.gov/wcb/files/SB0290.06.ENRH.pdf>
- Inge, K., Graham, C., Brooks-Lane, N., Wehman, P. & Griffin, C. (2017). Defining customized employment as an evidence-based practice: The results of a focus group study. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 48, p.p. 155-166. <https://www.griffinhammis.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/JVR-48.2-Inge-et-al-Customized-employment-.Results-of-Focus-Group.pdf>
- Isvan, N., Bonardi, A., & Hiersteiner, D. (2023). Effects of person-centered planning and practices on the health and well-being of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities: A multilevel analysis of linked administrative and survey data. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, Special Issue Article. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jir.13015>
- Iwanaga, K., Wehman, P., Brooke, V., Avellone, L., & Taylor, J. (2021). Evaluating the effect of work incentives benefits counseling on employment outcomes of transition-age and young adult Supplemental Security Income recipients with intellectual disabilities: A Case Control Study. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 31(3), 581–591.
- Kaya, C., Bishop, M., & Torres, A. (2023). The impact of work incentives benefits counseling on employment outcomes: A national vocational rehabilitation study. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 18, p.p. 1-12. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9846657/>
- Kaye, H. S., Jans, L. H., & Jones, E. C. (2011). Why don't employers hire and retain workers with disabilities? *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 21, 526-536.
- Kuo, H. J., Levine, A., & Kosciulek, J. (2020). The relationship of quality of life and subminimum wage: Implications of WIOA section 511. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 86(2), 31–38.
- Lane v. Brown, Case No. 3:12-cv-00138-ST (2016). <https://casetext.com/case/lane-v-brown-8>
- Lulinski, A., Timmons, J. C., & Leblois, S. (2017). From sheltered work to competitive integrated employment. Lessons from the field. Bringing Employment First to Scale, Issue 8. Boston, MA. University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion.
- Luecking, R. & Mank, D. (2022). Plan to increase competitive integrated employment. Office of Disability Employment Policy & U.S. Department of Labor, National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network. https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/topics/NEON_National_Plan_to_Increase_CIE_WSPT_cleared-2022-01-18.pdf
- Lyons, O., Timmons, J., Cohen-Hall, A., & LeBlois, S. (2018). The essential characteristics of successful organizational transformation: Findings from a Delphi panel of experts. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 49(2), 205–216.
- Lyons, O., Timmons, J., Hall, A., Enein-Donovan, L. & Kamau, E. (2022). The benefits of active, person-centered job placement: Results from service providers undergoing organizational transformation away from sheltered employment. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 60(3), p.p. 234-245. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35640605/>
- Maroto, M. & Pettinicchio, D. (2023). Worth less? Exploring the effects of subminimum wages on poverty among U.S. hourly workers. *Sociological Perspectives*, Volume 66 (3), 455-475.
- May-Simera, C. (2018). Reconsidering sheltered workshops in light of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). *Laws*, 7(1), 6. <https://www.mdpi.com/2075-471X/7/1/6>
- Meltzer, A., Kayess, R., & Bates, S. (2018). Perspectives of people with intellectual disability about open, sheltered and social enterprise employment: Implications for expanding employment choice through social enterprises. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 14(2), 225–244.

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- Migliore, A., Grossi, T., Mank, D., Rogan, P. (2008) Why do adults with intellectual disabilities work in sheltered workshops? *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 28(1), 29-40.
- Migliore, A., Butterworth, J., Nord, D., & Gelb, A. (2011) Improving job development through training and mentorship. Research to Practice Brief, Issue No. 51. Boston, MA. University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion.
- National Disability Rights Network. (2011). *Segregated and Exploited: The Failure of the Disability Service System to Provide Quality Work*. <https://www.ndrn.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Segregated-and-Exploited.pdf>
- Nettles, J. (2013). From sheltered workshops to integrated employment: A long transition. *Lynchburg College Journal of Special Education*, 8(9). <https://digitalshowcase.lynchburg.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1093&context=lc-journal-of-special-education>
- Olmstead v. L.C., 527 U.S. 581 (1999). <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/527/581/>
- Remund, C., Jones-Parkin, T., Hase, H., & Riesen, T. (2022). Preparing community rehabilitation providers to deliver a provision of employment supports: A tiered training approach. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 56(2), 193–201
- Rogan, P., & Rinne, S. (2011). National call for organizational change from sheltered to integrated employment. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 49 (4), 248 – 260fib.
- Rosenthal, D. A., Hiatt, E. K., Anderson, C. A., Brooks, J., Hartman, E. C., Wilson, M. T., & Fujikawa, M. (2012). Facilitators and barriers to integrated employment. Results of focus group analysis. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 36 (2), 73-86.
- Safronova, T. (2023). Options for youth with disabilities: A focus on competitive integrated employment limits, 26 U.D.C. L. Rev. 93 (v.26). <https://digitalcommons.law.udc.edu/udclr/vol26/iss1/7>
- Santos, B. (2014). The myth of job readiness? *Lessons for Living Ministries*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20141015132106-316943098-the-myth-of-job-readiness/>
- Schlegelmilch, A., Roskowski, M., Anderson, C., Hartman, E. & Decker-Maurer, H. (2019). The impact of work incentives benefits counseling on employment outcomes of transition-age youth receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 51(2), p.p. 127-136. <https://content.iospress.com/articles/journal-of-vocational-rehabilitation/jvr191032>
- Shouse, J. (2016). *The Dignity of Risk*. <https://www.tennesseeworks.org/the-dignity-of-risk/>
- Taylor, J., Avellone, L., Cimera, R., Brooke, V., Lambert, A., & Iwanaga, K. (2021). Scoping review of cost-benefit analyses of employment services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 54 (2), 1-14.
- Taylor, J., Avellone, L., Brooke, V., Wehman, P., Inge, K., Schall, C., & Iwanaga, K. (2022). The impact of competitive integrated employment on economic, psychological, and physical health outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 35(2), 448-459. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12974>
- ThinkWork! & Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston. (2022). *StateData*. <https://www.statedata.info/>
- United States Department of Labor (2023). Persons with disability: Labor force characteristics—2023. News Release: Bureau of Labor Statistics; USDL-23-0351. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/disabl.pdf>
- United States Government Accountability Office (2023). Subminimum wage program: DOL could do more to ensure timely oversight. *GAO Highlights*; GAO-23-105116: Report to Congressional Requesters. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-105116.pdf>
- United States v. Rhode Island, 1:14-cv-00175. <https://clearinghouse.net/case/13649/>
- Wehman, P., Taylor, J., Brooke, V., Avellone, L., Whittenburg, H., Ham, W., Brooke, A. M., & Carr, S. (2018). Toward competitive employment for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities: What progress have we made and where do we need to go. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 43(3), 131–144. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1540796918777730>
- Wehmeyer, M. L., & Bolding, N. (2001). Enhanced self-determination of adults with intellectual disability as an outcome of moving to community-based work or living environments. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 45 (5), 371 – 383.
- Winsor, Butterworth, Migliore, Domin, Zalewska, Shepard, Kamau, Wedeking & Edelstein. (2023). *StateData: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes Through 2021*. Institute for Community Inclusion. University of Massachusetts Boston & Administration for Community Living. https://www.thinkwork.org/sites/default/files/files/bluebook2023_F.pdf



Addendum

Agency Planning and Information Resources

Agency leaders need essential information and tools to support them in planning and executing the successful transition from sheltered work to competitive integrated employment (CIE). The resources below are organized into two main sections:

- **Agency Staging and Preparedness** guides leadership through considerations related to the agency's culture, vision, and mission. This phase establishes a foundational base for subsequent activities.
- **Professional Staff Development** focuses on equipping staff with the necessary skills to facilitate a smooth transition to CIE.

Resources are structured chronologically and by content, ensuring a logical progression of skill acquisition. Starting with foundational competencies, the resources guide staff through a continuum, addressing general concepts such as implicit bias before delving into more specific competencies like customized employment. The order of the content is designed to support increasing skill refinement.

Agency leadership is encouraged to develop a training plan based on the resources provided. They can choose resources that align with their agency's needs, with the flexibility to revisit and incorporate additional resources over time for continuous improvement.

We urge agencies to take a three-step approach to adapting the resources in each of these sections:

1. **Review** existing agency resources.
2. **Plan** how you will add and adapt needed resources.
3. **Implement** changes.

Agency Staging and Preparedness



The Agency Mission and Business Model

A significant reevaluation of services catering to individuals with disabilities, by legislative and civil rights leadership in the United States, has recently led to a deliberate departure from sheltered workshop programs administered through nonprofit community rehabilitation programs. Agencies moving towards CIE should adjust their missions to ensure

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

they are aligned with and reflect the values brought by integration and informed choice. The menu of services provided by any given agency may, therefore, also require adjustment. Agency service and mission transformation will subsequently entail adoption and integration of financially solvent business models.

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating agency staging and preparedness, and implement that plan.

1. [Pathway to Competitive Integrated Employment: A Discussion Guide to Assist Leadership](#)
2. [Provider Transformation Series](#) LEAD Center
Individualized Planning and Services
3. [Lighting the Way](#) TransCen
4. Butterworth and Fesko Conversion Series:
 - [Conversion to Integrated Employment: Case Studies of Organizational Change, Volume 1](#)
 - [Conversion to Integrated Employment: Case Studies of Organizational Change, Volume 2](#)
 - [Conversion to Integrated Employment: Case Studies of Organizational Change, Volume 3](#)
5. Additional agency-selected legislative topic or rule-making mandate (e.g., Olmstead decision)

Legislation and Regulations

Comprehensive education of all stakeholder groups represents a proactive, versus reactive, anticipation of and response to recent political and legislative activities signifying a shift towards CIE. Stakeholders can include staff, participating individuals, family members, board members, volunteers, and involved community members. Underscoring the benefits to be gained will help to equip your agency with necessary buy-in from all stakeholder groups. Framed as an opportunity to advance the civil rights and equal treatment of people with disabilities, stakeholders deserve an understanding of this shift.

Consider your method of educational delivery when planning. Unscripted and scripted town hall formats, for example, can be effective. One-on-one meeting venues, sharing of success stories, peer mentorship strategies, and family mentorship efforts can all be valuable in delivering comprehensive education. Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating consistent and broad knowledge of relevant legislative impacts, and implement that plan.

1. [Employment Leadership Training](#) Center on Community Living and Careers
2. [Indiana Employment First Plan](#)
3. [APSE Statement on Employment First](#)
4. [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: Laws, Regulations, and Guidance](#)
5. [Americans with Disabilities Act: Community Integration](#)
6. [Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act](#)

7. Additional agency-selected resource



Professional Staff Development

Implicit Bias, Cultural Competence, and Models of Disability

Staff will benefit from the realization that historical and life-course events—including segregation, devaluation, and limited choice—have and continue to shape the self-identities of individuals with disability and the people who support them. This includes family member identities, which often develop as they treat or care for their loved one with a disability.

As humans, we all have the ability to notice differences and to categorize (e.g., us versus them). Popular models of disability are testament to this categorization. Being human also means we are not immune to implicit bias (an unconscious and negative attitude or stereotype), especially when it comes to disability. Categorization and implicit bias can be mitigated through cultural competence development. Staff practicing effective person-centered services must be culturally competent in order to provide effective, strength-based services leading to individually meaningful outcomes for people receiving services.

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating cultural competence, implicit bias awareness, and disability models and implement that plan.

- 1. Cultural responsivity resources**, Center on Community Living and Careers
 - [Starting the Journey Toward Cultural Responsivity, Part 1, Awareness of Cultural Responsivity](#)
 - [Starting the Journey Toward Cultural Responsivity, Part 2, The Relevancy of Culture in the Employment Process](#)
 - [Starting the Journey Toward Cultural Responsivity, Part 3, Practical Application: Strategies and Tools](#)
 - [De-biasing Strategies](#)
 - [Effective Employment Services for the LGBTQ+ Community](#)
- 2. Use of descriptive language**
 - [Same and Different: Respect for All](#)
 - [Identity Theft](#)
 - [United Spinal Association: Disability Etiquette Guide](#)
 - Additional agency-selected resource
- 3. Cultural competence training**
 - [Resources on Race, Equity, and Understanding](#), Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- [The Cultural and Linguistic Competence Assessment for Disability Organizations](#), National Center on Cultural Competence
 - [National Center for Cultural Competence](#) Georgetown University
 - Additional agency-selected resource
- 4. Medical, human rights, and social models of disability**
- [Scoping Models and Theories of Disability](#) National Library of Medicine
 - [What Does Social Role Valorization Have to Teach Us About How Best to Support People with Disability?](#)
 - [Critical Disability Theory](#) Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
 - Additional agency-selected resource

Person-Centered Practices

Person-centered planning (PCP) practices are those reflecting and encouraging possibility thinking. Specifically, PCP elicits ideation and description of a “good life,” which is individually defined from one person to another. Once identified, PCP moves beyond to further empowering movement to that good life by planning necessary supports and services facilitating that vision. We are all aware of the saying, “name it to claim it,” and this can validly characterize the PCP process and outcomes. Any agency purporting individualized services, by definition, must adhere to PCP. PCP is the cornerstone of successful vocational outcomes and the foundation for relationship building, interest exploration, well-being, community belonging, and a host of other outcomes. Staff should be competent in practicing the fundamental skill sets necessary for PCP. Adherence to and delivery of PCP, importantly, facilitates trust and in turn can decrease resistance to CIE.

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating person-centered practice competencies, and implement that plan.

- 1. Personal profile and life skills resources, TransCen**
 - Positive Personal Profile
 - [Developing a Positive Personal Profile](#)
 - [Positive Personal Profile Example](#)
 - [Blank Positive Personal Profile](#)
 - [Family Interview Form](#)
 - [Family Session Worksheet](#)
 - Tools for building meaningful lives
 - [Life Skills Assessment](#)
 - [Blank Life Skills Assessment](#) (locate on page and download)
 - [A Future That Includes Employment Presentation](#) (PowerPoint)
- 2. Charting the LifeCourse training** from Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- [Charting the LifeCourse: Daily Life & Employment](#)
- LifeCourse tools
 - [Life Trajectory Worksheet: Individual and Family Versions](#)
 - [Charting the LifeCourse: Experiences and Questions Booklet](#)
 - [Integrated Supports Star](#)
 - [Integrated Supports Options](#)
 - [Tool for Developing a Vision: Individual Version](#)
 - [Tool for Developing a Vision: Family Version](#)
 - [Exploring Life Possibilities](#)
 - [Integrated Long Term Support Needs](#)
- 3. **Person-centered planning and tools**
 - [Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope \(PATH\)](#)
 - University of New Mexico: [Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope](#)
 - Agency-selected PATH resources and literature
 - [It's Never Too Early It's Never Too Late: Personal Futures Planning](#)
 - [Florida Outreach Project: Person-Centered Planning](#)
 - Michael Smull resources
 - [Person-Centered Thinking and Planning for Everyone](#)
 - [Person-Centered Skills and Concepts: Video Series](#)
 - David Pitonyak resources
 - [Being Hardwired for Belonging](#) (video)
 - [Coverage or Relationships](#) (video)
 - [Increasing Person-Centered Thinking: Improving the Quality of Person-Centered Planning](#)
 - Additional agency-selected resources

Asset-Based Community Development

By this time, staff have received foundational training related to the delivery of person-centered practices. The agency has also realigned both the vision and mission towards the support of CIE. Not everyone currently attending 14c employment will transition to full-time competitive employment for a number of legitimate reasons. Their person-centered plan, for example, may include varying life domain goals that are not employment related. Some people may want to develop a spiritual life, some may want to pursue health-related goals, and some may want to simply be more involved in community life.

Regardless, staff will benefit from exposure to and practice of community exploration skills, sometimes called networking skills or asset-based community development. This is important because staff must know how to investigate, assess, use, and mobilize naturally occurring opportunities in any given community.

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating asset-based community development skills and strategies, and implement that plan.

1. [DePaul Asset-Based Community Development Institute](#)
 - [Building Communities from the Inside Out: Introduction](#)
 - [Chapter One: Releasing Individual Capacities](#)
 - [Chapter Two: Releasing the Power of Local Associations and Organizations](#)
 - [Chapter Three: Capturing Local Institutions for Community Building](#)
 - [Chapter Four: Rebuilding the Community Economy](#)
 - [Chapter Five: Asset-Based Community Development. Mobilizing an Entire Community](#)
 - [Chapter Six: Providing Support for Asset-Based Development. Policies and Guidelines](#)
 - [Institute on Community Integration: Manual and Worksheets \(Friends: Connecting People with Disabilities and Community Members\)](#)
2. [Developing Community Connections](#), Resourcing Inclusive Communities
3. [Collaborative for Neighborhood Transformation](#)
4. [Asset-Based Community Development](#), Nurture Development
5. [Asset-Based Community Development: Narratives, Practices, and Conditions of Possibility](#), Sage Journals
6. [Connecting People with Disabilities and Community Members](#), University of Minnesota
 - [Friends Activity Worksheets](#)

Benefits Awareness and Education

For certain individuals with disabilities and their family members who may reside in the same or separate households, reliance on specific benefit programs covering income, health care, and various forms of assistance is a crucial aspect of their lives. A recurring obstacle, highlighted by both individuals and families, revolves around the fear that transitioning to competitive employment could jeopardize their existing benefits, leading them to hesitate about the prospect of losing vital support. There has been a long-standing issue of misinformation regarding Social Security and other state or federal entitlements, and this problem is reported as consistently widespread.

The consequences of inadequate or inaccurate information are substantial. Individuals and their families find themselves in a situation where they cannot make well-informed choices, particularly when it comes to deciding whether to pursue competitive integrated employment. This emphasizes the utmost importance of not only addressing the benefit-related barrier but also ensuring that professionals, who are entrusted with assisting individuals and families, provide accurate and comprehensive information to facilitate truly informed decision-making processes.

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating benefits awareness and education, and implement that plan.

1. **Benefits information resources** from the Center on Community Living and Careers
 - [Benefits Information Training](#)
 - [Benefits and Work Incentive Fact Sheets](#)
 - [Benefits and Work: Information for Students and Families](#)
 - [Work and Disability: Benefits, Incentives, & Asset Building](#)
2. **Social Security Administration resources**
 - [Section 218: Basic Training](#)
 - [Understanding Supplemental Security Income SSI Resources 2024](#)
 - [U.S. Senator Bob Casey's Office and Social Security Administration](#) (video)

Supported Employment

Consistent research highlights the limited awareness and knowledge specific to 14c staff, revealing a gap in technical expertise, particularly in providing CIE services. Primary employment services staff may also lack essential skills necessary for best practice supported employment. Achieving success in CIE requires an advanced skill set, including systematic instructional techniques, fundamental training methods (fading, chaining, prompting), task analysis, instructional plans, workplace assessments, the use of natural supports, self-management training, accommodation identification, advanced job negotiation, marketing skills, job development techniques, negotiation capabilities, effective communication with employers, job teaching, and long-term support planning. Implementing best practices in employment demands ongoing, concentrated efforts beginning with rudimentary Discovery. Staff providing employment services, especially those new to learning, will benefit from mentorship.

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating the receipt of best practice supported employment content knowledge and practice mentorship, and implement that plan.

1. **Employment resources** from the Center on Community Living and Careers
 - [Employment Consultant Training](#)
 - [Developing Natural Supports Training](#)
 - [Resource Ownership](#)
2. **Supported employment and vocational themes resources**, Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
 - [APSE Ethical Guidelines for Professionals in Supported Employment](#)
 - [APSE Universal Competencies](#)

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- [APSE Connections: The Three Vocational Themes Part 1](#)
- [APSE Connections: The Three Vocational Themes Part 2](#)

3. Discovery training and resources

- Center on Community Living and Careers resources
 - [Discovery Training](#)
 - [Effective Conversations: Tips & Tricks for Talking with the People Who Know Your Job Seeker](#) (video)
 - [Informational Interviews](#) (video)
 - [Developing Vocational Themes](#) (video)
 - [Discovery in Rural Communities](#) (video)
- TransCen
 - [Discovery and Assessment Process Log](#)
 - [Informational Interview Questions](#)
 - [Informational Interview Site Visit Form](#)
- [Guided Group Discovery Participant Online Workbook](#) from the LEAD Center
- [Self-Guided Discovery Helping People Discover Their Own Path to Employment](#)
- LEAD Center resources on group and self-guided Discovery
 - [Guided Group Discovery Course](#)
 - [Guided Group Discovery Participant Workbook](#)
 - [Guided Group Discovery Facilitator Guide](#)
 - [Self-Guided Discovery Facilitator Guide](#)
 - [Guided Group Discovery Youth Version Facilitator Guide](#)
- Marc Gold and Associates
 - [Using Alternatives to Traditional Vocational Assessment: The Why and How of Exploration Strategies Such as Discovery](#)
 - [Documenting Discovery](#)
 - [Profile Part 1 Guide](#)
 - [Profile Part 2 Guide](#)
 - [Profile Part 3 Guide](#)
 - [What is the Individual Placement and Support \(IPS\) Model](#)
- [Evidence for the Effectiveness of Individual Placement and Support Model of Supported Employment](#)
- [Evidence for IPS PowerPoint Reference List](#)
- Indiana IPS Resources
 - [Indiana FSSA Division of Mental Health and Addiction: Employment for Individuals with a Mental Health Diagnosis, Introduction](#) (video)
 - [Indiana FSSA Division of Mental Health and Addiction: Stigma Installment Two](#) (video)
 - [Indiana FSSA Voice Project: IPS Principles](#)
 - [Indiana FSSA Voice Project: IPS Fidelity Part 1](#)
 - [Indiana FSSA Voice Project: IPS Fidelity Part 2](#)

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- [Working with Mental Health Disorders](#) trainings from the Center on Community Living and Careers and its National Learning Academy on anxiety disorders, bipolar disorders, personality disorders, and schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorders
4. [Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Vendor Service Manual](#)
 - [Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation: Manual of Employment Services](#)
 - [Indiana Discovery Profile and Other Forms](#)
 5. **Workplace and job analysis**
 - [Employment Consultant Training](#) (Workplace and job analysis information covered in module 7), Center on Community Living and Careers
 - [Job Analysis Form and Job Analysis Sample](#) (for download), Marc Gold and Associates
 - [A Guide to Creating a Task Analysis](#), Center on Transition Innovations
 - [Job and Work Analysis: Guidelines on Identifying Jobs for Persons with Disabilities](#), International Labour Office

Instructional Foundations

Staff responsible for supporting a person throughout transition to CIE will be more successful when they understand the basics of instruction. After all, they will typically be acting in the role of partner (to the employer) to ensure that the employee learns discrete and generalized workplace tasks. Staff will benefit from exposure to systematic instructional techniques, fundamental training methods like fading, chaining, and prompting, conducting task analysis, creating instructional plans, completing workplace assessments, leveraging natural supports, developing self-management training, and identifying effective accommodations.

While this may seem overwhelming, we encourage you to approach instructional foundations systematically while providing ample time for skills development and training mentorship from more seasoned employment services staff.

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating the receipt of instructional foundations, and implement that plan.

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

1. Systematic instruction

- [Employment Consultant Training](#) (Systematic instruction information covered in module 8), Center on Community Living and Careers
- Marc Gold and Associates resources
 - [Systematic Instruction Strategies for Organizing Information](#)
 - [Systematic Instruction Training and Motivating Strategies](#)
 - [Job Analysis: A Strategy for Assessing and Utilizing the Culture of Work Places to Support Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Job Coach Training Manual](#), The North Dakota Statewide Developmental Disabilities Community Staff Training Program (Scroll to chapter five.)
- [Effective Job Coaching Supports: Using Both Natural Supports and Systematic Instruction](#), Institute for Community Inclusion
- Performance feedback: [Understanding and Managing Behavior](#), Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

2. Device-assisted instruction (AI/Computer-assisted)

- [Assistive Technology](#), Job Accommodation Network
- [The effects of a mobile-based vocational skill building coaching technology intervention for people with cognitive disabilities: A pilot feasibility study](#), *Journal of Rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies Engineering*
- [Using Technology for Remote Support, Self-Management, and Success in Employment and the Community](#), Institute for Community Inclusion
- [There's an App for Everyone: Successful Employment at Your Fingertips](#), Center on Community Living and Careers

3. Response prompting

- Least-to-most prompting
 - [Using the System of Least to Most Prompts](#), Nevada Dual Sensory Impairment Project
 - [Steps for Implementation: Least-to-Most Prompts](#), National Professional Development Center
- Most-to-least prompting
 - [Most-to-Least Prompting](#), Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism
- [What Is a Prompt Hierarchy in Applied Behavioral Analysis?](#)
- [Using Prompting Procedures to Teach Skills](#)

4. Chaining

- Forward chaining
 - [Forward Chaining in ABA Therapy: Definition & Examples](#), Cross River Therapy
 - [Chaining](#), Nebraska Autism Spectrum Disorders Network
- Backward chaining

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- [What is Backward Chaining in ABA Therapy?](#), Texas Education Agency
- Total Task Chaining
 - [The Role of Task Analysis and Chaining](#), Indiana Resource Center for Autism
 - [Backward and Forward Chaining](#), *I Love ABA* (blog)
- 5. **Time delay**
 - [Time Delay](#), National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders
 - [Time Delay](#), Texas Education Agency
- 6. **Modeling**
 - [Using Video Modeling to Teach Social Skills for Employment to Youth with Intellectual Disability](#), *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Children*, Hammill Institute on Disabilities
 - [Video Modeling: An Overview \(PDF\)](#), Vanderbilt Kennedy Center
 - [Steps for Implementation: Video Modeling](#), National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders
- 7. **Fading**
 - [Job Site Fading: Why Job Coaches Find It Difficult to Leave Job Sites](#), Training Resource Network
 - [Fading and Support Strategies for Employment Success](#), Institute for Community Inclusion
- 8. **Covert audio coaching**
 - [The Effects of Covert Audio Coaching on the Job Performance of Supported Employees](#), *Focus on Autism and Other Disabilities*
- 9. **Job Coaching**
 - [Job Developers and Job Coaches in the Workplace Learner's Guide](#), Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
 - [Job Skills Trainer: The Art of Job Coaching](#), University of North Texas

Accommodations and Assistive Technology

Dignity and social inclusion are important behind-the-scenes benefits of meaningful work for all employees. In this context, employers are responsible for promoting social integration by cultivating inclusive workplaces and facilitating necessary accommodations. Unfortunately, families may be hesitant to embrace competitive integrated employment due to the perception that employers are naïve to disability issues and reluctant to individualize accommodations needed for success. Families may also be wary of employment staff knowledge and skills concerning accommodations and assistive technology. Agency leadership is responsible for counter-balancing lack of education by ensuring employment staff are up to date and capable of identifying necessary accommodations through the implementation of low- and high-technology solutions.

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating broad development of accommodations/assistive technology availability and alternatives, and implement that plan.

1. [Employment Consultant Training](#) (module 9), Center on Community Living and Careers
2. [Searchable Online Accommodation Resource](#), Job Accommodation Network
3. [Assistive Technology Resources](#), Job Accommodation Network
4. [INDATA: Indiana Assistive Technology Resource Project](#), Easterseals Crossroads
5. [Costs and Benefits of Accommodation](#), Job Accommodation Network

Job Development

Successful supported and customized employment strategies demand core job development competencies. At a minimum this includes job negotiation, marketing skills, representational techniques, and a host of other associated competencies. Labor market openings, combined with subsequent “best fit” placement from among a list of waiting job seekers reflects a practice insufficient for person-centered planning and sustained job satisfaction. Labor market openings (and quick agency placement) should not drive outcomes. Rather, individualized job development and relationship building, especially among employers, should fuel outcomes. Leadership oversight of job placement rates and reimbursement necessary to sustain the programming should include both quantitative and qualitative consideration.

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating job development competency among staff, and implement that plan.

1. Center on Community Living and Careers resources
 - [Rural Job Development](#) (video)
 - [Employment Consultant Training](#) (module 7)
2. Denise Bissonnette videos
 - [Job Development vs. Job Placement: Noting the Differences](#)
 - [Dispelling Myths Around Job Development](#)
 - [Resolving Employer Concerns](#)
 - [Entrepreneurial Job Development](#)
 - [The Employment Proposal](#) (also helpful for customized employment training)
 - [Working with Employers](#)
 - [Gifts and Possibilities](#)
3. [Job Development Fidelity Scale](#) Griffin-Hammis Associates
4. TransCen resources

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

- [What Is Your Elevator Speech?](#)
 - [Examples of Waste in Business](#) (also relevant to customized employment)
 - [Job Development Plan](#)
 - [Job Seeker Features to Benefits From](#) (also relevant to Discovery practices and customized employment)
 - [Know Your Network](#)
 - [Sample Employer Proposal Letter](#) (also relevant to customized employment practices)
5. [Using a Visual Resume for Job Development](#), Marc Gold and Associates

Customized Employment

While some agencies use employment staff for both supported and customized employment, the latter demands additional competencies for successful transitions. When and if staff fail to recognize the value inherent in customized employment, this may corrupt adequate service provision to the individual. The availability, especially in rural communities, of highly effective staff continues to be a systemic barrier. Therefore, training for the appropriate utilization of customized employment is essential.

Customized employment incorporates the ideals from Marc Gold of “try another way.” This means that rather than trying to force and fit someone with a disability into a job without consideration of the strengths and skills they already have, an employment specialist works with the individual with a disability and their stakeholders along with the potential employer to customize a job using the person’s skills and strengths. Customized employment becomes an especially salient approach for a person with significant impacts of disability who cannot otherwise compete in an open labor market.

Review the following resources, develop a plan facilitating the development of customized employment competency among staff, and implement that plan.

1. [Employment Consultant Training](#) (customized employment information located in module 5), Center on Community Living and Careers
2. Griffin-Hammis Associates resources
 - [Bringing Fidelity to Customized Employment Processes](#)
 - [What’s Customized About It?](#)
 - [Customized Employment: Stories and Lessons from the Field](#)
 - [Developing Vocational Themes Workbook](#)
 - [The Florida Rural Routes to Employment Replication Manual](#)
 - [Virtual Customized Job Development Service Delivery Guidance](#)
 - *The Job Developer’s Handbook: Practical Tactics for Customized Employment*, Griffin, Hammis & Geary

Transitioning to Competitive Integrated Employment

3. Marc Gold and Associates resources
 - [What Is Customized Employment?](#)
 - [Customized Employment](#)
 - [Employment: From Competitive to Customized](#)
 - [The Essential Elements of Customized Employment for Universal Application](#)
 - [Supported Employment/Customized Employment Matrix: The Distinction Between Demand Employment and a Customized Relationship](#)
 - [Focus on the Positives: The Skills, The Preferences, and The Talents of People Impacted by Significant Disabilities](#)
4. [Recommendations for Customized Employment Practices](#), Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center
5. Office of Disability Employment Policy resources
 - [Customized Employment Competency Model](#)
 - [Customized Employment](#)
6. [Customized Employment Discovery Fidelity: Developing Consensus Among Experts](#), *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*
7. [Integrating Customized Employment Practices Within the Vocational Rehabilitation System](#), *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*
8. [Making Resumes Visual: Using Video Resumes in Customized Employment](#), VCU Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
9. LEAD Center resources
 - [Perspective of Employers on Customized Employment](#)
 - [Customized Employment Works Everywhere](#)
 - [Customized Employment Systems Innovation Brief](#)
10. Self-employment resources
 - [Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship](#), Office of Disability Employment Policy
 - Center on Community Living and Careers resources
 - [Taking the Road to Self-Employment](#)
 - [Entrepreneurship Education for Pre-Employment Transition Service Providers](#)
 - [Self-Employment Resource Information](#)
 - [Self-Employment Services](#)
 - [Social Security Language for the Entrepreneur](#)

For additional information and resources, see the [Competitive Integrated Employment](#) section of the Center on Community Living and Careers website.



INDIANA INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY

**CENTER ON COMMUNITY
LIVING AND CAREERS**

With funding from **the Indiana Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services**