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A Vocational Training Program for High School Students with Disabilities on an Alternative Track to Graduation

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A Vocational Training Program for High School Students with Disabilities on an
Alternative Track to Graduation

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APPROVAL PAGE

This Scholarly Project paper, submitted by Natalie Jennings and Michael Lehnerz in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master's of Occupational Therapy from the University of North Dakota, Has been read by the Faculty Advisor under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

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Date

PERMISSION

TITLE: A Vocational Training Program for High School Students with Disabilities on an Alternative Track to Graduation

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DEGREE: Masters of Occupational Therapy

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ABSTRACT

Problem: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), in 2016 the employment rate for persons with a disability was 17.9 percent compared to 65.3 percent for persons without a disability. The discrepancy between the employment rates can partially be attributed to a lack of high school readiness preparation as evidenced by Evert Citera, Gonda, and Vaschak (2015) who found that the referral rates of transition-aged youth decreased from 62.3 percent in 2004 to 50.0 percent in 2013.

Purpose: The purpose of this scholarly project is to minimize the gap during the transition from high school to vocational opportunities by offering students the chance to build their pre-vocational skills and explore their career interests prior to leaving the high school setting.

Method: A literature review was conducted on existing vocational rehabilitation programs for individuals with disabilities and the role of occupational therapy in regards to vocation. Online data bases such as PubMed, CINAHL, EBSCOhost, Academic Search Premiere, PSYCHinfo, AJOT, Google Scholar, as well as governmental websites and textbooks were used to conduct the literature review.

Results: Researchers indicated that there are vocational training programs and policies available that can be utilized to prepare and transition students from the school setting into a workplace setting; however, there is limited research on vocational training programs within schools and how occupational therapists can bring their knowledge and skills to help guide students through the transition process. A pre-vocational skills course

in the high school setting for students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) was created based on the Ecology of Human Performance Model (EHP) [Dunn, 2017]. The course also uses learning theories including pedagogy and andragogy to structure the course materials and interventions (Knowles, 1990, as cited in Bastable & Dart, 2011). The course is made up of group and individual sessions to help facilitate evaluation and learning in regards to vocation.

Conclusion: Occupational therapists are able to play a more supportive role in the high school setting, especially regarding pre-vocational skills training for students on IEPs. This course will be implemented and led by occupational therapists in collaboration with vocational rehabilitation counselors and special education personnel to educate and promote students' participation in vocational exploration and activities. Through consideration of the person, context, task, and performance within the EHP model, occupational therapists will be able to foster occupational justice for all students.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), in 2016 the employment rate for persons with a disability was 17.9 percent compared to 65.3 percent for persons without a disability. The discrepancy between the employment rates can partially be contributed to a lack of high school readiness preparation as evidenced by Evert Cimera et al. (2015) who found that the referral rates of transition-aged youth decreased from 62.3 percent in 2004 to 50.0 percent to 2013. Perhaps the incongruity of employment lies within vocational rehabilitation programs, as evidenced by Honeycutt, Thompkins, Bardos, and Stern (2015), who found that of the four to 14 percent of a state's transition-aged youth who applied for vocational rehabilitation services, only 31 to 82 percent of the applicants actually received vocational rehabilitation services, and only 40 to 70 percent who received services were actually able to close with an employment outcome. It is difficult to pinpoint where the problems lies, but this issue needs to be addressed in order to provide occupational justice for individuals with disabilities.

There is not an abundance of research that discusses pre-vocational programs in academic settings for students with disabilities, but there is a wide array of research that has been conducted regarding how vocational or skill-training programs impact individuals with disabilities. The concepts of these programs could be adapted to meet the needs of the students in the school setting.

Several studies conducted highlighted how vocation is used to address the needs of individuals with disabilities. Studies by Gal, Selanikyo, Erez, and Katz (2015), and Dunn, Diener, Wright, Wright, and Narumanchi, (2015), both used vocational interests to address the needs of the participants and found that utilizing vocations of interest had a positive effect on the lives of the participants. Tsang, Chan, Wong, and Liberman (2009), used a different approach and focused on how improving the skills of individuals could impact vocation. They found that including social skills training led to better employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities (Tsang et al., 2009).

Multiple studies also focused on how changing or altering the environments surrounding the individuals could impact vocational participation (Liu et al, 2013; Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014). Liu et al. (2013) found that a structured training program improved social and communication skills specific to the workplace setting, while Nochajski and Schwitzer (2014) used a School to Work Transition Program model that included school-based learning, community involvement, paid and supported work experience, and competitive employment to help students obtain and retain competitive employment.

Helping students identify their vocational interests, build skills, and modify the contexts and environments are all part of the skill set that occupational therapists can employ in the school setting to help students transition from school to vocational opportunities. However, Mankey (2011) found that 66 percent of occupational therapists feel that they are not utilized in the secondary transition process, even though at least one-third of them believe that they should provide some type of services in secondary transition. A pre-vocational skills training program that is led by occupational therapists

could not only increase the involvement of therapists in school districts, but also allow students with disabilities the opportunity to engage in vocation like the rest of their peers.

The students of this scholarly project used evidence to create a pre-vocational skills training program entitled *EXPLORE*, which is for high school students on individualized education plans. The program is led by an occupational therapist who is skilled at addressing various types of disabilities and impairments. The intent of this program is for it to be implemented as a course in a school curriculum. The purpose of this course is to offer students the chance to build their pre-vocational skills and explore their career interests prior to leaving the high school setting in order to minimize the gap during the transition from high school to vocational opportunities. This course is a 16-week program that will be broken up into group and individual sessions.

The course objectives are related to the occupation of work and will include topics such as career interest exploration, social/communication skills, emotion/stress identification and healthy coping skills, self-advocacy skills, finding a job and letters of recommendation, resumes and cover letters, and job interview skills. Students will participate in activities such as role-playing, scenarios, and simulations in order to encourage the aspect of doing the occupation of work and make the course more meaningful and relatable to real life, which is the goal of occupational therapy.

As mentioned before, the course will consist of group and individual sessions. In the first half of the course, students will learn and participate in activities that highlight the underlying skills needed to obtain and maintain employment. These sessions will be led by an occupational therapist due to their knowledge regarding skill building and their activity analysis skills. In the second half of the course, students will learn and participate

in activities that focus on the more practical aspects of vocation, such as finding a job, building a resume and cover letter, etc. If possible, these sessions will be co-led by an occupational therapist and a vocational rehabilitation counselor. According to Wyoming Department of Workforce services (2016), vocational rehabilitation counselors provide services such as job search and placement assistance, job retention and career follow-up, transition services, and counseling and guidance related to work. The knowledge and expertise that vocational rehabilitation counselors have will complement services provided by occupational therapist throughout this course.

Each student will be provided two individual sessions with the occupational therapist during the course. The first session will be utilized for evaluation where the therapist will work with the student in collaboration to identify areas of strength and growth, and develop personalized vocational goals. In the second session, the therapists will collaborate with the students to identify resources available to them that will support their vocational goals and promote self-advocacy, such as IDEA, ADA, Section 504, etc.

Outside of the sessions, students will complete a research project that is designed to help students apply the pre-vocational knowledge learned in this course to a specific occupation of their choosing. Students will identify a career, complete assignments, and present on their chosen career that links together the skills and resources they developed over the semester. The research project is a tool that helps to ensure that the objectives of the course remain occupation-centered, focused, and based by having the students apply their newfound knowledge to a potential career that they are interested in. To accompany the research project students will also assemble a job portfolio that includes handouts, homework, and resources that they complete and obtain throughout the semester. The

goal of the job portfolio is to provide the students a resource that they can use in the future when seeking employment.

Multiple theories were used to develop the product and provide structure to the entire scholarly project. The theories that were used in this project include the Ecology of Human Performance Model [EHP] (Dunn, 2017) and pedagogy and andragogy learning styles (Knowles, 1990, as cited in Bastable & Dart, 2011).

Theory

Ecology of Human Performance Model

The EHP model provides a framework to consider the relationships between person, task, and context, and how the dynamic interactions among these constructs impact performance (Dunn, 2017). The EHP model was developed with the person at the center, but also emphasizes the indispensable role of context. There are four main constructs associated with the EHP model: person, context, task, and performance (Dunn, 2017).

The construct of *person* includes the experiences; values and interests; and sensorimotor, cognitive, and psychosocial skills of an individual (Dunn, 2017). Each person is unique and complex, and the meaning that each person attaches to the task and contextual variables will influence their performance. The construct of *context* is the conditions that surround the person and include physical, social, cultural, and temporal aspects. Contexts can either be supports or barriers to performance, such as the availability of materials and people, and the expectations and norms of a specific situation. The construct of *task* is an observed behavior that allows an individual to accomplish a goal. There are an infinite variety of tasks that surround every person and

form their roles and occupations. However, every person defines tasks differently and their meaning is influenced by their cultural contexts. The construct of *performance* arises when a person participates in tasks within a context. Performance in this model is viewed as a range that is based on the number of tasks available to the individual related to the interaction of the person's factors and contextual variables (Dunn, 2017). All of these constructs were considered throughout this project to enhance the performance range available to individuals regarding the occupation of work.

The EHP model was chosen to guide this project for a variety of reasons. Firstly, this model is not used exclusively for occupational therapy, but for inter-professional teams to support collaboration (Dunn, 2017). Other professionals such as special education teachers and vocational rehabilitation counselors can bring insight and experience into a pre-vocational skills program that occupational therapists do not have. Secondly, the terminology used in the EHP model is more familiar to everyday language, especially through the use of the term *task* instead of *occupation*. Using this model when working with other professionals will make it easier to communicate and collaborate. The third reason why EHP was chosen is because this model analyzes the dynamic interactions of the person, task, and context, and how these interactions impact the person's performance range. This provides a holistic view of what encompasses the individual and how it could affect their performance to participate in desired tasks. The fourth reason why EHP was chosen is the strong emphasis on independence even when assistive devices must be used. Also, EHP encourages the use of different intervention strategies to not just *fix* the person, but to support participation. It is perfectly acceptable to use intervention strategies such adapt/modify or even alter as long as the students are

able to participate in their desired tasks. Lastly, and most importantly, EHP supports and promotes successful and satisfying independent living for everyone regardless of vulnerabilities. No person should face occupational injustice, which is why self-advocacy is emphasized throughout the project (Dunn, 2017).

Learning Theories

Several learning theories relating to pedagogy and andragogy were incorporated throughout the project in order to guide and support learning for the students (Knowles, 1990, as cited in Bastable & Dart, 2011). Pedagogy is the methods best used to help children learn and is subject centered, while andragogy is the methods best used for adults to learn and is more learner-centered and less teacher-centered (Knowles, 1990, as cited in Bastable & Dart, 2011). This scholarly project does not specifically focus on children or adults, but on adolescents who are transitioning from childhood to adulthood. This is why a combination of both learning styles was used throughout the project. Under pedagogy, teaching strategies include peer group discussion, one-to-one instruction, use of technology, and shared decision-making. These strategies were used in conjunction with andragogy teaching strategies such as mutual collaboration on goal setting, drawing on past experiences to make learning relevant, and providing opportunities for students to seek information on their own to increase their knowledge (Knowles, 1990, as cited in Bastable & Dart, 2011).

To accompany the learning style of pedagogy is the social learning theory (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Braungart, Braungart, & Gramet, 2011). The social learning theory focuses on the learner observing others and reproducing the desired behavior through the use of role models (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011).

Through discussions and activities, the students have the opportunity to observe and learn from each other, as well as regulate the decisions to reproduce the behaviors they have witnessed. The occupational therapist and other adults partaking in the course have the task of modeling behavior and influencing the self-regulation of the students (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011).

To accompany the learning style of andragogy is the cognitive constructivism learning theory (Bandura, 2001; Hunt, Ellis, & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). The cognitive constructivism theory encourages internal perception and thought processing through active participation to promote learning (Bandura, 2001; Hunt, Ellis, & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). Students are encouraged to actively participate, reflect, and discuss while drawing on their personal past experiences. The occupational therapists and other adults involved are there to help structure the experiences and encourage the students to reorganize the way they think about a given situation (Bandura, 2001; Hunt, Ellis, & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011).

The mentioned theories were all utilized throughout this project in various ways. The EHP model was used as a framework to structure and guide the reasoning behind the components of the literature review and the *EXPLORE* pre-vocational skills training program. The learning theories were used to guide the activity choices and discussion integrated into the *EXPLORE* pre-vocational skills training program. Chapter II of this project will discuss the findings of the literature review and the benefits a pre-vocational skills training program in a school setting can have on students with disabilities. Chapter III describes the methodology behind how the literature and theories were used to create this project. Chapter IV is the actual product that was created from the review of

literature and theories and includes a description of the product, session outlines, handouts, homework, and other resources that can be utilized by any occupational therapist using this product. Finally, Chapter V provides a summary of the main concepts of this project, as well as, limitations to the product, and recommendations for future use.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), in 2016 the employment rate for persons with a disability was 17.9 percent compared to 65.3 percent for persons without a disability. The discrepancy between employment rates for individuals with and individuals without disabilities could possibly be linked to a lack of high school work readiness preparation and education, especially for students with disabilities. Evert Cimera et al., (2015) found that the referral rates of transition-aged youth decreased from 62.3 percent in 2004 to 50.0 percent in 2013. This study provides evidence that not all students with disabilities are receiving the appropriate services, including vocational training, and this may be impacting their employment outcomes. The purpose of this literature review is to investigate the benefits of a pre-vocational skills program inside a high school setting for students with disabilities. This literature review will identify the key problems that students with disabilities face, evaluation tools that can be used to help address vocational needs, discuss current programs and policies that affect students with disabilities, and the role that an occupational therapist can play. The Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) model, discussed in Chapter I, will be used as a framework to guide this literature review (Dunn, 2017).

Problem Areas

After reviewing background literature, it is evident that there are many issues impacting transition services and vocational outcomes for students with disabilities.

Some of the problems relate to characteristics of the individuals, some relate to the contexts surrounding the individuals, and some relate to the performance of work tasks. Problems that revolve around the person vary depending on the diagnosis of the individual, but it is still possible that the problems one population encounters may apply to others.

Person

In an article by Tomblin and Haring (2000), the researchers stated that entry into the workforce for students with disabilities requires adequate performance of social skills. However, social/life skills issues were involved in 42 percent of job losses according to the Employment Training Programme job loss records. Attendance and time management skills were also associated with job loss. The researchers discussed possible social behavioral patterns of individuals with an intellectual disability that could impact job competition with non-disabled peers. These patterns may include absences, failure to call in, job-hopping, tardiness, and uncooperative behavior (Tomblin & Haring, 2000). Lack of skills or maladaptive behavior patterns can affect employment outcomes for individuals with not just intellectual disabilities, but with other diagnoses.

Reflecting trends seen today, Wagner (1995) conducted research that demonstrated the employment gap between individuals with and without disabilities, providing evidence that this divergence in employment rates has been around for a long span of time. Wagner (1995) analyzed data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study and found that 64 percent of students with emotional behavioral disorders in the twelfth grade reported having the goal of competitive employment, but following three to five years post high school only 47 percent were currently employed compared to 69

percent of students without disabilities. Teachers reported that their students with emotional behavioral disorders had more difficulties with behavior and task performance compared to students without disabilities (Wagner, 1995). Problems with behavioral and task performance skills may possibly be impacting employment outcomes for students with emotional behavioral disorders. This may be even more detrimental to those students who have the goal of competitive employment because it is affecting their ability to participate in desired occupations and they deserve the opportunity to follow their goals and interests.

Employment can be a common goal or interest of individuals, whether they have a disability or not, and it may also affect a person's overall health. In a study by Barišín, Benjak, and Vuletić (2011), the researchers explored the differences between quality of life in unemployed and employed women with disabilities and attempted to establish the factors that impact life satisfaction. The researchers used The World Health Organization Quality of Life questionnaire to obtain the perspectives and factors that influenced the life satisfaction of women with disabilities. The researchers found that women with disabilities who were unemployed had a lower mean score of quality of life compared to their employed counterparts; especially in the areas of psychological health, social relationships, environment, and even self-assessed health (Barišín, et al., 2011).

Researchers have discussed multiple issues that individuals with disabilities face regarding vocation. These individuals may be lacking the necessary skills to acquire positive employment outcomes, which can impact their life goals or restrict them from participating in activities that they find meaningful. The inability to participate in employment can even have consequences on a person's overall health. The skills and

interests of the person are not the only aspects that can impact or be impacted by employment outcomes. The contexts that surround the person have a strong influence as well.

Context

Political and institutional contexts can play a role in affecting vocational pursuits of individuals with disabilities. It is a federally mandated law under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that students in special education begin to receive transitional services when they reach 16 years of age (Evert Cimera et al., 2015). The researchers investigated whether or not the rates of referral of transition-aged youth (ages 17 to 25) with intellectual disability (ID) were decreasing over a ten-year period (2004 to 2013). By using the Rehabilitation Services Administration's (RSA) database, the researchers examined the referral source of 286,663 transition-age youth with ID from 2004 to 2013. From their examination of the RSA's database, the researchers found that the rate of referral from high schools decreased from 62.3 percent in 2004 to 50.0 percent in 2013 (Evert Cimera et al., 2015). This decrease in referral rates from high schools to vocational rehabilitation services is disconcerting because it appears that current transition programs are not working or being utilized like they should, especially to follow federal law mandates.

Transitional programs inside high schools may not be meeting the needs of the students, but the vocational rehabilitation programs also seem to be struggling to provide students with transition services. In an article by Honeycutt et al. (2015) the researchers set out to determine the rate at which transition-age youth with disabilities apply to vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies, how likely is it that they will receive services,

and what proportion of youth VR cases are closed with an employment outcome. The researchers used the RSA-911 Case Service Report data from 2004 to 2006 to ascertain information about each person who exited VR services during each year, including the characteristics of the individual at application, the types of services received, and the employment outcomes for those who received services. From the RSA-911 data, the researchers found that four to 14 percent of a state's transition-age youth population applied for VR services, 31 to 82 percent of the applicants actually received VR services, and 40 to 70 percent of the youth who received services were able to close with an employment outcome. The researchers concluded that VR services for transition-age youth could be improved (Honeycutt et al., 2015). The fact that less than 50 percent of transition-age youth with disabilities are even applying for VR services indicates that there is a gap somewhere in the transition process. There are other barriers in place that impact individuals with disabilities and their pursuits for employment.

In a quantitative and qualitative article by Schindler and Kientz (2013), the researchers attempted to identify the supports and barriers that are a part of higher education and employment for individuals diagnosed with mental illnesses. There were 48 adult participants with various mental diagnoses that included bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and major depressive disorder. The researchers implemented a one-group posttest quantitative survey design and qualitative focus groups. The questionnaire included the participants' demographics and a self-report about supports and barriers that were identified throughout the study. The researchers identified various aspects of supports or barriers that had an impact on their ability to perform in either higher education or a workplace setting. Some of the barriers identified were support systems,

financial supports, psychiatric stability, managed stress, and accommodations; however, these barriers were dependent on the individual's process in recovery (Schindler & Kientz, 2013). The barriers identified in this study influence multiple contexts that surround an individual and can affect whether or not someone diagnosed with a mental illness obtains higher education or employment.

Many studies that have been conducted demonstrate that contexts can have a significant impact on individuals with disabilities as they either transition from the school setting to the workplace or attempt to gain employment. The contexts are not always supportive of the individual. It is also important to consider that the tasks or occupational activities available to individuals with disabilities may also influence their employment outcomes.

Task

In some situations, individuals with disabilities want to participate in the occupation of work and have a desire to increase their roles as a worker, but they may not have the opportunity to gain employment. In 2005, students with disabilities who were no longer in school had a 57 percent employment rate, while students without disabilities had a 66 percent employment rate (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). There is a lack of research studies that focus on the tasks that individuals can engage in specifically related to work. This can be recognized as a gap in the literature and a need for future research. According to the Department of Education 38th Annual Report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (2016), there are a variety of ongoing studies that focus on employment and participation in the tasks associated to a workplace setting. Some of the problem areas that are identified include: career

development programs that focus specifically on high school girls with disabilities, reasons why students with disabilities lag behind their peers in terms of college access and employment outcomes, and promoting positive employment-related skills and outcomes for incarcerated juvenile offenders with disabilities in long-term facilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). A decrease in roles or tasks for individuals with disabilities, as well as the contexts and personal attributes of the person, could possibly affect the person's performance related to vocational outcomes.

Performance

An indicator of success in today's society is when a student transitions to postsecondary education, employment, and community settings (Eismann et al., 2017). However, students with disabilities have lower enrollment in postsecondary education, lower rates of employment in paid positions, and are less likely to engage in community activities (Eismann et al., 2017; Wehman, 2013). In a study by Eismann et al., (2017), the objective was to identify the characteristics of individuals with disabilities who receive occupational therapy services during their transition into adulthood and determine factors associated with positive transition outcomes. The researchers conducted a secondary analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) to meet the objective of the study. From the results, the researchers found that 7.5 percent of students from the NLTS2 reported receiving occupational therapy services from the school district. The most commonly reported disability classifications were autism, cerebral palsy, and intellectual disability. From the results, the researchers found that functional use of arms and hands was significantly associated with participation in postsecondary education and community activities. The health status of the students was also

significantly associated with participation in community activities. Finally, students' verbal comprehension was significantly associated with postsecondary employment (Eismann et al., 2017). Participation in tasks or occupations related to postsecondary school, employment, or community events is significantly impacted by a student's abilities or disabilities. Addressing the functional capabilities of students with disabilities before or even during their transition to adulthood may help them engage in desired tasks more successfully. Multiple problems have been identified through research that affect students with disabilities during the transition from the school setting to the workplace setting, which can lead to occupational injustice. These problem areas must be addressed in order to help create a solution. This is where evaluations play a role. Evaluations can be used to identify personal attributes, contexts, tasks, and performance that may be impacting transition and vocational outcomes for students with disabilities.

Evaluation

Many different assessment tools are used to evaluate a person's occupational performance related to vocational outcomes. Occupational therapists are trained to utilize a multitude of assessment tools, as well as use their observation and interview skills to build a profile and identify goals. The types of assessments that occupational therapists use, related to work, evaluate the skills and interests of the individuals, the supports and barriers of the individual's various contexts, and their participation in tasks and activities. It is also important to mention that assessment is mandatory under IDEA and should relate to education, training, employment, and independent living skills (Webb, Repetto, Seabrooks-Blackmore, Patterson, & Alderfer, 2014).

Person

It makes logical sense that skills and interests of the individual are evaluated in order to determine appropriate vocational goals. Levison and Palmer (2005) recommended collecting information related to a student's cognitive, academic, and interpersonal skills. Academic information can be retrieved from a student's school records that include grades and test scores. More specific evaluation tools can be used to gather information relevant to cognitive and interpersonal skills. An assessment that evaluates various skills is the Scales of Independent Behavior-Revised (SIB-R). The SIB-R is a set of tests that comprehensively measure adaptive and problem behaviors to determine eligibility for services and set goals for individualized education or program plans (Bruininks, Woodcock, Weatherman, & Hill, 1996, as cited in Crist, 2014). The SIB-R consists of 259 items in 14 subscales organized into four other subscales such as motor skills, social interaction and communication skills, personal independence skills, and community independence skills (Bruininks, Woodcock, Weatherman, & Hill, 1996, as cited in Crist, 2014). The SIB-R is an excellent assessment tool to utilize in a vocational rehabilitation program because it addresses multiple skill areas related to work. It is also important to evaluate how the different contexts and environments that surround an individual will affect their vocational performance.

Context

The contexts around a person can either facilitate or hinder vocational performance. An assessment that evaluates a variety of contexts is The Transition Planning Inventory (TPI). The TPI is an inventory and rating scale evaluation tool that can be administered orally or self-guided (Patton & Clark, 2014, as cited in Page &

Tuckwell, 2014). The TPI was developed to determine the strengths and needs of high school students who are preparing to transition into a variety of post-school settings. This evaluation tool was designed for students aged 14-22 years old, including students with disabilities, who meet the IDEA requirements. It is comprised of a 46 transition planning statements that cover employment, further education/training, daily living skills, leisure activities, community participation, health, self-determination, communication, and interpersonal relationships. It also includes 15 open-ended questions that were designed to take into account the student's needs, interests, and preferences (Patton & Clark, 2014, as cited in Page & Tuckwell, 2014). The TPI is a well-rounded evaluation tool that is an asset in a vocational rehabilitation program due to the broad range of contexts and interests it covers.

Task

It is also vital to assess the various tasks or activities that must be performed in a vocational setting. An assessment that focuses on performance of tasks is the WorkHab FCE system. The WorkHab FCE is designed to assess a person's capacity for physical work (Roberts & Bradbury, 2006, as cited in Page & Tuckwell, 2014). It is also used to develop plans for return to work, workplace modifications, and pre-employment testing. The WorkHab FCE is used with people who have disabilities and consists of 12 assessments that identify safety concerns and energy consumption through participation in tasks (Roberts & Bradbury, 2006, as cited in Page & Tuckwell, 2014). This assessment is beneficial for a vocational rehabilitation program because it focuses on the person performing tasks and determines if the task is appropriate for that individual. An

evaluator for a vocational rehabilitation program could use this to determine if the client is safe and is performing tasks in an appropriate and effective manner.

Performance

When an individual is participating in an activity, his/her performance can influence the quality and enjoyment of the task. Performance is also important to consider because of the influence it has on whether or not the individual is employed or unemployed. An individual's performance will constantly be evaluated in a workplace setting either by his/her boss or supervisor, and the person's skill level needs to match the environmental demands. Although there are a variety of assessments that can measure a person's performance, it is hard to tailor them to different workplace settings. However, it is important to address the pre-vocational skills necessary to improve a person's work performance. The assessments discussed above, as well as observations and interviews can help occupational therapists and other school professionals design goals that will help prepare students with disabilities for employment. The evaluation process also provides information to guide the interventions or programs that are utilized to help meet vocational goals.

Programs and Policies

There is not a plethora of research that discusses pre-vocational programs in academic settings for students with disabilities; however, there is research available related to vocational or skills training programs for adults with disabilities. The tenants of these programs could be modified and applied to students in the school setting. It is also important to address the policies in place that were established to help students with

disabilities achieve occupational justice. First, studies that focus on helping individuals with disabilities build skills and pursue their interests will be discussed.

Person

Under the EHP model a person is a configuration of past experiences; values and interests; and sensory-motor, cognitive, and psychosocial skills (Dunn, 2017). Multiple studies have been conducted that examine how all the different variables of a person can impact vocational outcomes and how the use of vocation can impact the variables of a person (Dunn, Diener, Wright, Wright, & Narumanchi, 2015; Gal, Selanikyo, Erez, & Katz, 2015; Tsang, Chan, Wong, & Liberman, 2009). Studies by Gal et al. (2015) and Dunn et al. (2015) were similar in that they both used vocational interests to address the needs of the participants. Gal et al. (2015) used a quantitative pretest-posttest design to investigate how a professional training employment placement program could impact the perception of quality of life and subjective well being of young adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The researchers found a significant improvement in quality of life perception and subjective well being during the period between the end of the course and the six-month trial period in the army (Gal et al., 2015). In contrast, Dunn et al. (2015) used a qualitative approach with grounded-theory analysis to explore engagement and learning in a technology-based extracurricular program called iSTAR designed for youth with autism. Researchers found that by involving the youth in a similar interest program, it stimulated engagement and learning (Dunn et al., 2015). While these two studies used different research methods and had different goals, they both demonstrated that utilizing vocations of interest could have a positive effect on the lives of the participants (Dunn et al., 2015; Gal et al., 2015). Helping high school students identify

careers of interest can lead to better engagement in the occupation of work and bring more meaning to their lives.

Tsang et al. (2009) used a different approach from the previous studies and focused more on how the person can impact vocation versus how vocation can impact the person. Using quantitative methods, the researchers examined if an integrated supported employment (ISE) program, which augmented Individual Placement and Support (IPS) with social skills training (SST) would help individuals with severe mental illness achieve and maintain employment. They found that participants in ISE had significantly higher employment rates (78.8 percent) and longer job tenures (23.84 weeks) compared with IPS and traditional vocational rehabilitation participants (Tsang et al., 2009). The iSTAR program created by Dunn et al. (2009) also incorporated a social engagement aspect that led to increased engagement and learning for the participants. By incorporating social skills training and social engagement in a high school setting, students can increase their likelihood of gaining employment and achieving vocational outcomes.

Programs that have been created to address the skills, interests, and overall quality of life of individuals with disabilities have had positive vocation impacts. Not all of these programs may directly involve students, but they have components that can be used to address the vocational needs of youth with disabilities. The skills and interests of the person, or students, should be considered when developing a pre-vocational program, but the contexts that surround the person can also be shaped and utilized to support vocational development.

Context

Under the EHP model, context is the condition that surrounds a person and includes physical, social, cultural, and temporal aspects (Dunn, 2017). Various studies have been conducted that examine how different contextual conditions impact vocational outcomes (Liu et al., 2013; Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014). Studies conducted by Liu et al. (2013) and Nochajski and Schweitzer (2014) were similar in that they both altered and/or modified the physical and social contexts of high school students with disabilities to improve vocational participation and outcomes. Using a quantitative pretest-posttest design, Liu et al. (2013) explored the benefits of a workplace training program that included practicing in a work context and group education sessions to focus on improving work-related behaviors in individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities. By changing the physical and social contexts within the program, the researchers found that the participants benefited from a structured training program and saw improvements in social and communication skills specific to the workplace setting. Participants were also less confused when faced with directions from a supervisor and had a better self-concept (Liu et al., 2013).

Nochajski and Schweitzer, (2014) also used quantitative research methods, but in contrast, they developed the School to Work Transition Program model to help identify best practices in order to facilitate successful school to work transition for students with emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD). Students participated in a four-phase program including: school-based learning, community involvement, paid and supported work experience, and competitive employment and follow-up. The researchers found that 30 percent of the project participants were competitively employed at the end of the study.

Students had the most difficulty in phase three, but 81 percent of those who successfully completed phase three obtained and retained competitive employment for at least one year (Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014). The researchers from both of the studies utilized different vocational programs with different populations; however, by altering and/or modifying the physical contexts so that they reflected and incorporated workplace environments and by adding in group work and staff support, the participants improved their skills in the workplace setting and gained competitive employment (Liu et al., 2013; Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014). By providing high school students physical contexts that reflect the workplace and increasing support in the social context through group work and staff support, students have a better chance at gaining the skills they need for work and obtain employment outcomes.

The social context does not just include peers, teachers, counselors, therapists, and other individuals engaging with each other, but also the governmental agencies that create policies and laws that impact individuals (Dunn, 2017). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 is a federally mandated law that ensures youth with disabilities have access to public education, including school to adulthood transition services (Bazyk & Cahill, 2015). Students with disabilities are provided specialized support to meet general education standards, and through collaboration between professionals, including occupational therapists, students achieve postsecondary education, vocational training, employment, and/or community living outcomes. In a sense, IDEA is in place to provide occupational justice to all students, including those with disabilities (Bazyk & Cahill, 2015). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act also plays a role in providing students with disabilities occupational

justice (Bazyk & Cahill, 2015). Students with disabilities are required to have reasonable accommodations provided to them if they are unable to qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) under IDEA through Section 504. Basically, educational institutes must take reasonable steps to accommodate an individual's disability by providing assistive technology, ramps, training, or other adjustments. The Rehabilitation Act and Section 504 are also responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services. If a student is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, then the school is to provide them with a vocational rehabilitation counselor who works with the transition team to help plan for the student's future job-related education and training (Bazyk & Cahill, 2015).

Another policy that has influenced students with disabilities in an educational setting is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (Bazyk & Cahill, 2015). The ADA is a civil rights law that extends past programs that receive federal funding and addresses access and discrimination in public and private schools, business establishments, and public buildings. Provisions provided by ADA can eliminate barriers and provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities (Bazyk & Cahill, 2015). All of the mentioned policies have been erected in order to provide students with disabilities the same opportunities as their peers and can be utilized in the school setting to support students as they transition from school to adulthood.

These policies not only support the social contexts of students as they transition from school to adulthood, but they relate to the temporal and social conditions surrounding the individuals (Dunn, 2017). In the temporal context, all of these governmental policies are designed to support high school students with disabilities. In the cultural context, these policies set expectations and rules of behavior that schools and

other public facilities are to abide by (Dunn, 2017). It would be beneficial for high school students who are eligible for services under these policies to learn about their rights, the resources available to them, and how to advocate for their needs to promote occupational justice for all.

All of the contexts provide structure, support, rules, and experiences that can improve vocational outcomes for students with disabilities, and the academic setting would be an ideal location to alter and modify the contexts to better suit the needs of youth with disabilities and start them on their journey into vocation. The appropriate contexts also provide more opportunities for students to perform or participate in tasks related to vocation.

Task

Under the EHP model, tasks are behaviors that can be observed from an objective perspective and allow an individual to achieve a goal (Dunn, 2017). There is limited research available that addresses how vocational tasks influence students with disabilities, but in a study by Taylor et al. (2012), the researchers implemented a systematic review to explore the evidence regarding vocational interventions for individuals with ASD between the ages of 13 to 30 years old. The researchers looked at three different databases and searched for articles between 1980 and 2011 that addressed vocational interventions. Out of the many articles that the researchers perused, only five studies were identified, and unfortunately, all of them were poor quality and focused on on-the-job support interventions. From the five articles the researchers examined, they found that supported employment improved quality of life, ASD symptoms, and cognitive functioning in individuals with autism. Supported employment consisted of

counseling, on-the-job training, assessment, assistive technology, job searching, education for employers and colleagues, job coaches, and community-based jobs. In three of the studies that the researchers explored, interventions that incorporated vocational interests increased rates of employment for young adults diagnosed with autism (Taylor et al, 2012). The lack of research regarding vocational interventions for adolescents and young adults diagnosed with autism exemplifies a need for research on this particular topic. However, the results that the researchers did find still provide evidence, though it is limited, that vocational interventions can have a positive impact on individuals diagnosed with autism. By incorporating practical skills such as work preparation and job searching, as well as education and assessment, a vocational program for high school students with disabilities could enhance participants' quality of life and their ability to participate in work-related tasks. Also, working with other professionals such as job coaches or vocational rehabilitation counselors could enhance the experience and learning of the participants.

There may not be an abundance of research regarding interventions, or tasks, that are available to students with disabilities, but there is at least a foundation that can be utilized and provide ideas for activities to use when working with students to improve vocational performance.

Performance

Under the EHP model, performance transpires when a person participates in tasks within a context (Dunn, 2017). Several studies have been identified related to vocation that have led to positive performance in employment (Cocks, Thoresen, & Lee, 2015; Mahoney, Roberts, Bryze, & Kent, 2016; Shih, Chen, Chiang, & Liu, 2015). Studies

conducted by Cocks et al. (2015), Mahoney et al. (2016), and Shih et al. (2015) were all similar due to the fact that they adapted one of the components of performance in order to determine how participation and engagement in vocational activities were impacted. In a mixed-methods study by Cocks et al. (2015), the researchers investigated the pathways from high school to 12 months following graduation and the quality of life (QOL) outcomes of 30 people with disabilities who graduated with apprenticeship or traineeship qualifications between 2009 and 2011. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and the QOL.Q assessment was given to gather perspectives and analyze the QOL of the participants. The researchers concluded that positive QOL outcomes were associated with employment, employee benefits, and satisfaction with work and social interactions (Cocks et al., 2015).

While the study by Cocks et al. (2015) focused more on how supports from the social context could impact QOL and vocational outcomes, the study by Shih et al. (2015) concentrated more on how the physical context impacted vocation. Using a randomized control trial, Shih et al. (2015) explored whether work attention increased in persons with chronic schizophrenia by adding background music to their environment. The researchers randomly assigned the participants to one of three conditions: quiet environment as the control group and classical light music and popular music as the experimental groups. In conclusion, the researchers found that with the addition of background music the participants had an increase in attention test scores (Shih et al., 2015).

Mahoney et al. (2016) also took into consideration the positive effects altering or adapting the contexts had on occupational engagement, but they also focused on how the

attributes of the person affected occupational engagement. In a qualitative, phenomenological study, Mahoney et al. (2016) explored and explained how people with intellectual disabilities demonstrated occupational engagement in a community-based day program. The researchers used the Volitional Questionnaire in order to assess how the individuals perceive their perception in activities. Through thematic analysis, the researchers illustrated how participants demonstrated engagement by initiating activities, expressing positive affect, and showing focused attention. Social support from staff members was also found to contribute to participants' engagement in activities (Mahoney et al., 2016). By addressing the underlying skills of high school students, increasing support within their social contexts, and adapting the physical contexts, performance in vocation-related activities could be improved.

Addressing the skills and contexts of students could help improve their performance and start them on the journey of career development, but how can these concepts be incorporated into a school setting? In their article, Webb, Repetto, Seabrooks-Blackmore, Patterson, and Alderfer (2014) discussed the importance of career development and how it can be integrated into academic and community settings. The researchers emphasized that the basic tenant to career development is that for learning to be meaningful, it must be connected to the real world. Many models have been used to describe career development, but the researchers found that there are four themes that stand out in these models that schools try to incorporate into transition planning for students including: personal development, personal learning, personal skills, and environmental influences. The researchers also found that the components of career development are straightforward and include: self-determination and person-centered

planning, career assessment, and career planning. These components can be incorporated into the academic setting through activities such as career fairs, job shadowing, career interest assessments, and early work experience. The researchers concluded that too often focus is placed on academics versus helping students explore areas of interest, which is where career development comes in because it can help students better understand themselves and determine how they can best function as adults (Webb et al., 2014). Career development is an important factor that must be taken into consideration along with preparing the students for the work environment.

All of the above-mentioned programs and policies have impacted the vocational outcomes of individuals with disabilities. Even though these programs did not always directly involve pre-vocational skills training or take place in academic settings, the tenants, and concepts of these programs can be applied to a program in the schools for students with disabilities. An advantage to having a pre-vocational skills training program in the schools for students with disabilities is that occupational therapists can play a role in helping the students achieve their goals and outcomes.

Role of Occupational Therapist

Occupational therapists are educated and trained to evaluate and provide interventions for individuals that relate to the person, context, tasks, and overall performance. They are also trained to act holistically and consider all components of the individual, including vocational interests. Occupational therapists would be able to work with students with disabilities who have a vocational IEP goal and help them build skills, explore interests, and modify the contexts that surround them to better support their performance.

Person

One of the main jobs of an occupational therapist is to try and understand what brings meaning to lives of their clients. Occupational therapists work in a variety of settings and interact with different people who wish to return to the activities that they enjoy. An occupational therapist in a mental health setting might focus on teaching his or her clients positive coping skills in order to facilitate participation in a meaningful activity that they used to be involved in, while an occupational therapist in a rehabilitation facility might focus on increasing the range of motion or building strength in an individual's upper extremity to help improve the person's ability to cook for his or her family. Two major aspects that should be similar between an occupational therapist in all settings is the ability to be client-centered and educate the client so that they may be successful in their desired occupation. Vocational rehabilitation programs facilitated by an occupational therapist should not be any different.

In two different case studies, the researchers explored the role an occupational therapist provided in a vocational rehabilitation program and how they enabled meaning for their participants in regards to vocation. The studies conducted by Arikawa, Goto, and Mineno (2013) and Dean, Dunn, and Tomchek, (2015) were similar due to the fact that the researchers explored how occupational therapists can support individuals to live a self-determined life and find meaning through the occupation of work. However, these case studies differed with the roles the occupational therapist played for the participant. More specifically, in the case study by Arikawa et al. (2013), the researchers found that it was beneficial for the occupational therapists to assess the participant's occupational performance and work environment, and use their activity analysis skills to adjust or

improve the work environment to match the capabilities of the individual. By doing this, the occupational therapists in this case study were able to facilitate the client to be more successful, locate jobs that were meaningful, and adjust or improve the work environment to match the capabilities of the client (Arikawa et al., 2013).

In the study by Dean et al. (2015), the researchers described how occupational therapists can assist adults with developmental disabilities to live a self-determined life by using a consumer-directed service (CDS) as a type of support program. The CDS focused on self-determination and provided the individual with more authority and accountability to their desired occupation. In a case study, the individual inquired about adaptations that could make her more efficient with answering phones, creating documents on a computer, and responding to emails. The occupational therapists played an important role in educating the individual on communication skills and compensatory strategies to help facilitate success. The case study provided by the researchers demonstrated the importance and role of an occupational therapist in providing a person with developmental disabilities the necessary skills and tools to be successful in a workplace setting (Dean et al., 2015).

The case study by Dean et al. (2015), was different from the case study by Arikawa et al. (2013) due to the fact the occupational therapists held different roles to help facilitate engagement. In the study by Dean et al. (2015) the occupational therapist was helping an individual become more successful in a pre-determined work environment compared to the Arikawa et al. (2013) case study where occupational therapists were assisting the individuals in the process of finding a job that would best meet the person's occupational performance. However, both articles provide examples of

how occupational therapists can help facilitate a positive work environment and promote meaning through work by understanding the person's desires.

Occupational therapists can apply their expertise facilitating skill development and incorporating client-centered tenants to help students with disabilities work towards their vocational goals and outcomes in the school setting. They can also modify and adapt the contexts that surround students in order to enhance outcomes, but there are barriers that impact how involved a therapist can be in the transition and vocational training processes for students with disabilities.

Context

The role of an occupational therapist, in regards to context, is to identify the different physical, social, personal, temporal, virtual, and cultural contexts that either facilitate or hinder the person's ability to participate in their desired occupation (AOTA, 2014). In the limited amount of research that is available on the topic of occupational therapists' role in the transition team with a focus on vocational interests, two studies by Kardos and White (2005), and Spencer, Emery, and Schneck (2003) explored the contextual barriers that interfere with occupational therapists working on a transition team in a high school setting.

In the study by Kardos and White (2005), occupational therapists identified several contextual barriers that inhibit or make it more difficult for them to be a part of the transition team in the high school setting. The barriers identified include: transition services are primarily handled by other professionals; the role of occupational therapy is not well understood; school systems lack funds to fully maximize occupational therapy services; there is limited information regarding appropriate assessment tools for

occupational therapists to use; there is decreased awareness in the occupational therapy profession concerning transition planning; caseloads are too large to devote more time to transition planning; there is limited involvement with the high school population; a majority of students being discharged from occupational therapy services before the age of 14 when transition planning begins; transition planning services are not addressed in an occupational therapist's specific program; occupational therapists are perceived as manual therapists by transition team members; occupational therapists have limited skills to address transition services; there is a lack of transition programs in high schools; and occupational therapy is not considered an effective related service for students of transition age (Kardos & White, 2005).

The study by Spencer, Emery, and Schneck (2003) addressed contextual barriers that interfered with occupational therapists working on the transition team, but from special education directors' point of view. The identified barriers to occupational therapy use included lack of funding, lack of interagency planning, and lack of parent participation (Spencer et al., 2003).

Spencer et al. (2003) and Kardos and White (2005) both identified a variety of contextual barriers that make it difficult for occupational therapists to be a part of the transition team in a high school setting. Both studies identified funding to be a similar contextual barrier; although the occupational therapists were able to identify more contextual barriers that interfere with their ability to be a part of the transition team in a high school setting (Kardos & White, 2005; Spencer et al., 2003). If a pre-vocational skills program were to be included within the school curriculum, it could help to

eliminate or at least decrease the cost of implementing occupational therapy programming to enhance vocational outcomes.

It is beneficial that the two studies identified contextual barriers that may possibly complicate the role occupational therapists play while assisting students with disabilities through the transition from school to adulthood and employment opportunities. However, these barriers cannot detract from the fact that occupational therapists have the ability to help students pursue vocational outcomes. Perhaps one of the reasons that occupational therapists are not used more often on a transition team is because their roles are not clearly identified.

Task

There was limited research available that addressed issues that occupational therapists face or opportunities available regarding tasks related to transition or employment for students with disabilities. This gap in the literature may be due to the fact that tasks are so closely linked with the performance of tasks.

Performance

Occupational therapists are capable of helping people build skills and acquire the tools necessary to be successful in many contexts, but they are not being utilized very efficiently in the school setting regarding transition services. Three studies by Kardos and White (2005), Mankey (2011), and Spencer et al. (2003), explored the types of services that occupational therapists were providing to students to facilitate their transition from high school and whether or not they were a part of the transition team.

In the study by Mankey (2011) the researcher conducted an exploratory study to analyze how occupational therapists in schools are involved in secondary transition

planning for students with disabilities; whether or not occupational therapists feel they have a role in secondary transition planning; the types of services occupational therapists are providing regarding secondary transition services and how often the services are provided; and the factors that facilitate and/or hinder occupational therapist involvement in secondary transition planning. A survey was sent out to occupational therapists in Arkansas with a 46 percent response rate. From the results of the survey the types of services occupational therapists were providing and the frequency of them varied depending on if the occupational therapists were working one-on-one with the students or consulting, but some services included providing input on student schedules, evaluating for adaptive equipment and assistive technology, and providing resources to parents outside the school environment (Mankey, 2011).

Some common facilitating factors to the participation of occupational therapists in a school setting included knowledge in sensory integration and assistive technology, the emphasis on functional skills and occupations, and establishing a relationship with the team (Mankey, 2011). Hindering factors identified included the lack of awareness by team members of the contributions occupational therapists can provide, the educational team not asking for input and not wanting too many opinions, contract therapists who are not part of the team, and the lack of funding when there is no progress if the school chooses to seek third-party reimbursement sources. Overall, the involvement of occupational therapists in secondary transition planning was believed to be limited, but many felt that occupational therapists would be beneficial to transition services (Mankey, 2011). This study demonstrated how occupational therapists provide some services that could help facilitate the transition process for students after high school; however, it does

not provide examples of services that occupational therapists can provide that specifically relate to vocation.

In a similar quantitative study conducted by Kardos and White (2005), the researchers investigated school-based occupational therapists' knowledge of transition planning, their involvement in assessment and intervention of students requiring transition services, and possible barriers limiting therapists' participation in transition services. The researchers randomly selected 400 therapists from the School Special Interest Section of the American Occupational Association to participate in this study. The questionnaire that the participants were asked to complete asked questions related to IDEA transition services and barriers the therapists encountered. The researchers found that only 30 percent of therapists believed they were participating effectively in providing transition services for students. Less than half of the therapists surveyed reported that they conducted assessments that provided information towards the development of transition goals/objectives. Most therapists reported providing intervention related to postsecondary transition versus assessment including post-secondary education (64 percent), community participation (45 percent), and residential outcomes (25 percent) [Kardos & White, 2005]. This study suggests that occupational therapists are not as involved in transition services as they should be. Therapists that do participate in transition services address post-secondary education, employment, community participation, and residential outcomes, which may facilitate the student's performance after high school. Although Kardos and White (2005) showed that some occupational therapists do provide some services related to employment, one role that occupational therapists could assist more in is pre-vocational skill training. By providing pre-

vocational skill training the individual learns skills that are specifically work-related to facilitate their performance to explore and participate in jobs.

Occupational therapists are not the only educational professionals who feel as though they could contribute more to the transition team in a high school setting. In a quantitative study by Spencer et al. (2003), the researchers surveyed special education directors to ascertain their perspectives about current transition service provider utilization with occupational therapy as a member of a multidisciplinary team and new occupational therapy services needed for students with disabilities. The researchers recruited 104 special education directors representing all districts across Kentucky to take part in the questionnaire. From the results of the survey, the researchers found that occupational therapists provided less than one-fifth of transition services in high schools for students with disabilities. They provided more assistive technology consults (30.3 percent), task or environmental modification (25.8 percent), and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) planning (20 percent) than other providers. About 35 percent of special education directors suggested that additional occupational therapy services were needed for adolescents with cognitive disabilities and for job performance and related work skills programming.

The researchers concluded that many special education directors believe occupational therapy services are needed and that new services for adolescents transitioning to adult roles should be directed towards students with cognitive disabilities (Spencer et al., 2003). This study is different from Kardos and White (2005) and Mankey (2011) due to the fact that the researchers are gaining a viewpoint from other educational professionals. The study by Spencer et al., (2003) reinforces the fact that occupational

therapists can play a role on the transition team, help students with disabilities prepare for life after high school, and occupational therapists are seen as a resource that is not being utilized.

Despite the fact that occupational therapists are not often part of transition teams, many therapists and other educational professionals believe they can help students with disabilities enhance the skills needed for employment and identify career interests. It makes sense that an occupational therapist could work with students to meet IEP goals related to vocation by using components from programs that have already shown to lead to positive employment outcomes.

Discussion

After reviewing existing literature on transition services available to students with disabilities, researchers show that the needs of students with disabilities who are on an alternative track from post-secondary education are not being met. On a personal level, literature has demonstrated that students with disabilities lack the skills necessary for obtaining and maintaining employment including social, communication, and emotional/behavioral skills. This lack of skills also inhibits students from pursuing their interests and goals related to career development. There has even been an overall decrease in quality of life for individuals with disabilities who struggle to meet vocational outcomes. On a contextual level, there has been a decrease in referral rates to vocational rehabilitation services and the current vocational rehabilitation services available are not leading to employment outcomes. There is overall limited research available related to the level of involvement students with disabilities have in vocational tasks or activities, but research has shown that a person's functional abilities impact employment outcomes.

This may put students with disabilities at a disadvantage. Overall, students with disabilities have poorer vocational outcomes than their peers without disabilities, which is an occupational injustice that should be remedied.

An evaluation must be conducted to identify each student's individual skills and interests, as well as what barriers and supports their contexts provide. This information is crucial for identifying goals and it provides a framework to build upon that can guide the students, therapists, and other members of the transition team towards realistic and achievable vocational outcomes.

The evaluation process identifies goals that can then be addressed through intervention or programs that relate to vocational training. Researchers have identified programs and policies in place that can help individuals with disabilities obtain their vocational goals. Vocational programs have impacted individuals on a personal level by improving their employability skills and their quality of life. They have also offered individuals with disabilities the opportunity to pursue their personal goals. Vocational programs have also addressed the contextual elements that impact employment outcomes for students and other individuals with disabilities by providing structure and support. There are also federal policies in place that ensure students with disabilities are provided the necessary resources and supports in order to successfully complete the transition from high school to adult life. Research has also identified vocational interventions that can be utilized to positively impact employment outcomes. Overall, there are programs and policies in place that have led students and other individuals with disabilities to effectively participate in vocation. These programs may not directly involve students or

the high school setting, but the tenants and concepts from these programs can be applied to better support students with disabilities who are preparing to transition to adult life.

Research also indicates that occupational therapists can play a vital role in transition services and vocational intervention to enhance students' skills and provide them the tools and opportunities to be successful in the work context. Occupational therapists are trained to help individuals build skills through holistic interventions. They also emphasize client-centeredness and can help individuals pursue their specific interests and goals. Research has identified barriers that impact how involved occupational therapists are in providing transition services, such as funding or lack of knowledge regarding the role of occupational therapy in the transition process. Occupational therapists are not currently being utilized in secondary transition planning, but many occupational therapists and other school professionals feel that they could be valuable assets to the transition team and provide services related to vocational outcomes. There is limited research on vocational training programs within schools and how occupational therapists can bring their knowledge and skills to help guide students through the transition process; however, this gap in literature provides an excellent opportunity for occupational therapists to become more involved in transition services such as pre-vocational skill training for students with disabilities.

Conclusion

Students with disabilities are faced with occupational injustice related to vocation when compared to students without disabilities. However, there are vocational training programs and policies available that can be utilized to prepare and transition students from the school setting into a workplace setting. Occupational therapists are trained and

have the evaluation tools that can support students with disabilities through the transition period. Webb et al. (2014) stated that early work experience is the best predictor of post-school employment for students with disabilities, but the challenge is to find ways to integrate and relate career activities into meaningful classroom experiences. A pre-vocational skills training program in high schools led by occupational therapists could help students with disabilities build the skills for employment after school and help them identify their interests related to vocation. Chapter III describes the methodology used for creating this type of program.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This purpose of this scholarly project is two-fold. Firstly, it addresses occupational injustice related to vocation that students with disabilities face when compared to their non-disabled peers by creating a pre-vocational skills training course for high school students on individualized education plans. Secondly, it incorporates the knowledge and skills of occupational therapists regarding participation in occupation and meaningful activity by having them lead the course with the assistance of a vocational rehabilitation counselor, special education teachers, and para-professionals. The objective of the literature review is to examine and evaluate occupational therapy and other similar professional literature to determine: what the specific problem areas are; evaluation tools that evaluate an individual's skills and needs related to work; current programming, policies, and interventions being utilized to address the occupation of work for individuals with disabilities, and the role that occupational therapists can play to assist individuals in their vocational endeavors. The information incorporated into the literature review was obtained through a variety of sources.

Online databases were the main source utilized to collect information for the literature review. The most commonly utilized databases were accessed through the Harley E. French Library of the Health Sciences and Chester Fritz Library located online through the University of North Dakota and included: Academic Search Premiere, CINAHL, EBSCOhost, PsychINFO, and PubMed. Outside of the University of North

Dakota online libraries, databases such as Google Scholar and the American Journal of Occupational Therapy (AJOT) were also used to find applicable sources. Commonly used search terms within these databases included: occupational therapy and vocation, occupational therapy and transition services, occupational therapy and students with disabilities, individuals with disabilities and vocational rehabilitation, and students with disabilities and school to work transition.

Every article found that was deemed appropriate for the literature review was reviewed for evidence and content through the lens of an occupation-based model. Several occupation-based models were considered to guide and structure this scholarly project including the Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) model, the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model, and the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E). After consideration of the problem areas and interventions addressed in the identified literature, the EHP model was ultimately chosen to configure the project due to the strong emphasis of inter-professional collaboration, occupational justice, and dynamic interaction of the person, context, and task on performance (Dunn, 2017).

Acceptable articles located through the databases were organized based on the main concepts from the Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) model: Person, Context, Task, and Performance. More specifically, articles were organized depending on whether or not they addressed the relationship between the skills and values of the person and work, the effect of environmental supports, common interventions used to address the occupation of work, or how a combination of the three affected work performance.

To support the scholarly articles found in the mentioned databases, occupational therapy textbooks and government websites were also utilized to provide information for the literature review. The authors of this scholarly product also had the opportunity to speak with Sam Bradbury, MAOM, ATC, CPE, one of the authors of the WorkHab FCE Assessment. Mr. Bradbury provided more detailed information on his assessment and supported the idea of a prevocational skills training program for high school students (S. Bradbury, personal communication, November 16, 2017). Mr. Bradbury offered to possibly work with the authors of this scholarly project in the future to create a work assessment specifically tailored to students in the high school setting (S. Bradbury, personal communication, November 16, 2017). The authors of this study also spoke with Addy Hutchinson, a Work Readiness Trainer in Casper, Wyoming, to learn more about vocation rehabilitation and how an inter-professional relationship would better prepare students on IEPs for vocational pursuits and outcomes (A. Hutchinson, personal communication, December 21, 2017).

Throughout the review of literature, it was noted that there is limited evidence supporting a prevocational skills training program for students with disabilities in the high school setting led by occupational therapists. In fact, several articles discussed how many occupational therapists in secondary school settings do not feel as though they are being utilized in special education to support students as they transition out of high school to pursue other interests, including employment (Kardos & White, 2005; Spencer et al., 2003). Although there is limited evidence regarding vocational programs in high schools led by occupational therapists, there is still a multitude of existing vocational programs that focus on skill building and environmental modifications including: career

interest exploration, social skills building and engagement, utilizing physical contexts that reflect the workplace, structured programming, group inclusion, and increasing staff support (Dunn et al., 2015; Gal et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2013; Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014; Tsang et al., 2009). There are also several governmental policies in place that support students with disabilities and provide resources that can be used to help obtain vocational outcomes (Bazyk & Cahill, 2015).

Problems identified within the literature review include lack of social and life skills, maladaptive behaviors, unemployment leading to decreased quality of life, a decrease in referral rates from high schools to rehabilitation services, a decrease in students applying for vocational rehabilitation services and closing with employment outcomes, and lower rates of employment in paid positions for students with disabilities (Barišín et al., 2011; Eismann et al., 2017; Evert Cimera et al., 2015; Honeycutt et al., 2015; Tomblin & Haring, 2000; Wehman, 2013). The problem areas addressed in the literature review highlight how a deficiency in the person, context, and/or task components influences the performance range available to an individual and can lead to occupational injustice. However, the literature review also discusses programs and interventions that have been used to address these components through inter-professional collaboration and environmental modification. The components of person, context, and task are emphasized throughout the course guide provided in this project, as well as the incorporation of inter-professional collaboration in order to bring occupational justice to students with disabilities pursuing vocational goals. A description of the pre-vocational course designed for this project is located within Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

Product

Research has shown that there is a gap somewhere in the transition process for students with disabilities when they are preparing to move on from high school to vocational opportunities. Evert Cimera et al. (2015) found that the referral rates of transition-aged youth decreased from 62.3 percent in 2004 to 50.0 percent in 2013. To accompany that study, Honeycutt et al. (2015) found that only four to 14 percent of a state's transition-aged youth applied for vocational rehabilitation services, of those youth only 31 to 82 percent of the applicants actually received vocational rehabilitation services, and only 40 to 70 percent of youth who have received services were actually able to close with an employment outcome. Occupational therapists are educated and trained to help fill in the gap in the transition process. However, Mankey (2011) found that 66 percent of occupational therapists feel that they are not utilized in the secondary transition process, even though at least one-third of them believe that they should provide some type of services in secondary transition. Occupational therapists provide holistic care and consider all components of the individual including vocational interests. Occupational therapists are able to work with students with disabilities who have a vocational individualized education plan (IEP) goal and help them build skills, explore interests, and modify the contexts that surround them to better support their performance related to vocation. In addition, occupational therapists are also trained in activity

analysis, which means that they are able to break down an activity and analyze the different components in order to make adaptations and modifications to a task to increase each student's participation in the course activities.

EXPLORE is a pre-vocational course that is led by occupational therapists for high school students on an IEP with vocational aspirations. In conjunction with the occupational therapist, a vocational rehabilitation counselor will provide education and resources to the students. According to Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (2016), vocational rehabilitation counselors provide services such as job search and placement assistance, job retention and career follow-up, transition services, and counseling and guidance related to work. The knowledge and expertise that vocational rehabilitation counselors have will complement services provided by occupational therapists through this course.

The purpose of this course is to minimize the gap during the transition from high school to vocational opportunities by offering students the chance to build their pre-vocational skills and explore their career interests prior to leaving the high school setting. This course is a 16-week program that will be offered to 10 students on IEPs who have vocational goals. This 16-week course will be broken up into group and individual sessions. Group sessions will last for approximately 90 minutes. This timeframe is based off block scheduling, but this is subject to change depending on which district the user of this manual is working in. Individual sessions will last for approximately 30 minutes, and ideally, at least three students should be able to attend their individual sessions within the allotted 90-minute block of time. Additional time may be needed to complete the evaluation portion of the course, which will take place during individual sessions.

Group sessions will occur every other week and focus on topics such as career interest exploration, social/communication skills, emotion/stress identification and healthy coping skills, self-advocacy skills, finding a job and letters of recommendation, resumes and cover letters, and job interview skills. All of these topics will be related to the occupation of work and it is this practice that separates occupational therapists from other professionals in the school setting. Occupational therapists strive to incorporate scenarios and encourage simulation of the actual occupation. In this case, the course sessions will include activities that help bring the students to the workplace in order to make what they are doing seem more realistic and make the course more meaningful regarding the occupation of work. In between the group sessions, students will either participate in open lab time or individual sessions with the occupational therapist. The individual sessions will include an evaluation where each student's skills related to work will be assessed and goals created, and an individualized self-advocacy intervention. When students are not scheduled for individualized sessions, they will have open lab time to finish homework related to group sessions and/or work on their research project (to be discussed further).

In the course manual, readers will find outlines for each of the eight group sessions and the two individual sessions. Each session contains an introductory page that is organized through the Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) Model and a brief explanation of current research that supports the session. The EHP model was chosen to guide this course for a variety of reasons. Firstly, this model is not used exclusively for occupational therapy, but for inter-professional teams to support collaboration (Dunn, 2017). The occupational therapist leading the course will be working with a vocational

rehabilitation counselor, special education teacher, and para-professionals working with the students. The terminology used in this model is more familiar to everyday language, especially through the use of the term *task* instead of *occupation*. Another reason why EHP was chosen is because this model analyzes the dynamic interactions of the person, task, and context, and how the interactions impact the person's performance range. This provides a holistic view of what encompasses the individual and how it could affect their performance to participate in desired tasks. The third reason why EHP was chosen is the strong emphasis on independence, even when assistive devices must be used. Also, EHP encourages the use of different intervention strategies to not just *fix* the person, but to support participation. It is perfectly acceptable to use intervention strategies such as adapt/modify or even alter as long as the students are able to participate in their desired tasks. Lastly, and most importantly, EHP supports and promotes successful and satisfying independent living for everyone regardless of vulnerabilities. No person should face occupational injustice, which is why self-advocacy is emphasized throughout the course (Dunn, 2017).

A table organizes the EHP components and how they connect to the session. The EHP components include Person, Context, Task, and Intervention Approaches. For each session, the Person component is highlighted in green and addresses the skills, interests, and/or experiences of the students being focused on in the session. The Context component is highlighted in blue and addresses the physical, social, temporal and cultural contexts that make up the session. The Task component is highlighted in purple and addresses the activity/activities that will be used in the session. Lastly, the Intervention Approaches component is highlighted in orange and addresses how the EHP intervention

strategies of establish/restore, alter, adapt/modify, prevent, and create can support the students' performance and interests (Dunn, 2017).

Following the introductory page is the outline for the session, which is loosely based off Cole's Seven Steps. Cole's Seven Steps includes introduction, activity, sharing, processing, generalizing, application, and summary (Cole, 2012). The course sessions all include an introduction where students are introduced the topic, objectives, and participate in a warm-up. The activity follows the introduction and describes what the students will be doing in each particular session. Sharing, processing, and application are typically addressed in the activity discussion, but the course sessions differ from Cole's Seven Steps in the respect that generalizing is not directly addressed. Lastly, the session ends with a wrap-up, which is equivalent to the summary portion of Cole's Seven Steps (Cole, 2012).

Besides the use of Cole's Seven Steps, several learning theories and instructional methods were incorporated throughout the session outlines and course in order to support learning for the students. The theory of social learning was prominent throughout the group sessions (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). The social learning theory focuses on the learner observing others and reproducing the desired behavior through the use of role models (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). The group sessions allow the students to observe and learn from each other and from the adults assisting with the sessions. The cognitive constructivism learning theory was also used throughout the sessions (Bandura, 2001; Hunt, Ellis, & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). The cognitive constructivism theory encourages internal perception and thought processing through active participation to promote learning

(Bandura, 2001; Hunt, Ellis, & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). The sessions encourage active participation, reflection, and discussion. There are several instructional methods that are used throughout the course to provide a variety of learning opportunities for the students. Group discussion is used in every group session to encourage idea sharing, while one-to-one instruction is used during every individual session to better meet the goals of each student (Fitzgerald, 2011). Simulation is used in several sessions to enhance problem-solving and interactive abilities that must be used in real life sessions, but in a safe environment. Role-playing is also used throughout sessions to help the students explore their understanding and feelings in certain situations. Lastly, self-instruction is used during lab times and during homework completion because it encourages active learning and allows students the opportunity to reflect on the information being taught (Fitzgerald, 2011).

Following each session in the course manual are the handouts and assigned homework that relates to the respective session. Handouts and homework are labeled to match the session outline to prevent confusion. Students are required to complete homework for each group session and the second individual session. This ensures carry-over learning of each topic discussed and provides an opportunity for students to relate the new information to their research project.

The research project is designed to help students apply the pre-vocational knowledge learned in this course to a specific occupation of their choosing. Students will first identify a career that sparks their interest. They will then complete assignments that tie each group topic to their chosen occupation. At the end of the course, each student will give a brief presentation on their chosen career that links together the skills and

resources they developed over the semester. The research project is a tool that helps to ensure that the objectives of the course remain occupation-centered, focused, and based by having the students apply their newfound knowledge to a potential career that they are interested in.

To accompany the research project students will also assemble a job portfolio. Each student will be provided a portfolio at the beginning of the course. In this portfolio, students will place any handouts, homework, and resources that they complete and obtain throughout the semester. The goal of the job portfolio is to provide the students a resource that they can use in the future when seeking employment. Students are encouraged to add to their portfolio as they participate in new experiences.

This course was loosely developed off the school curriculum and resources of the Natrona County School District #1 in Casper, Wyoming. The full course manual is located in Appendix A. Chapter V contains the conclusion to this scholarly project where implications, limitations, and recommendations are described.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

The intent of this scholarly project is to exemplify the role an occupational therapist can play in a pre-vocational skills training program for students in a high school setting, and address the gap in transition services offered to high school students with vocational goals. As discussed prior, there is evidence that supports and provides examples of how important occupational therapists are and how beneficial they could be in facilitating vocational exploration and training. In the studies by Arikawa, Goto, and Mineno (2013) and Dean, Dunn, and Tomchek, (2015) the researchers explored how occupational therapists can support and improve an individual's ability to live a self-determined life and find meaning through the occupation of work. Occupational therapists are educated and trained to look at an individual from a holistic perspective; they consider all components of what makes that individual unique and capitalize on occupations that they find meaningful.

From a review of current literature regarding vocational rehabilitation for students with disabilities and the role of occupational therapy, *EXPLORE: A Pre-Vocational Course* was developed for occupational therapists to provide education and intervention for high school students on IEPs with vocational goals. The Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) model was selected to guide and structure the course by emphasizing the person, context, task, and performance through inter-professional collaboration to promote occupational justice. This course provides intervention sessions, assessments,

and resources related to the occupation of work that will help students build skills and identify supports that can be used to assist them in their future endeavors in vocation.

Limitations and Recommendations

There are several limitations and recommendations to this guide that should be noted. First, *EXPLORE: A Pre-Vocational Course* restricts the number of students allowed to participate in the course due to the fact that this course has never been implemented and it is unknown what the appropriate group size for this course may be at this point. There are most likely more than ten students on IEPs who would benefit from pre-vocational skills training and it may be difficult to determine which students would be allowed to sign up for the course. It is recommended that the occupational therapist facilitating the course create a system or checklist to determine which students are most appropriate for the course. For example, when piloting this course therapists may want to first offer the course to senior students so that they have some exposure to the material before graduating.

The second limitation to *EXPLORE: A Pre-Vocational Course* is the time of day the course would be offered to the students. It would have to be determined whether the course would be integrated as part of the school curriculum for students in special education or whether it would be an after school program. This course was designed for sessions to be completed in 90-minute intervals. Not all school districts schedule classes in 90-minute intervals; some may utilize shorter, or possibly longer class periods. It is recommended that the occupational therapist facilitating the course collaborate with the school district to determine the most appropriate time for this course to be offered. If an occupational therapist is working in a school district that does not utilize a 90-minute

block schedule, then the course sessions will need to be modified to accommodate the appropriate time frames.

The third limitation to *EXPLORE: A Pre-Vocational Course* is that it has not been tested and implemented in a high school setting. This course was developed using various resources that focused on occupational therapy's role in vocational exploration and participation. Since the course has not been integrated in a high school setting it is hard to understand the true effects it would have on the students that would participate in it. It is recommended that the course be piloted and updated as necessary. It is also recommended that a follow-up study be conducted in the future to determine the vocational success of students who participated in the course if the appropriate resources are available.

Conclusion

Occupational therapists are able to play a more supportive role in the high school setting, especially regarding pre-vocational skills training for students on IEPs. This course will be implemented and led by occupational therapists in collaboration with vocational rehabilitation counselors and special education personnel to educate and promote students' participation in vocational exploration and activities. Through consideration of the person, context, task, and performance within the EHP model, occupational therapists will be able to foster occupational justice for all students.

APPENDIX

EXPLORE:

A Pre-vocational Course



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Michael Lehnerz, MOTS

Scinda Janssen, PhD, OTR/L, CLA

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Introduction

Research has shown that there is a gap somewhere in the transition process for students with disabilities when they are preparing to move on from high school to vocational opportunities. Evert Cimera, Gonda, and Vaschak, (2015) found that the referral rates of transition-aged youth decreased from 62.3 percent in 2004 to 50.0 percent in 2013. To accompany that study, Honeycutt, Thompkins, Bardos, and Stern (2015) found that only four to 14 percent of a state's transition-aged youth applied for vocational rehabilitation services, of those youth only 31 to 82 percent of the applicants actually received vocational rehabilitation services, and only 40 to 70 percent of youth who have received services were actually able to close with an employment outcome. Occupational therapists are educated and trained to help fill in the gap in the transition process. However, Mankey (2011) found that 66 percent of occupational therapists feel that they are not utilized in the secondary transition process, even though at least one-third of them believe that they should provide some type of services in secondary transition. Occupational therapists provide holistic care and consider all components of the individual including vocational interests. Occupational therapists are able to work with students with disabilities who have a vocational individualized education plan (IEP) goal and help them build skills, explore interests, and modify the contexts that surround them to better support their performance related to vocation. In addition, occupational therapists are also trained in activity analysis, which means that they are able to break down an activity and analyze the different components in order to make adaptations and modifications to a task to increase each student's participation in the course activities.

EXPLORE is a pre-vocational course that is led by occupational therapists for high school students on an IEP with vocational aspirations. In conjunction with the occupational therapist, a vocational rehabilitation counselor will provide education and resources to the students. According to Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (2016), vocational rehabilitation counselors provide services such as job search and placement assistance, job retention and career follow-up, transition services, and counseling and guidance related to work. The knowledge and expertise that vocational rehabilitation counselors have will complement services provided by occupational therapists through this course.

The purpose of this course is to minimize the gap during the transition from high school to vocational opportunities by offering students the chance to build their pre-vocational skills and explore their career interests prior to leaving the high school setting. This course is a 16-week program that will be offered to 10 students on IEPs who have vocational goals. The course will be broken up into group and individual sessions. Group sessions will last for approximately 90 minutes. This timeframe is based off block scheduling, but this is subject to change depending on which district the user of this manual is working in. Individual sessions will last for approximately 30 minutes, and ideally, at least three students should be able to attend their individual sessions within the allotted 90-minute block of time. Additional time may be needed to complete the evaluation portion of the course, which will take place during individual sessions.

Group sessions will occur every other week and focus on topics such as career interest exploration, social/communication skills, emotion/stress identification and healthy coping skills, self-advocacy skills, finding a job and letters of recommendation,

resumes and cover letters, and job interview skills. All of these topics will be related to the occupation of work and it is this practice that separates occupational therapists from other professionals in the school setting. Occupational therapists strive to incorporate scenarios and encourage simulation of the actual occupation. In this case, the course sessions will include activities that help bring the students to the workplace in order to make what they are doing seem more realistic and make the course more meaningful regarding the occupation of work. In between the group sessions, students will either participate in open lab time or individual sessions with the occupational therapist. The individual sessions will include an evaluation where each student's skills related to work will be assessed and goals created, and an individualized self-advocacy intervention. When students are not scheduled for individualized sessions, they will have open lab time to finish homework related to group sessions and/or work on their research project (to be discussed further).

In the course manual, readers will find outlines for each of the eight group sessions and the two individual sessions. Each session contains an introductory page that is organized through the Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) Model and a brief explanation of current research that supports the session (Dunn, 2017). The EHP model was chosen to guide this course for a variety of reasons. Firstly, this model is not used exclusively for occupational therapy, but for inter-professional teams to support collaboration (Dunn, 2017). The occupational therapist leading the course will be working with a vocational rehabilitation counselor, special education teacher, and para-professionals working with the students. The terminology used in this model is more familiar to everyday language, especially through the use of the term *task* instead of

occupation. Another reason why EHP was chosen is because this model analyzes the dynamic interactions of the person, task, and context, and how these interactions can impact the person's performance range. This provides a holistic view of what encompasses the individual and how it could affect their performance to participate in desired tasks. The third reason why EHP was chosen is the strong emphasis on independence, even when assistive devices must be used. Also, EHP encourages the use of different intervention strategies to not just *fix* the person, but to support participation. It is perfectly acceptable to use intervention strategies such as adapt/modify or even alter as long as the students are able to participate in their desired tasks. Lastly, and most importantly, EHP supports and promotes successful and satisfying independent living for everyone regardless of vulnerabilities. No person should face occupational injustice, which is why self-advocacy is emphasized throughout the course (Dunn, 2017).

A table organizes the EHP components and how they connect to the session. The EHP components include: Person, Context, Task, and Intervention Approaches. For each session, the Person component is highlighted in green and addresses the skills, interests, and/or experiences of the students being focused on in the session. The Context component is highlighted in blue and addresses the physical, social, temporal, and cultural contexts that make up the session. The Task component is highlighted in purple and addresses the activity/activities that will be used in the session. Lastly, the Intervention Approaches component is highlighted in orange and addresses how the EHP intervention strategies of establish/restore, alter, adapt/modify, prevent, and create can support the students' performance and interests (Dunn, 2017).

Following the introductory page is the outline for the session, which is loosely based off Cole's Seven Steps (Cole, 2012). Cole's Seven Steps includes introduction, activity, sharing, processing, generalizing, application, and summary (Cole, 2012). The course sessions all include an introduction where students are introduced the topic, objectives, and participate in a warm-up. The activity follows the introduction and describes what the students will be doing in each particular session. Sharing, processing, and application are typically addressed in the activity discussion, but the course sessions differ from Cole's Seven Steps in the respect that generalizing is not directly addressed. Lastly, the session ends with a wrap-up, which is equivalent to the summary portion of Cole's Seven Steps (Cole, 2012).

Besides the use of Cole's Seven Steps, several learning theories and instructional methods were incorporated throughout the session outlines and course in order to support learning for the students. The theory of social learning was prominent throughout the group sessions (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). The social learning theory focuses on the learner observing others and reproducing the desired behavior through the use of role models (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). The group sessions offer the students the opportunity to observe and learn from each other and from the adults assisting with the sessions. The cognitive constructivism learning theory was also used throughout the sessions (Bandura, 2001; Hunt, Ellis, & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). This theory encourages internal perception and thought processing through active participation to promote learning (Bandura, 2001; Hunt, Ellis, & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Braungart et al., 2011). These sessions also encourage reflection and discussion. There are several instructional methods that are used throughout the

course to provide a variety of learning opportunities for the students. Group discussion is used in every group session to encourage idea sharing, while one-to-one instruction is used during every individual session to better meet the goals of each student (Fitzgerald, 2011). Simulation is used in several sessions to enhance problem-solving and interactive abilities that must be used in real life sessions, but in a safe environment. Role-playing is also used throughout sessions to help the students explore their understanding and feelings in certain situations. Lastly, self-instruction is used during lab times and during homework completion because it encourages active learning and allows students the opportunity to reflect on the information being taught (Fitzgerald, 2011).

Following each session in the course manual are the handouts and assigned homework that relates to the respective session. Handouts and homework are labeled to match the session outline to prevent confusion. Students are required to complete homework for each group session and the second individual session. This ensures carry-over learning of each topic discussed and provides an opportunity for students to relate the new information to their research project.

The research project is designed to help students apply the pre-vocational knowledge learned in this course to a specific occupation of their choosing. Students will first identify a career that sparks their interest. They will then complete assignments that tie each group topic to their chosen occupation. At the end of the course, each student will give a brief presentation on their chosen career that links together the skills and resources they developed over the semester. The research project is a tool that helps to ensure that the objectives of the course remain occupation-centered, focused, and based

by having the students apply their newfound knowledge to a potential career that they are interested in.

To accompany the research project students will also assemble a job portfolio. Each student will be provided a portfolio at the beginning of each course. In this portfolio, students will place any handouts, homework, and resources that they obtain and complete throughout the semester. The goal of the job portfolio is to provide the students a resource that they can use in the future when seeking employment. Students are encouraged to add to their portfolio as they participate in new experiences.

This course was loosely developed off the school curriculum and resources of the Natrona County School District #1 in Casper, Wyoming.

Schedule

Week	Session Topic	Homework
Week 1	Group Session: Course Introduction & Career Interest Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O*NET Interest Profiler Follow-Up Worksheet...Due Week 3
Week 2	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 1: Assessment & Goal Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O*NET Interest Profiler Follow-Up Worksheet...Due Week 3 • Begin work on job portfolio
Week 3	Group Session: Social/Communication Skills in the Workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Skills Case Study Worksheet...Due Week 5 • Continue work on job portfolio • Begin work on research project
Week 4	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 1: Assessment & Goal Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Skills Case Study Worksheet...Due Week 5 • Continue work on job portfolio • Begin work on research project
Week 5	Group Session: Emotion/Stress Identification & Healthy Coping Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Stress Worksheet...Due Week 7 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 6	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 1: Assessment & Goal Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Stress Worksheet...Due Week 7 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 7	Group Session: Self-Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Advocacy Case Study Worksheet...Due Week 9 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 8	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 1: Assessment & Goal Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Advocacy Case Study Worksheet...Due Week 9 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 9	Group Session: How to find a Job & Letters of Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Search & Recommendation Sources Worksheet...Due Week 11 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 10	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 2: Self-Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Search & Recommendation Sources Worksheet...Due Week 11 • JAN Worksheet...Due Week 16

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 11	Group Session: Resume & Cover Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Cover Letter & Resume...Due Week 13 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 12	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 2: Self-Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Cover Letter & Resume...Due Week 13 • JAN Worksheet...Due Week 16 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 13	Group Session: Job Interview Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview Questions Worksheet...Due Week 15 • Continue work on job portfolio • Continue work on research project
Week 14	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 2: Self-Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview Questions Worksheet...Due Week 15 • JAN Worksheet...Due Week 16 • Complete work on job portfolio • Complete work on research project
Week 15	Group Session: Project Presentation & Job Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Course Evaluation...Due Week 16
Week 16	Lab Time &/or Individual Session 2: Self-Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Evaluation Due • JAN Worksheet Due

Assignments

Job Portfolio: Each student will assemble his or her own personal job portfolio throughout the course. Mandatory items that must be placed within the portfolio include: all assigned homework sheets, your personal cover letter, and your personal resume. It is recommended that you keep any handouts or additional resources provided by the vocational rehabilitation counselor inside the portfolio as well for future reference. A table of contents must be included in the front of the portfolio, and each section must be clearly marked with tabs or page dividers. **Due: Week 15**

Research Project: Each student will use their knowledge and skills learned throughout the course to create a project that they will give a brief, 5-7 minute presentation on towards the end of the course. The research project will be based off of a career that the student chooses at the beginning of the course. Every group session will include homework that the students will complete related to their career of choice to promote learning and give the students information to include in their final presentation. Students may present their project in a PowerPoint, poster, video, or any other medium of their choice. **Due: Week 15**

Section I

Group Session Outlines

Overview of Section I

Section I is a compilation of all of the group sessions for this course. Each session includes an introduction page that relates the EHP components to the session, as well as a brief explanation of current research that supports the session. Following the introduction page, the session outline can be found that provides detailed information regarding the objectives and activity/activities of the session. Behind each session outline, users can find the handouts and homework that pertain to the session. Every component of each session is labeled to increase ease of use.

The first four group sessions of this course are led by the occupational therapist. The focus of these four sessions is on the underlying skills that are needed to obtain and maintain employment. Session 1 is an introduction to the course followed by an online career interest exploration activity. From this activity, the students will determine what career they will focus their research project on for the semester. Session 2 revolves around social/communication skills in the workplace and incorporates a social scripts activity. From this session, students will then need to identify social/communication skills that they will need for their chosen research project career. Session 3 focuses on emotion/stress identification and healthy coping skills. Students will participate in an emotional wheel activity and practice mindfulness techniques that can be utilized in the workplace setting. To tie the session material to their research project, students will identify work task/activities from their chosen career that could be possibly stressful for them and describe coping strategies they would employ. Session 4 relates to self-advocacy and uses the *Advocating for Me* activity to help students build confidence and self-advocacy skills in the workplace. For homework, students will identify self-advocacy

cues or strategies that they could improve upon and why those particular cues could be beneficial for them in the workplace.

The last four group sessions of this course are led by the occupational therapist in conjunction with a vocational rehabilitation counselor. The occupational therapist leads the sessions, while the vocational rehabilitation counselor provides resources and additional information that they deem necessary for the session. Session 5 focuses on how to find a job and letters of recommendation. Students will participate in a role-playing activity to practice asking for letters of recommendation and participate in a job search activity where they will explore resources that can be used to locate a job. For homework, students are asked to locate three different job postings for their identified research project career and identify three different individuals who would be appropriate to request letters of recommendation. Session 6 relates to resumes and cover letters. Students will participate in a cover letter and resume critique activity where they will identify components that should and should not be included in a cover letter and resume. For homework, students are asked to build their own cover letter and resume that they would provide to a potential employer for their research project. Session 7 covers job interview skills. Students will participate in a role-playing activity where they will practice answering interview questions via a mock interview. To tie the session to the research project, students will write out their answers to interview questions and practice their responses with a family member or friend. For the final group session, students will assemble their job portfolio and present their research project. This session is meant to encompass all of the previous sessions. Students will also be given an evaluation to provide feedback on their perceptions of the course.

Session 1: Introduction & Career Interest Exploration

Dunn, Diener, Wright, Wright, and Narumanchi (2015), found that providing youth with programming that pertains to their interests and builds on their strengths fosters a positive environment and potential career development. Incorporating the interest of the students is to remain client-centered and support their contexts.

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	Students will <i>learn</i> about the purpose of this pre-vocational skills training course and begin the process of exploring what their <i>interests</i> related to work are.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •<i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; tables placed in a circle. •<i>Social</i>: Students will work as a group and individually; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance when needed. •<i>Temporal</i>: Session will last for approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. •<i>Cultural</i>: Incorporated pre-vocational skill training for high school students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in an introductory activity and <i>complete</i> a work-related questionnaire to identify potential career interests.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Use of vocation questionnaire allows students opportunity to discover and learn about potential career interests.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Preventing occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session One Outline

Objectives:

- Students will participate in an activity that will allow the students and staff to get to know each other.
- Students will complete an online questionnaire that identifies potential areas of vocation that are fitting and interesting to the student.

Materials:

- Large rubber ball, volley ball, or beach ball
- Portfolio binders
- Access to laptops, computers, or iPads
- Access to a printer
- Notebook/paper
- Pencil/pen
- Session 1 Homework Worksheet (HW1)

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce objectives and have students connect them to their personal goals.
- Introduce Course Syllabus (located at front of sessions).
- Discuss course schedule and introduce research project.
- Hand out portfolio binders to each student and instruct students in binder purpose.

Warm-Up

- *Getting to Know You Ball* activity (Katrina, 2013) to facilitate a socially cohesive context.

Activity

- Students will explore potential career interests using the O*NET Interest Profiler Short Form (O*NET Resource Center, 2017).
- Using an electronic device such as a laptop, computer, or iPad, students will go to <https://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html>
 - Once page loads, have students click the tab labeled *Short Form*.
 - Once tab opens, have students click on the button in the middle of the page labeled *Take Interest Profile Short Form*.
 - The Short Form consists of 60 seconds.
 - Have students follow the directions provided.
 - Print results for students to place in their professional portfolio

- Results will also be used to complete Session 1 Homework Worksheet

Sharing

- Have each student share one or two of their suggested results

Processing

- Are you happy/satisfied with your results? Why?
- Was anyone surprised about their suggested careers? Why?
- Did your results include a career that you had not considered before? What was it?
- Did anyone feel as though a career that interests him or her was not represented on the Interest Profiler? What was it?

Application

- How could you use the information from the Interest Profiler?
- Are there any job or environment modifications/adaptations you can think of that you might need to perform your job duties?
- What kinds of options are there for financial support to get the training for one of the jobs you found on O*Net?

Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce Session 1 Homework Worksheet.
 - Students will begin to work on their research project by identifying a career they are interested in and would like to learn more about.
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Introduce students to next week's topic (social/communication skills in the work setting)

References

- Dunn, L., Diener, M., Wright, C., Wright, S., & Narumanchi, A. (2015). Vocational exploration in an extracurricular technology program for youth with autism. *Work, 52*(2), 457-468.
- Warm up adapted from: Katrina. (2013). *Life as I know it: 52 get to know you questions!* Retrieved from <http://lifeaccordingtokatrina.blogspot.com/2013/01/54-get-to-know-you-questions.html?m=1>
- O*NET Resource Center. (2017). *O*NET interest profiler*. Retrieved from <https://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html>

Session 1 Homework Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 1

1. Open up Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Fire Fox, or Safari on your computer and type in <https://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html> into the space provided.
2. Look for the tab labeled *Short Form* near the top of the website page, select the link and read about the O*NET Interest Profiler.
3. After reading about the O*NET Interest Profiler, select *Take the Interest Profiler Short Form* located in the center of the webpage.
4. Follow the directions and complete the *Interest Profiler Short Form*
5. Look at the different occupations the *Interest Profiler* provided to you.

After completion of the *Interest Profiler Short Form* what are five occupations that looked interesting to you? Please list them below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Part 2

1. Go back to the search space provided on the Internet, Google Chrome, Fire Fox, or Safari on your computer and type in <https://www.onetonline.org>.
2. On the left hand side of the webpage select the *Find Occupations* link.
3. Under the *Keyword* or *O*NET-SOC Code* type in one occupation out of your list above and select the occupation from the list
4. Explore the occupation and write some notes on that occupation that can be related to the occupation's task, technology skills, knowledge, and abilities.
5. Explore your top three occupations

Occupations

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Select one of the three occupations that interested you above and you would like to present for research project. Please write the occupation in the space provided.

Reference

O*NET Resource Center. (2017). *O*NET interest profiler*. Retrieved from <https://www.onetcenter.org/IP.htm>

Session 2:
Social/Communication Skills in the Workplace

Tsang, Chan, Wong, and Liberman (2009), found that individuals who participated in supported employment programs with added social skills training had increased positive employment outcomes such as higher employment rates and increased job tenure.

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session will address the students' <i>knowledge</i> and <i>understanding</i> of what <i>social skills</i> are and how they can be utilized in professional or workplace settings.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •<i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; two students per table facing front of room. • <i>Social</i>: Students will work in pairs and as a group; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance when needed. •<i>Temporal</i>: Session will last for approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. • <i>Cultural</i>: Incorporated pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in a social scripts activity and <i>practice</i> using their social and communication skills in a professional or work context.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Use of social scripts allows students opportunity to practice their social/communication skills in a workplace context.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Preventing occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session 2 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will provide at least one example of appropriate social behaviors to use in a professional or workplace setting.
- Students will identify a social situation in a workplace setting that can be perceived as awkward or challenging and then create a social script to guide them through the situation.
- Students will demonstrate appropriate nonverbal and verbal communication skills during the activity that can be applied to future social encounters.

Materials:

- Whiteboard
- Dry erase markers
- Notebook/paper
- Pencil/pen
- Session 2 Homework Worksheet (HW2)

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce social/communication skills topic.
- Introduce objectives.

Warm up:

- Facilitate a socially cohesive context through discussion on social/communication skills
 - What are social skills? (ex. greeting people, taking turns, looking at who is speaking, manners, appropriate physical distance etc.)
 - What is communication? Different types? (verbal, nonverbal, written, listening, etc.)
 - What parts of communication are important in the workplace setting? (ex. facial expressions, listening, gestures, eye contact, tone, and body language)

Activity:

- Introduce Social Scripts activity.
 - Practicing social situations that can be perceived as awkward or challenging by writing a script that can help guide the individual through the situation.
- Have students pair up and assign each pairing a workplace scenario.
 - Social situations may include: introducing self, giving help, asking for help, giving or receiving a compliment (add more scenarios as needed).
- Students will then create a script and/or practice their social situation.

Sharing:

- Have each student pair share their social situation with the group by acting out their script.

Processing:

- What was difficult about the activity?
- What was enjoyable about the activity?
- What communication/social skills were the groups employing?

Application:

- What do you think are important social/communication skills for the workplace?
 - Therapist might suggest: good eye contact, asking for help, introducing oneself, starting conversations, cooperation etc.
- What are some social/communication skills that you feel you have that will help you in the workplace?
- What are some social/communication skills that you need to create for the workplace?
- What can you do to establish your social/communication skills for work?
 - Therapist might suggest: practice in the mirror having conversations, practice with someone you are comfortable with, discuss your concerns with your boss/manager, write down what you want to say beforehand, look for nonverbal cues, etc.

Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce Session 2 Homework Worksheet.
 - Students will continue on their research project by addressing social/communication skills in a case study and identifying social/communication skills that they will need for their chosen career
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Introduce students to next week's topic (emotion recognition and coping skills in the workplace)

References

- Hilton, C.L. (2015). Interventions to promote social participation for children with mental health and behavioral disorders. In Case-Smith, J., O'Brien, J.C. *Occupational therapy for children and adolescents*. (7th ed., pp. 321-345). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby.
- Tsang, H. W., Chan, A., Wong, A., & Liberman, R. P. (2009). Vocational outcomes of an integrated supported employment program for individuals with persistent and severe mental illness. *Journal of behavior therapy and experimental psychiatry*, 40(2), 292-305.

Session 2 Homework Worksheet

Case Study

Sophia is an 18-year-old girl who has recently started a new job at a local retail store called The Ridge. Sophia has been working at The Ridge for about two weeks and her current job requirements involve: walking around the store and making sure the clothes are on the hangers, picking up any hangers or clothes that have fallen on the floor, folding clothes that have been misplaced, and assisting customers. Sophia's manager has told her that she has been very helpful with cleaning up the store and making sure that the clothes are presented in a nice format to the customers. However, the manager of the store has noticed that Sophia has been having trouble initiating conversations with customers and co-workers and looking at the customers when they are asking her where things are located in the store. The customers have talked to the manager saying that Sophia is unfriendly and she gives the impression that she does not like her job. Sophia recognizes that it is difficult for her to look at people when they are talking to her and to initiate conversations with co-workers and customers. Sophia expresses to her manager that she does not like looking at people in the eyes because she does not want people to think that she is staring at them. She has trouble initiating conversations because she is afraid of saying something wrong to the customers. The manager asks Sophia's occupational therapist for help regarding her social skills.

What social skills do you think are inhibiting her work performance?

What social skills do you think help her working performance?

Who are some people Sophia could talk to or what activities could she do to improve her socialization skills? (ex. practice having a conversation with herself while looking at a mirror, having a close family member or friend to practice initiating conversations).

Research Project

After looking at the case study about Sophia and thinking back to the class on social skills, what are some social situations or skills that you may need to practice in order to complete the job requirements of the career you chose for your research project? In the space provided below write down some examples of social situations or skills that you think apply to your career. Consider using O*NET as a resource to look up information about the social/communication skills on your career.

Skills:

Social Situations:

Identify some social/communication skills that you already possess related to your career choice.

Identify some social/communication skills that you need to improve on related to your career choice.

Consider putting the above examples in your final research project.

Session 3:
Emotion/Stress Identification & Healthy Coping Skills

Harzer and Ruch (2015), found that intellectual, emotional, and interpersonal character strengths were related to positive stress reducing coping. Character strengths are found in individual behaviors, thoughts, and feelings and can be trainable characteristics (Harzer & Ruch, 2015).

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	Students will identify different <i>emotions</i> that they have or could experience in a workplace setting and discuss how emotions relate to stress. Students will then demonstrate one healthy <i>coping skill</i> that could be utilized in a workplace setting when experiencing high emotions or feeling stressed.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; two students per table facing front of room. • <i>Social</i>: Students will work in pairs and as a group; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance when needed. • <i>Temporal</i>: Session will last approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. • <i>Cultural</i>: Incorporated pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in the emotional wheel activity, <i>discuss</i> the relationship between stress and emotions, and <i>demonstrate</i> different mindfulness techniques to utilize in the workplace setting.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Use of emotional wheel allows students the opportunity to visually learn about different emotions and practice mindfulness techniques that they could use in the workplace setting.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Preventing occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session 3 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will identify at least two emotions from the Emotion Regulation Wheel that they experienced or may experience in a workplace context.
- Students will discuss the relationship between emotions and stress in the workplace context.
- Students will demonstrate at least one mindfulness technique that they learned during the session that can be used to cope with emotions/stress in the workplace context.

Materials:

- Colored pencils or markers
- Emotional wheel worksheet
- Deep Pressure Touch Menu
- Deep Breathing and Progressive Muscle Relaxation Techniques
- List of mindfulness apps
- An iPad that has the mindfulness apps loaded onto them (one for each group)
- Session 3 Handouts 1-4
- Session 3 Homework Worksheet (HW3)

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce emotion/stress identification and health coping skills topic.
- Introduce objectives.

Warm up:

- Facilitate socially cohesive context by watching *How to Make Stress Your Friend* by Kelly McGonigal <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU>
(McGonigal, 2013)
 - What did you think about the video?
 - Do you believe that you have power over your stress?

Activity:

- Discuss with the students on how stress can lead to powerful emotions and how powerful emotions can lead to stress.
 - The idea is to form a relationship between the two concepts.
- Hand out the Emotional Wheel worksheet and provide the students with colored pencils or markers to use to color in the emotions they may experience in the workplace setting.

- Go through the different workplace scenarios and ask students to color/mark, which feelings they think they might feel.
 - Your boss calls you into their office. As you walk into their office, you notice that they have a stern look on their face. They ask you to sit down and then they proceed to tell you “I just wanted to talk to you about your performance, you have done a wonderful job and I would like to give you a raise.” You then notice that their stern look turns into a smile. What kind of feelings did you just experience?
 - You work for a local bank as a bank teller and you are helping a customer who seems to be in a hurry. They are talking really fast and are moving around, acting impatient. You are trying to deposit a check for them and they start yelling at you, saying “You are moving too slowly, do you not realize that I have other places to go?” You apologize and as you give them their receipt, they grab the receipt and storm out of the bank. What are the feelings you might be experiencing?
 - You are a veterinarian technician and you are talking to a customer who has recently lost a pet. You notice that they are starting to tear up. You talk to them about how it is very sad to lose a pet, but they should try to think of the all the wonderful and happy memories that they experienced with the animal. You notice that they start to feel better; they give you a hug and thank you for talking with them. As they leave the building your supervisor comes up to you and comments on your ability to talk and listen to the customer. What kinds of feelings did you just experience?
 - You are working as a barista at a local coffee shop. You notice that after a coworker has finished making a drink for a customer, the customer takes a sip of their beverage and they make an unpleasant face. They start to approach you at the counter and request another drink because their drink has coffee in it when it was not supposed to. As you apologize to the customer and remake their drink, you notice your coworker frowning. After the customer has left the coffee shop, your coworker starts to badmouth the customer to you saying “I did not make their drink with coffee, these people are stuck up and want their drink to be perfect.” What kind of feelings did you experience?
- Ask students to identify ways that they could handle the stress caused by the above situations; merge into health coping skills activity with focus on mindfulness techniques.
 - Broderick and Metz (2009) used mindfulness techniques such as body awareness, working with thoughts and feelings, bodily sensations, decreasing harmful self-judgments, and incorporating mindful awareness into daily life and found that students had decreased negative affect and tiredness, and increased calmness, self-acceptance, and emotional regulation.
- Provide session handouts and allow time for the students to actively participate in any of the options that are provided to them via the handouts and the mindfulness apps that are loaded onto the iPad.

Sharing:

- Ask students to share a benefit they took away from the activity on emotions and healthy coping strategies for stress.

Processing:

- What types of emotions typically cause us stress? Why?
- What coping strategy/strategies did you like or dislike? Why?

Application:

- How can the relationship between powerful emotions and stress impact your ability to work?
- What are your thoughts regarding the TED video that we watched at the beginning of the class?
 - Do you think you can alter your thought process and view stress as a positive attribute?
- What mindfulness activities do you see yourself using in the workplace setting? Why?

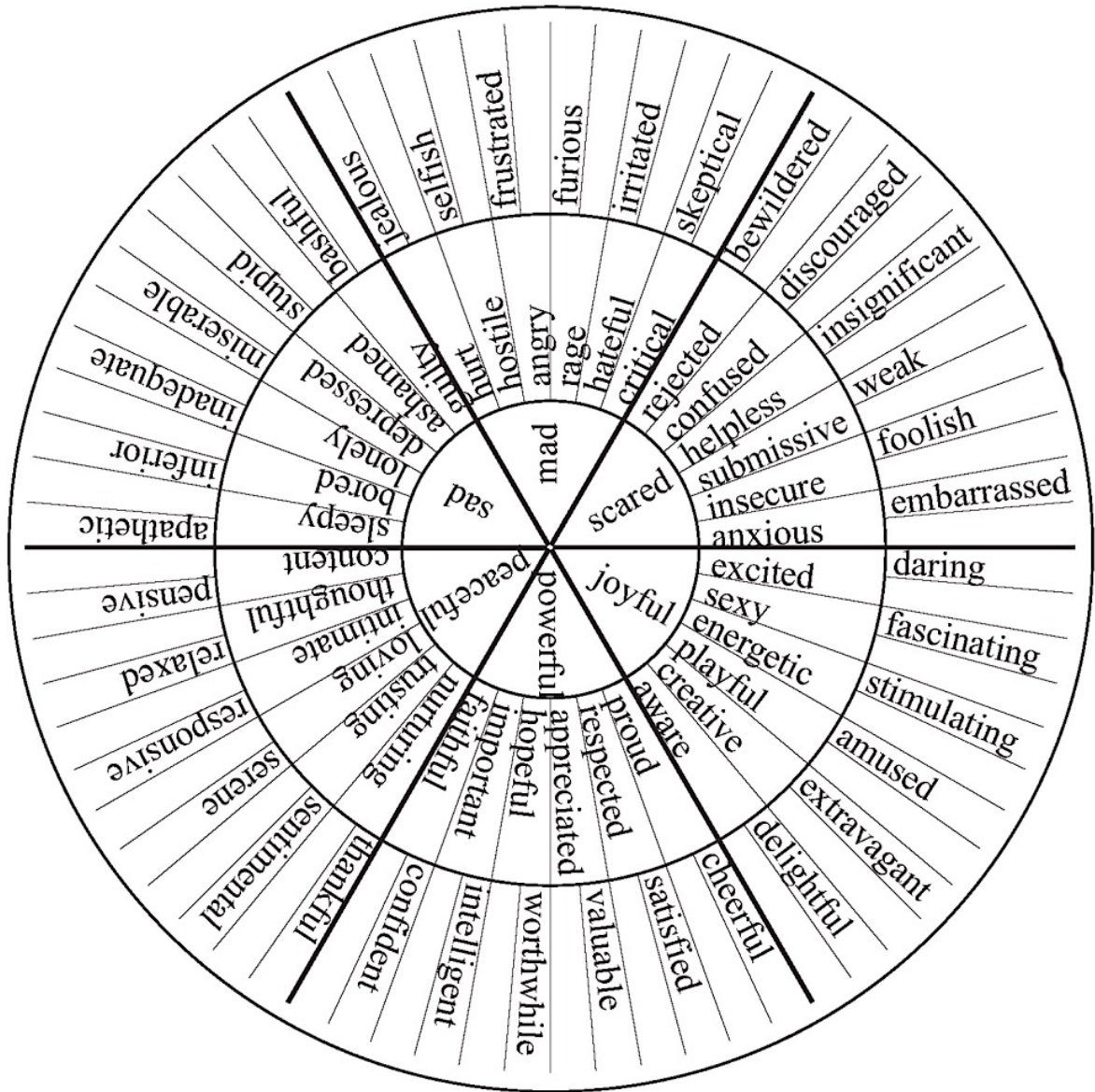
Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce Session 3 Homework Worksheet.
 - Students will continue on their research project by addressing emotion and stress identification, and health coping skills in the worksheet and identifying emotion and stress identification that they will need for their chosen career
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Introduce students to next week's topic (advocacy, self awareness, and conflict resolution in a workplace)

References

- Broderick, P.C., & Metz, S. (2009). Learning to BREATHE: A pilot trial of a mindfulness curriculum for adolescents. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion, 2*(1), 35-46.
doi:10.1080/1754730X.2009.9715696
- Harzer, C., & Ruch, W. (2015). The relationships of character strengths with coping, work-related stress, and job satisfaction. *Frontiers in Psychology, 6*(165), 1-12. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00165
- McGonigal, K. (2013). *How to make stress your friend*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU>

Session 3 Handout #1



Reference

Spurlock, J. (2014). *Name that emotion: The feeling wheel*. Retrieved from <http://www.joshspurlock.com/professional-counseling/christian-counseling/therapy-resources/name-emotion-feeling-wheel/>

Session 3 Handout #2

Deep Pressure Touch Menu

Directions: If any of these exercises hurt, please don't do them. All of these exercises can be done sitting in a chair so that if you start to feel anxious or angry you can feel grounded.

Arm Squish: Firmly squeeze your arms into your body; start near the shoulders and work your way down to wrist level.

Shoulder Push: Firmly push straight down on top of your shoulders (not squeeze, simply push down).

Hands on Head: Interlock your fingers and place them on top of your head, then push your hands firmly down on top of your head.

Hands Together: Place your hands together, palm-to-palm and press them together.

Knee Push: Place your hands on your knees; make sure your knees are directly over your ankles and your feet are on the floor, then press down on your knees.

Feet into Floor: Push your feet down into the floor.

Finger Squeeze: Squeeze each whole finger one by one.

Individual Finger Squeeze: Knuckle by knuckle squeeze each part of the finger, working through all of your fingers individually.

Thumb Massage: Find the soft squishy part between your thumb and your hand and massage it in a gentle circular motion.

Self-Hug: Wrap your arms across the front of your chest and “give yourself a firm squeeze.”

Hands under Chin: Interlock the fingers of your hands together to provide a *platform*; place under your chin and push gently up while your chin is pressing down.

Reference

Childlightyoga. (2012, April 10). *Calm and focus: The potential effects of deep pressure touch*. Retrieved from <http://kidsrelaxation.com/uncategorized/calm-and-focus-the-potential-effects-of-deep-pressure-touch/#comment-61>.

Session 3 Handout #3

Deep Breathing and Progressive Muscle Relaxation Menu

Once the individual is comfortably supported in a quiet place, the detailed instructions are given as below:

- 1.) Take three deep abdominal breaths, exhaling slowly each time. As you exhale, imagine that tension throughout your body begins to flow away.
- 2.) Clench your fists. Hold and then relax.
- 3.) Tighten your biceps by drawing your forearms up toward your shoulders. Hold and then relax.
- 4.) Tighten your triceps by extending your arms out straight and locking your elbows. Hold and then relax.
- 5.) Tense the muscles in your forehead by raising your eyebrows as far as you can. Hold and then relax. Imagine your forehead muscles becoming smooth and limp as they relax.
- 6.) Tense the muscles around your eyes by clenching your eyelids tightly shut. Hold and then relax. Imagine the sensations of deep relaxation spreading all around them.
- 7.) Tighten your jaws by opening your mouth so widely that you stretch the muscles around the hinges of your jaw. Hold and then relax. Let your lips part and allow your jaw to hang loose.
- 8.) Tighten the muscles in the back of your neck by pulling your head way back; as if you were going to touch your head to your back. Hold and then relax.
- 9.) Tighten your shoulders by raising them up as if you were going to touch your ears. Hold and then relax.
- 10.) Tighten the muscles around your shoulder blades by pushing your shoulder blades back as if you were going to touch them together. Hold and then relax.
- 11.) Tighten the muscles of your chest by taking in a deep breath. Hold; release slowly.
- 12.) Tighten your stomach muscles by sucking your stomach in. Hold and then release. Imagine a wave of relaxation spreading through your abdomen.
- 13.) Tighten your lower back by arching it up. Hold and then relax.
- 14.) Tighten your buttocks by pulling them together. Hold and then relax. Imagine the muscles in your hips going loose and limp.
- 15.) Squeeze the muscles in your thighs by bending down your knees. Hold and then relax. Feel your thigh muscles smoothing out and relaxing completely.
- 16.) Tighten your calf muscles by pulling your toes toward you. Hold and then relax.
- 17.) Tighten your feet by curling your toes downward. Hold and then relax.
- 18.) Mentally scan your body for any residual tension. If a particular area remains tense, repeat once or twice the tense-relax cycles for that group of muscles.
- 19.) Now imagine a wave of relaxation slowly spreading throughout your body, starting at your head and gradually penetrating every muscle group all the way down to your toes.

The duration of this relaxation training is for 15 minutes. Gently open your eyes.

Reference

- Gupta, S. S. (2014). Effect of progressive muscle relaxation combined with deep breathing technique immediately after aerobic exercises on essential hypertension. *Indian Journal of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy*, 8(1), 227

Deep Breathing Techniques

- The individual is positioned in relaxed and comfortable semi –fowler’s position in which gravity assists diaphragm.
- The pillows are used for proper positioning: 1 pillow used below knees to relaxation to hamstring muscle.
- The individual is taught to relax accessory muscle of inspiration by shoulder rolls or shoulder shrugs coupled with relaxation.
- The individual’s one hand is placed on the rectus abdominals just below the anterior costal margin. During deep breath in, the hand rises up. This insures that the diaphragm is pulling air into the bases of the lungs.
- Ask individual to breathe in slowly & deeply through nose and allow abdomen to rise till count of 7. Then slowly let all air out using controlled expiration till count of 8.

Frequency: 2 sets of 5 repetition of deep breathing

Reference

Gupta, S. S. (2014). Effect of progressive muscle relaxation combined with deep breathing technique immediately after aerobic exercises on essential hypertension. *Indian Journal of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy*, 8(1), 227.

Session 3 Handout #4

The applications provided below are some that could be utilized to practice mindfulness. Some of these applications are free while others may have a cost associated with them; some applications do require a personal account, while others do not. The applications can be accessed through the App Store on any Apple device. Some applications can be accessed through the Android Store.

- *Mindfulness Daily* (Free): *Mindfulness Daily* is designed around your unique daily life. This application allows the user to build a daily mindfulness practice with just a few minutes per day (Inward Inc, 2015).
- *Koru* (Free): Track and grow your meditation practice with guided meditations, refreshers on meditation skills, and a timer that is easy to use. Easily record your log entries after every meditation to get the most out of your practice. You will receive real time comments from your teacher right on your phone so you can grow your practice. This application was designed for the user to be a part of a four-week program (Koru Mindfulness, 2017).
- *Stop, Breathe & Think* (Free, upgrade available): Check in with how you are feeling and participate in short activities tuned to your emotions. Provides mindfulness breathing techniques to create space between your thoughts, emotions, and reactions (Stop, Breathe, and Think PBC, 2017).
- *Breathe* (Free): De-stress and sleep better in only 10 minutes with your personal mindfulness coach! *Breathe* is the easiest way to meditate. Learn simple mindfulness and meditation techniques to help bring more happiness, calm, and peace of mind into your life. Includes hundreds of daily meditations, and a wide variety of other guided meditations to help you deal with specific issues such as weight loss, insomnia, anxiety, work performance, trouble sleep, etc. (Breathe, 2016).

References

- Breathe. (2016). *Breathe-Meditation guided app*. Retrieved from: Breathe.com
Inward Inc. (2015). *Mindfulness daily app*. Retrieved from: www.mindfulnessdailyapp.com
Koru Mindfulness. (2017). *Koru app*. Retrieved from: app.korumindfulness.org
Stop, Breathe, & Think PBC. (2017). *Stop, breathe & think app*. Retrieved from: <https://www.stopbreathethink.com>

Session 3 Homework Worksheet

Work Stress

Directions: Rate each hypothetical work-related stressor with a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 based on YOUR personal perception of the statement: 1 being unlikely to experience, 2 being somewhat unlikely to experience, 3 being neutral, 4 being somewhat likely to experience, and 5 being likely to experience. For each statement provide an explanation for WHY you perceive the statement as stressful or not stressful and what emotion(s) you relate to the statement. For each statement marked as a 3, 4, or 5, provide at least ONE coping strategy you could use.

I worry about having to interact with coworkers

1 2 3 4 5

I worry about completing work assignments on time

1 2 3 4 5

I worry about discussing issues with my supervisor

1 2 3 4 5

I worry about receiving negative feedback on my performance

1 2 3 4 5

I worry about handling upset customers/clients/patients

1 2 3 4 5

I worry about not understanding how to use equipment/programming at work

1 2 3 4 5

Adapted from: Khalsa, S.S. (1996). *Group exercises for enhancing social skills & self-esteem* (pp 37-38). Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Exchange, Inc.

Research Project

Directions: Using your O*NET resource (<https://www.onetonline.org/>) identify at least 4 **Work Activities** or **Tasks** that are required for your chosen career that you believe could be stressful or cause stress. For each **Work Activity** or **Task**, self-reflect and identify why or how it could be stressful, the emotions that you might feel associated with the stress, and coping strategies that you would use to deal with the stress.

1. Work Activity/Task: _____
Why/how it causes stress: _____

Emotions: _____

Coping Strategies: _____

2. Work Activity/Task: _____

Why/how it causes stress: _____

Emotions: _____

Coping Strategies: _____

3. Work Activity/Task: _____

Why/how it causes stress: _____

Emotions: _____

Coping Strategies: _____

4. Work Activity/Task: _____

Why/how it causes stress: _____

Emotions: _____

Coping Strategies: _____

*Consider using the above examples in your final research project

Session 4 Self-Advocacy

Downing, Earles-Vollrath, and Schreiner (2007), state that for students to self-advocate they must have an accurate and realistic understanding of themselves and use that knowledge applicably Dryden, Desmarais, and Arsenault (2014), found that self-advocacy interventions improved students' self-advocacy knowledge, confidence, and behavior.

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session will address the students' <i>knowledge</i> and <i>understanding</i> of what self-advocacy is and why it is needed in professional or workplace settings.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; two students per table facing front of room. • <i>Social</i>: Students will work as a group; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance when needed. • <i>Temporal</i>: Session will take last approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. • <i>Cultural</i>: incorporated pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in the <i>Advocating for Me</i> activity where they will <i>practice</i> building their confidence and self-advocacy skills in the workplace.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Use of the self-advocacy activity allows students the opportunity to learn about and practice self-advocacy that can be utilized in the workplace setting.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Preventing occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session 4 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will discuss what self-advocacy is and its importance in the workplace setting.
- Students will identify at least two cues for successful self-advocacy that they would use in the workplace setting.
- Students will participate in a confidence building activity in order to improve their self-advocacy skills through vocational scenarios.

Materials:

- Writing utensils
- White board/markers
- Paper or notebook
- Self-advocacy handouts
- Newspapers, vocation brochures, phone book, vocation magazines etc.
- Container
- Session 4 Handouts #1 & #2
- Session 4 Homework Worksheet (HW4)

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce self-advocacy topic.
- Introduce objectives.

Warm up:

- Watch *Self Advocacy-A State of Mind* by Abby Edwards
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqtO3cvdom8> (Edwards, 2015)
 - What is one thing that you would like to see change in your life?

Activity:

- For this activity write examples that students come up with on a white board.
- Introduce what self-advocacy is
 - The ability to speak up for oneself. Individuals are allowed to have control over their resources and actions, even if they need support from others. Individuals have the right to make their own life decisions. (Crist, 2011)
- Provide session 4 handout #1 to students regarding self-advocacy cues and discuss with students
- Introduce *Advocating for me* (Butler, 2001).
 - Students will use self-advocacy steps and cues to practice building their confidence and goal-directed actions related to workplace scenarios.
 - The scenarios for this activity are located on session 4 handout #2

Sharing:

- Ask students to resort to their paper from the warm-up activity and write down ways that they can accomplish the change they desire.
 - Ask students if any of them would like to share

Processing:

- What did you think about this activity?
- Was it beneficial for you to go through a scenario to practice self-advocacy, why or why not?
- What were common self-advocacy cues and strategies that were used during this activity?
- Do you think that having these self-advocacy cues and strategies is important in the workplace, why or why not?

Application:

- What are some self-advocacy cues and strategies that are beneficial to you that you could utilize in the future at work or in other settings?
- What self-advocacy skills do you need to improve upon for your future career?
- What can you do to improve your self-advocacy skills?

Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce Session 4 Homework Worksheet.
 - Students will continue on their research project by addressing self-advocacy and conflict resolution skills in the worksheet and how it relates to their chosen career.
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Introduce students to next week's topic (how to find a job and letters of recommendation)
 - Provide time for questions.

References

- Activity Adapted from: Butler, C.A. (2001). Go getters. In Butler, C.A. *100 interactive activities for mental health and substance abuse recovery* (pp.226-227). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions & Publishing.
- Crist, P. (2011). Psychosocial concerns with disability. In Brown, C., & Stoffel, V.C. *Occupational therapy in mental health: A vision for participation*. Philadelphia, PA: FA Davis Company
- Downing, J.A., Earles-Vollrath, T., & Schreiner, M.B. (2007). Effective self-advocacy: What students and special educators need to know. *Intervention in school and clinic, 42*(5), 300-304. doi: 10.1177/10534512070420050701
- Dryden, E.M., Desmarais, J., & Arsenaulet, L. (2014). Effectiveness of the IMPACT: Ability program to improve safety and self-advocacy skills in high school students with disabilities. *Journal of school health, 84*(12), 793-801. doi: 10.1111/josh.12211
- Edwards, A. (2015). *Self-advocacy-a state of mind*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqtO3cvdom8>

Session 4 Handout #1

Self-Advocacy Cues

- Create a checklist to identify questions and/or concerns you want or need addressed
- Keep a written record of important contacts and copies of written communication that include...
 - What you wanted or needed and why
 - The person you contacted including: name, title, address, email, phone number
 - When the contact occurred including date and time
 - What was said during the communication
 - The next steps that should be taken and your expectations of what will happen and when it will happen
- Always be RESPECTFUL
- Learn more about your diagnosis to become informed through...
 - Medical records, medication lists, lab results, etc.
 - Research on disability (articles, textbooks, brochures, etc.)
 - Reliable websites
- Work to understand the perspectives of the individuals you are working with
- Practice making requests and rehearse dialogue in different ways.
- Practice social skills
 - Strong, clear voice
 - Eye contact
 - Limit negative emotions (yelling, screaming, walking off, etc.)
- Plan a time for discussion so that it is not rushed and can be completed
- Give yourself time to say what you need/want to say and ask for time to process before answering
- Allow for compromises, but establish beforehand what is and what is not acceptable
- When met with resistance, ask to meet another time and consider bringing someone along to support you or request further information
- Be an active participant in the change you desire
- Give yourself time to make decisions; request a future meeting if necessary

Reference

Crist, P. (2011). Psychosocial concerns with disability. In Brown, C., & Stoffel, V.C. *Occupational therapy in mental health: A vision for participation*. Philadelphia, PA: FA Davis Company

Session 4 Handout #2

Scenarios

You want a pay raise	Your boss turns you down for a promotion
You need special equipment to complete a job assignment	You are having trouble completing your job tasks in a timely manner
You want to request a day off or some vacation time	You need to change your work schedule
You have a problem with a coworker	You want to participate in a training related to your job position
You have an idea that you feel will benefit the company	You are unhappy with job position and related tasks
You would like to ask a coworker to switch shifts with you	You have a health problem that is interfering with your ability to complete your job tasks

Reference

Adapted from: Butler, C.A. (2001). Go getters. In Butler, C.A. *100 interactive activities for mental health and substance abuse recovery* (pp.226-227). Plainview, NY: Wellness Reproductions & Publishing.

Session 4 Homework Worksheet

Case Study

Bridgette is a 24 year old who has been working at a local retail store since she was 18. Over the past few years she has shown her boss that she is able to have more responsibilities and job duties. She arrives on time and completes her job responsibilities in a timely fashion. When she first started out at the retail store she was a sales associate; however, her current position is an assistive manager position. Unfortunately, her boss is moving out of the state because her significant other has been transferred to another state. Bridgette is really sad to see her boss leave, but is interested in the opportunity to become the manager in the store. Bridgette is nervous about approaching her boss and recommending herself for the position, but she does believe that she can take on the responsibilities of a manager.

Directions: Use the case study to answer the case study below.

Write out the steps that you think Bridgette should take regarding asking her boss for the promotion to become the manager at the store.

Identify specific self-advocacy cues that Bridgette could utilize to help her through the process.

Research Project

Directions: For this portion of the homework, identify 3-5 self-advocacy cues or strategies that you think you need to improve on. Describe ways that you could improve and why you think it would be beneficial to use the self-advocacy cues or strategies in your future career.

1. Cue/Strategy: _____

Ways to improve: _____

Why you think it is beneficial: _____

2. Cue/Strategy: _____

Ways to improve: _____

Why you think it is beneficial: _____

3. Cue/Strategy: _____

Ways to improve: _____

Why you think it is beneficial: _____

4. Cue/Strategy: _____

Ways to improve: _____

Why you think it is beneficial: _____

5. Cue/Strategy: _____

Ways to improve: _____

Why you think it is beneficial: _____

Session 5

Finding A Job & Letters of Recommendation

Nochajski and Schweitzer (2014) created a school-to-work transition program that included learning modules for how to secure a job. Topics included where to look for a job and how to interpret job postings. Approximately 30 percent of participants were competitively employed at the end of the program (Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014).

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session will address the students' <i>knowledge</i> and <i>understanding</i> of where to look to find a job, what a letter of recommendation is and why it is important for applying to a job.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; Two students per table facing front of room. • <i>Social</i>: Students will work as a group to; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance when needed. • <i>Temporal</i>: Session will last approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. • <i>Cultural</i>: Incorporated pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in a role-playing activity where they will <i>practice</i> asking for letters of recommendation and they will <i>participate</i> in a job search activity where they will <i>explore</i> resources that can locate a job.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Use of the role-play and job search activities allow the students the opportunity to learn about and practice how to ask for letters of recommendation and to locate a job.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Preventing occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session 5 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will identify at least two different sources that can be used to locate a job.
- Students will discuss the importance of procuring a letter of recommendation when applying for a job.
- Students will participate in a writing activity where they will be required to request a letter of recommendation from an individual.

Materials:

- Writing utensils
- White board/markers
- Paper or notebook
- Electronic device (used to assess the internet)
- Session 5 Handouts #1, #2, and #3
- Newspapers, ads, etc. (provide ways for the students to search job opportunities)
- Session 5 Homework Worksheet (HW5)

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce find a job and letters of recommendation topic.
- Introduce objectives.

Warm up:

- Write the different methods that are commonly used by individuals looking for a job on the white board (Bolles, 2016).
 1. Job postings on the internet
 2. Mailing your resume to employers
 3. Local newspaper ads
 4. Using employment agencies
 5. Professional or trade journals
 6. Support groups for job hunters
 7. State or federal employment office
 8. Asking friends or family for job leads
 9. Physically going to the place of business to speak with the employer
(Bolles, 2016)
- Ask students to guess how often each method works to procure a job. Answers are located below (Bolles, 2016).
 1. 4%
 2. 7%
 3. 5-24%

4. 5-28%
5. 7%
6. 10%
7. 14%
8. 33%
9. 47%

(Bolles, 2016).

- Ask students the questions
 - Were they surprised about what methods work well and which do not to find a job?
 - Have you ever used one of these methods to find a job?

Activity:

Part I

- The activity will be co-run with a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor
- Students will be provided with an iPad, laptop, newspapers, or other resources to find a job.
 - Provide students with Session 5 Handout #1
- At the end of the time, each student will discuss their two favorite resources that they used to locate a job and why they like those resources.

Processing/Application:

Part I

- Do you feel that you have a better understanding of what resources are available to you to utilize to find jobs, why or why not?
- What skills do you think you will need when job searching?
 - Have students think about the different methods, for example social/communication skills will be needed when going to the physical location.

Activity:

Part II

- The activity will be co-run with a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor
- After you find job, the next step is applying for the job.
- Introduce topic of what is a letter of recommendation?
 - A former teacher, colleague, employer, or someone else who can testify an individual's performance related to work or academics typically writes a letter of recommendation (Doyle, 2017f).
 - Letters of recommendation typically discuss the skills, achievements, and characteristics of the person being recommended; a vote of confidence for the person (Doyle, 2017f).
 - Brainstorm with students the type of individuals who would be good to ask for a letter of recommendation.
- Provide students with Session 5 Handout #2 so students can be provided examples.
- Discuss the proper way to ask for a letter of recommendation with the students.

1. Carefully choose who you want to write your reference for you.
2. Allow the person you are asking the opportunity to decline.
3. Ask the individual who is providing the reference permission to use them ahead of time.
4. Be polite and respectful when asking
5. Provide your reference information regarding your background information, a short summary of the job description, your current resume, and skills or qualities that you would like them to mention.
6. Thank your reference provider.

(Doyle, 2017d).

- Students will then have the opportunity to write a mock letter request to a possible reference asking them for a letter of recommendation.
- Provide Session 5 handout #3

Processing/Application:

Part II

- Why do you think that it is important to request a letter of recommendation?
- What did you think about this activity, was it helpful?
- Do you feel like you have the skills to request a letter of recommendation, if not what do you need to work on?

Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce Session 5 Homework Worksheet.
 - Students will continue on their research project by addressing finding a job and letters of recommendation in the worksheet and how it relates to their chosen career.
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Remind students that there are only 3 more group sessions left of this course
- Introduce students to next week's topic (Resume and cover letter)
 - Provide time for questions.

References

- Bolles, R.N. (2016). The 10 best and worst ways to look for a job. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2016/09/05/the-10-best-and-worst-ways-to-look-for-a-job/#297c9f4e2e7b>
- Doyle, A. (2017d). Sample letters and email messages asking for a reference. *The Balance*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalance.com/asking-for-a-reference-2062928>
- Doyle, A. (2017f). What is a recommendation letter? *The Balance*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalance.com/whati-is-a-recommendation-letter-2062074>
- Nochajski, S. M., & Schweitzer, J. A. (2014). Promoting school to work transition for students with emotional/behavioral disorders. *Work*, 48(3), 413-422. doi: 10.3233/WOR-131790

Session 5 Handout #1

Online Job Search Resources

Monster.com- Users can search and apply for jobs, post their resume for employers to view, find information about the company and salary, and even seek career advice (Doyle, 2017e).

LinkUp.com- This site only posts jobs listed on company websites, providing users with unadvertised jobs; useful site to avoid duplicate job listings (Doyle, 2017e).

CareerBuilder.com- Users can search job listings, post their resume, and seek career advice. This site directly provides job listings from employers and partners with newspapers to provide local listings (Doyle, 2017e).

Indeed.com- This site contains job listings from thousands of sites including newspapers, job boards, and company sites. Users can research job trends, salaries, and upload their resume (Doyle, 2017e).

Google for Jobs- This is a search engine that compiles job listings from other job search engines; users are provided with related listings and can narrow search results down to location, type of job, type of company, etc. Just type the job you are looking for into Google search (example: teaching jobs) and job listings are provided (Doyle, 2017e).

US.jobs- Users have access to job listings from employers nationwide. This site has partnered with the Direct Employers Association and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) to directly connect employers and job seekers (Doyle, 2017e).

Jobing.com- This site provides users with job listings that can be found around their local/regional areas (Sterne, 2018).

References

- Doyle, A. (2017e). Top 10 best job websites: Maximizing your online job search. *The Balance*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalance.com/top-best-job-websites-2064080>
- Sterne, H. (2018). Top resources for finding a job. *Reader's Digest*. Retrieved from <https://www.rd.com/advice/work-career/always-know-whos-hiring/>

Session 5 Handout #2

Letters of Recommendation Examples

Example #1

Peeka Boo
1234 East 6th Street
Crater Lake, WV 99909

December 9, 2013

Fun Times School District
900 North Rabbit Road
Crater Lake, WV 99907

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing this letter of reference for Genevieve Karp. Genevieve was a student of mine when she was in Seventh grade. I found her to be an excellent student and young lady. She always completed her work on time and to the best of her ability. I could tell that learning was a priority to Genevieve as she always produced high quality assignments. In addition, her attendance at school was excellent.

I have continued to have a relationship with Genevieve as she has grown into a productive young adult. She has worked hard to graduate with honors from The University of Bloomburg. While balancing a full load every semester during college, Genevieve still found time to volunteer both in Pierre and back here in Crater Lake. Whenever she was home, she would come and help out in classrooms at Brickhouse Elementary. Children loved it when she came to visit and help and adults loved it too because she could do any job proficiently.

Without hesitation, I would recommend Genevieve for a job in our school district. She has the qualities (compassion, competence, timeliness, hardworking, high standards and ethics) we look for in employees and would be quite an asset in any capacity. If I can be of any further assistance, don't hesitate to contact me at the above address or by phone at 555-3333 (home) or 777-8888 (cell).

Sincerely,

Peeka Boo

Reference

Adapted from: B. Kennedy, personal communication, December 9, 2013.

Example #2

Choco Late
9876 North Plum Place
Malkin, KS 11101

June 16, 2012

Advocates for Children
555 West Coral Court
Malkin, KS 11103

To Whom It May Concern:

I highly recommend George Jacobs for the position of advocate and case manager. In the few years I have known George it is apparent he has a passion for helping others and a strong desire and willingness to learn.

George is a highly motivated, organized, determined and enthusiastic individual. Each task he undertakes is given a high attention to detail. George is not afraid to take the initiative on any task, while still maintaining a team player mentality.

George possesses the necessary qualifications to excel at the position of advocate and case manager. I highly recommend him for this position. George will be a great addition to your team! If I can be of any further assistance, do not hesitate to contact me at the above address or by phone at 222-4444 (home) or 999-3333 (cell).

Sincerely,

Choco Late

Reference

Adapted from: L. Trongard, personal communication, June 16, 2012.

Session 5 Handout #3

Request Letter for A Recommendation

Below is an example of a request letter for a recommendation that you may use. However, you may have to change or add additional information that is specific to the job that you are applying to.

Dear Mr. Snow Owl

I hope that everything is going well for you and the new students are treating you well. I wish that I could go back to being a part of your class.

Currently, I am in the process of finding a new position as a police officer in the local town of Edwards.

I am writing to request if you would not mind and feel comfortable providing a positive letter of recommendation for me? If you could attest to my abilities to perform the job of a police officer and the positive skills that I demonstrated while being a part of your class I would greatly appreciate it.

Becoming a police officer has always been one of my dreams. I would be greatly honored to be able to serve and protect my community. Please let me know if there is any information that I can provide to you or if you have any questions regarding my experiences to assist you in giving me this reference.

Attached in the letter is my updated resume. If there are any additional materials that would be helpful to you, please let me know. I can be contacted at burrowingowl@owlmail.com or (123) 456-7890.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,

Burrowing Owl

Reference

Adapted from: Doyle, A. (2017a). Example email message asking for a reference. *The Balance*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalance.com/reference-request-email-message-example-2062904>

Session 5 Homework Worksheet

Research Project

Directions: For this worksheet, use the handout Job Search Resources to locate three job postings for your desired occupation in a location that you would be interested in working in. If given a description of the job, please write it down. This could be useful to see how the occupations are being described. For the last portion of this homework, write down a list of people whom you would ask for a letter of recommendation and what about that person would make them a good reference (It is okay if you can only think of one individual).

Job 1: _____

Method: _____

Job description: _____

Job 2: _____

Method: _____

Job description: _____

Job 3: _____

Method: _____

Job description: _____

My list of people who I would ask:

Person 1: _____

What about this person: _____

Person 2: _____

What about this person: _____

Person 3: _____

What about this person: _____

Session 6

Resume & Cover Letter

Nochajski and Schweitzer (2014), created a school-to-work transition program that included learning modules for how to secure a job. Topics included writing a personal resume and cover letter. Approximately 30 percent of participants were competitively employed at the end of the program (Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014).

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session will address the students' <i>knowledge</i> and <i>understanding</i> of what a cover letter and resume are and why they are important for applying to a job.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; two students per table facing front of room. • <i>Social</i>: Students will work in pairs and as a group; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, vocational rehabilitation counselor, and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance when needed. • <i>Temporal</i>: Session will last approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. • <i>Cultural</i>: Incorporated pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in a cover letter critique activity and a resume critique activity where they will <i>identify</i> components that should and should not be included in a cover letter and a resume.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Use of discussion and critique activities allow the students the opportunity to learn about cover letters and resumes and identify the necessary components needed for each.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Preventing occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session 6 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will discuss what a resume is and why it is important when applying for a job.
- Students will discuss what a cover letter is and why it is important when applying for a job.
- Students will identify the necessary and proper components that should be included in a resume.
- Students will identify the necessary and proper components that should be included in a cover letter.

Materials:

- White board
- Dry erase markers
- Paper or notebook
- Writing utensils
- Session 6 Handouts #1,2,3,4
- Session 6 Homework Worksheet (HW6)

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce cover letter and resume topic.
- Introduce objectives.

Warm up:

- What do employers typically ask applicants to supply when applying for a job?
 - Resume, cover letter, letters of recommendation, application, proof of identification, transcripts, etc.

Activity:

Part I (co-led with vocational rehabilitation counselor)

- Introduce cover letter topic to class
 - Cover letters are typically provided with your resume and supply more detailed information on why you are qualified for the job you are applying to (Doyle, 2017b).
 - Employers use cover letters to screen applicants and to decide who they want to interview.
 - Cover letters complement resumes; they explain your interest in the job/organization and identify the most relevant skills you possess related to the job.

- Do not include personal information about yourself or family, any qualifications you do not have, or any questions regarding the job, salary, schedule, or benefits. (Doyle, 2017b).
- Provide students with Session 6 Handout #1 for examples of well-written cover letters.
- Students will then be provided a cover letter (Session 6 Handout #2) that they will then critique in pairs.

Sharing:

Part I

- Students will discuss in a large group what they thought was good and what they thought was bad about the cover letter.

Activity:

Part II (co-led with vocational rehabilitation counselor)

- Introduce resume topic to class (Doyle, 2017c).
 - A resume is a document that provides employers information regarding your education, work experience, volunteer experience, credentials, and accomplishments.
 - Resumes are typically the first item employers look at when reviewing your application; the first impression
 - Resumes are written in a bulleted summary and include factual information regarding your education, work experiences, volunteer experiences, skills, credentials, certifications, and achievements; they may also include sections such as an objective, summary statement, or career highlights.
 - Include information that is recent and relevant; resumes should only be 1-2 pages
 - Spacing should be consistent and overall appearance should be aesthetically pleasing (Doyle, 2017c).
- Provide students with Session 6 Handout #3 for examples of well-written resumes.
- Students will then be provided a resume (Session 6 Handout #4) that they will then critique in pairs.

Sharing:

Part II

- Students will discuss in a large group what they thought was good and what they thought was bad about the resume.

Processing:

- Do you feel as though you could create your own cover letter and resume? Why or why not?
- What are the main differences between cover letters and resumes?
- Why are cover letters and resumes important when applying for a job?

Application:

- What are important skills or experiences that you think will be beneficial for you to add to your cover letter for your intended career?
- What are important skills or experiences that you think will be beneficial for you to add to your personal resume for your intended career?

Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce Session 6 Homework Worksheet.
 - Students will continue on their research project by creating their own cover letter and resume for either a fictional employer or for an employer they identified in Session 5.
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Introduce students to next week's topic (Interview Skills)

Reference

- Doyle, A. (2017b). How to write a successful cover letter. *The Balance*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalance.com/cover-letter-4073661>
- Doyle, A. (2017c). How to write the perfect resume for your job hunt. *The Balance*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalance.com/job-resume-4073657>
- Nochajski, S. M., & Schweitzer, J. A. (2014). Promoting school to work transition for students with emotional/behavioral disorders. *Work*, 48(3), 413-422. doi: 10.3233/WOR-131790

Session 6 Handout #1

Cover Letter Example #1

4561 Turpin Dr.
Sunburst, New York 73456
September 12, 2017

Mrs. Jane Doe
Therapy Supervisor
Growing Sprouts
3333 South 34th St.
Sunburst, NY 73458

Dear Mrs. Doe,

I am writing to express my interest in the staff position at Growing Sprouts advertised at <http://growingsprouts.ngl/careers/>. I will graduate from the University of Kaftlin in May with a Master's degree in Occupational Therapy, and I feel that I possess many of the skills you require for this position.

I have successfully completed my Level II Fieldworks at St. Virgil Hospital in Rockstar, Vermont and Lincoln Federal Hospital in Drayton, New Hampshire where I worked directly with their senior staff. These experiences provided me with solid entry-level skills in both physical and psychosocial rehabilitation.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you how my capabilities and personal qualities may be of benefit to your organization. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me hazel.ortuno@uok.edu or (333) 999-8888. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Hazel Ortuno

Reference

Adapted from: L. Fox, personal communication, September 12, 2017.

Cover Letter Example #2

8463 Stergis Rd.
Urtle, OR 72543
December 9, 2013

Carmondy County School District
435 N. Poppin Rd.
Urtle, OR 72545

Dear Mrs. Kard:

I am writing to inquire about a job position offered by the Carmondy County School District. An acquaintance of mine works as a teacher at Knightly Elementary School, told me about the open job of Education Support Personnel at Knightly Elementary School in the FLS classroom.

I recently graduated from the University of Garden with a B.S. in Physiology. I have completed 144 hours of college credit and managed to keep my GPA at a 3.5 or higher every semester of my college career. I think that my college experience makes me qualified for this position. I hope to one day be an occupational therapist and I think this job would help prepare me for my future. I also have numerous hours volunteering at Knightly since it was built in 2007. Volunteering at Knightly has given me an opportunity to interact with children and help them learn. I have also had the opportunity to work with the staff of Knightly. It is a friendly, helpful, caring environment that I would love to be a part of. I have a friendly personality that allows me to get along well with others, which I think is an important quality for someone in this position. I am also hard working and always try to put my best effort into anything I do.

I want to thank you for taking the time to consider me for the job of Education Support Personnel at Knightly. I would be pleased to discuss these and my other qualifications for this position further with you. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 777-555-4444 or e-mail me at hmunstero@outlook.com.

Sincerely,

Herman Munstero

Reference

Adapted from: N. Jennings, personal communication, December 9, 2013.

Session 6 Handout #2

564 Turnpike Ct.
Magpie, NV 81234

Helping Hearts
777 Yuca Dr.
Mistbin, ID 73458

I am writing to express my interest in the staff position at Helping Hearts. I graduated from Zaney University in 2006 with a Master's degree, and I feel that I possess many of the skills you require for this position.

I had a successful career at Turnpike Counseling Services working with children and families, but my wife decided that she wanted a change in scenery so we decided to move to Idaho and try out somewhere new. My experience at Turnpike Counseling Services provided me with solid experience and I was able to grow my counseling skills. My mom also said that she thinks I have the perfect personality for a counselor, but I am still very awkward with confrontation.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you how my capabilities and personal qualities may be of benefit to your organization. I did want to ask, what salary can I expect with this position? If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me.

Goodbye,

Derek Pingo

Reference

Adapted from: L. Fox, personal communication, September 12, 2017.

Session 6 Handout #3

Resume Example #1

Rachelle Frasier

2468 Laurel Ct. • Harden, FL 56789 • rfrasier222@outlook.com • (888)
222-7777

Personal Statement: I am a professional and motivated individual who is passionate about working hard. I have experience in an office setting as well as a fast-paced work environment. My varied knowledge and experience make me an excellent candidate for the Administrative Assistant position with Florida Legal Aid Institute.

Education:

University of Washaw College of Business, Orville, FL

- B.S. in Business Administration, December 2015 **GPA: 3.75**
- Minor in Entrepreneurship, December 2015 **Cum Laude**

Work Experience:

Blue Rise Coffee

September 2016-Present

Barista

- Work in a fast-paced and high-stress environment to perform various tasks
- Prepare a variety of drinks and food items in accordance with high customer standards
- Handle customer complaints and concerns in a professional and helpful manner

University Store

January 2015-December 2015

Sales Associate

- Interacted with and assisted customers with purchases
- Performed cashiering duties such as sales, returns and exchanges
- Assisted with textbook purchases/rentals
- Filed various documents for account purposes

Junipers

May 2015-August 2015

Bakery Clerk

- Prepared baked goods and packaged them for distribution
- Interacted with customers (sliced breads, customized cakes, ensured orders were satisfactory)
- Organized products for better customer satisfaction and convenience
- Problem solved to help customers with order concerns or basic purchases

Enhanced Oil Recovery Association

June 2014-December 2014

Accounting Intern

- Prepared monthly reconciliations of financial accounts
- Developed spreadsheets and other files to assist with managerial and accounting operations

- Ordered office supplies when needed
- Updated and organized filing systems, standard operating procedures and various accounting files
- Transferred a large oil field database into electronic form to make it more accessible

Activities and Leadership Experience

Member of the American Marketing Association **February 2014-December 2015**

- Media Officer
 - Coordinated advertising initiative for other campus organizations
 - Created posters, flyers, and other media documents to market the organization's various projects
- Gave several presentations on resumes and elevator speeches to High School FBLA members

Member of Golden Key International Honour Society **October 2013-December 2015**

- President (February 2015-December 2015)
 - Scheduled and coordinated meetings and volunteer activities, submitted annual plan and guided the other officers through their roles and responsibilities
- Web Master (February 2015-December 2015)
 - Monitored and updated the organization's website and social media pages
- Treasurer (February 2014-January 2015)
 - Monitored the banking account and provided insight for future spending ventures

Reference

Adapted from: M. Jennings, personal communication, January 18, 2018.

Resume Example #2

Scarlet O. Lee

3456 Rawlings Blvd. ♦ Butler, GA, 65432 ♦ (444) 111-5555 ♦ scarlet.lee@uot.edu

Objective	To obtain a position as an OTR/L in a department that is client-centered, energetic, dynamic and supportive of professional growth and development.	
Education	Master of Occupational Therapy University of Tara Longtin, TN Certifications: American Heart Association CPR Certification CarFit Certification	5/2017-5/2018
	Bachelor of General Studies University of Tara Longtin, TN Distinction: Summa Cum Laude	5/2015-5/2017
	Bachelor of Science: Physiology University of Melville, Butler, GA Concentration: Pre Medicine	8/2009-5/2013
Honors & Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dean's List: UoT & UoM 4 semesters each▪ President's Honor Roll: UoM 4 semesters▪ Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society▪ Student Occupational Therapy Association - Treasurer: 2015-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Golden Key International Honor Society▪ Student Organization for Accessibility and Resources (SOAR) Member▪ Forest County School District #1 Volunteer
Significant Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Integration of OT Theory▪ Assistive Technology▪ Management & Leadership (I, II, III)▪ OT with Infants and Preschool Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Occupation & Vocation▪ Anatomy▪ Multicultural Competency in OT▪ OT with School-Age Children and Young Adults
Related Experience	Level II - Mental Health January 8, 2018 - March 31, 2018, Roger's Medical Center, Daytown, SC <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Independently evaluated, designed and implemented client centered therapy for clients with diagnoses such as: Schizophrenia, Alcohol Dependency and Depression▪ Responsible for discharge planning▪ Responsible for own case load with an average of 20 clients▪ Participated in staff sessions Level II - Physical Disabilities May 25, 2017 – August 11, 2017, St. Franklin Hospital, Arving, VA	

- Independently evaluated, designed and implemented client centered therapy for clients with a variety of diagnoses such as: CVA, TBI, Elective Joint Replacement, SCI, CABG
- Responsible for discharge planning
- Responsible for own case load with an average of 8-10 clients
- Participated in staff sessions

Level I (*Skill Areas & Sites*)

A Total of 200 Hours

- Pediatrics (Gershwin Clinic, Ulton, GA)
- Physical Disabilities (St. Franklin Hospital, Arving, VA; Grassroots Therapy, Bard, NC)
- Mental Health (Reshly Hospital, Carbon, SC; Independent Living Resource, Inching, FL)

Leadership Experience	Treasurer Student Occupational Therapy Association Longtin, TN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Account Budgeting ▪ Financial Consulting ▪ Fee Collector 	2015-2017
Other Work Experience	Forest County School District #1: Birch Elementary School <i>-Education Support Personnel in a Functional Life Skills Room</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with children to increase their math skills • Assisted children with feeding and toileting • Accompanied children to their regular classrooms for inclusion • Provided sensory support to children 	1/2014-6/2015
Computer Skills	Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel), SPSS	
Interests	Pediatrics, Sensory Processing Disorders	

References provided upon request

Reference

Adapted from: L. Fox, personal communication, September 12, 2017.

Session 6 Handout #4

Derek

564 Turnpike Ct. ♦ Magpie, NV ♦ (212) 212-2122

Objective	Get a job	
Education	Master of Counseling	5/2006
	Bachelor of Science: Psychology	5/2001
	Urban University	
	High School Diploma	5/1997
Honors & Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Swim team▪ Good grades▪ Honor Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Volunteer▪ Chess club▪ School counselor
Leadership Experience	Secretary Future Counselors of Tomorrow Turnpike, NV <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Document club meetings▪ Advise on group activities	
Other Work Experience	Roger's Chicken Coop -Cook	1995
	Clementine's Closet -Cashier	3/2002-7/2003
	Turnpike Counseling Services -Counselor	6/2008-2017
Computer Skills	Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel), Facebook, Pinterest, IG	
Interests	Swimming, biking, traveling, salsa dancing, baking, underwater photography	

Academic
References

Greg
(456) 999-2345

Professional
References

Mr. Edwards
Turnpike Counseling Services
edwards.brad@yahoo.com

Greta Spinnet
Clementine's Closet

Personal
References

Jana Rutger
918 Broomtail Drive
Landmark, NV 87654

Morris Loughlin
1889 10th Ave.
Magpie, NV 81234

Reference

Adapted from: L.Fox, personal communication, September 12, 2017.

Session 6 Homework

Directions: For this session, you will create your own personalized cover letter and resume that you would provide to a fictional employer or to an employer you identified in Session 5. For this activity, you will reflect on the skills and experiences that you need and want to include in both a resume and cover letter when applying for a job. Some of the information you provide may be skills and experiences that you will acquire in the future. Templates for both a cover letter and resume are provided on the next pages. You may use these templates, search online for your own, or ask a friend/family member to provide you resources. You may also schedule time with the VR counselor or OT for further help. Feedback will be provided on your submitted cover letter and resume to use in the future when applying for a job.

133 Cornell Drive
Felicity, Oklahoma 62467
April 7, 2016

(Date)
Mr. John Smith
Director of Finance
BestJobEver Financial Corporation
90 Industrial Lane
Virtue, AZ 56489

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am writing to express my interest in the (job title) at BestJobEver Financial Corporation, advertised at _____. I will graduate from _____ in May with (state your degree/certification if applicable) and I feel that I possess many of the skills you require for this position.

I have successfully completed an internship at Halloway and Sons, Inc. where I worked directly with their senior staff. This experience provided me with solid entry-level skills in finance and management. I have excellent interpersonal skills and am hard working. I also held a leadership position in my financial club where I acted as vice-president.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you how my capabilities and personal qualities may be of benefit to your organization. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me osully@fyi.edu or (676) 288-0000. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Oliver Sully (your signature)

Oliver Sully (typed signature to ensure legibility)

Reference

Adapted from L. Fox, personal communication, September 12, 2017.

Name (Try not to exceed 2 pages)

Street Address ♦ City, State, Zip ♦ Phone number ♦ e-mail

Objective To obtain a position as ...
(optional)

Education High School Degree grad date?
Belmont High School Northern, MI
Minor:
Licensure:
Certifications:
Languages:

Other schools attended?

Honors & Activities

- School Organizations
- Awards
- Recognitions
- School Activities
- Community Activities
- Scholarships

Leadership Experience [Company/Institution Name] [City, State] dates
[Details of position, award, or achievement.]

Other Work Experience Work that is relevant/current, Volunteer experiences dates

Computer Skills MS (Word, Works, Excel, PowerPoint, Access), SPSS, ...

Interests [Click here and enter information.]

(optional)

References Furnished upon request (*or, if furnishing references then delete this line*)
(optional)

Only use this next section if you are going to provide them.

Professional	Name/Title	Name/Title
References	Company or Organization	Company or Organization
(2-3 work supervisors)	Mailing Address	Mailing Address
	City, State, Zip	City, State, Zip
	Phone number	Phone number
	e-mail address	e-mail address

Personal	Name	Name
References	Mailing address	Mailing address
(2-3 personal or character references: -co-workers or -long time friends or -clergy members)	City, State, Zip	City, State, Zip
	Phone Number	Phone Number
	e-mail address	e-mail address

Reference

Adapted from L. Fox, personal communication, September 12, 2017.

Session 7 Job Interview

Nochajski and Schweitzer (2014), created a school-to-work transition program that included learning modules for how to secure a job. Topics included participating in an interview. Approximately 30 percent of participants were competitively employed at the end of the program (Nochajski & Schweitzer, 2014).

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session will address the students' <i>knowledge</i> and <i>understanding</i> of the job interview process, the skills needed for a job interview, the attire to wear to an job interview, and participate in a mock interview scenario.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; two students per table facing front of room. • <i>Social</i>: Students will work as a group; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, vocational rehabilitation counselor, and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance when needed. • <i>Temporal</i>: Session will last approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. • <i>Cultural</i>: Incorporated pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in a role-playing activity where they will <i>practice</i> answering interview questions via a mock interview and <i>discuss</i> the importance, the skills, and the attire for a job interview.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Use of the role-play activities and discussion allows the students the opportunity to learn about different job interview questions, the skills needed for a job interview and how to dress professional.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Occupational therapist will provide adaptations and modifications to activity depending on needs of students.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: The activity/course is helping prevent occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Activity/course is creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session 7 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will discuss what a job interview is, why it is important, and the skills needed to participate in a job interview.
- Students will discuss the appropriate attire that should be worn in a job interview situation.
- Students will participate in a mock interview scenario in partners to practice interview skills

Materials:

- Writing utensils
- White board/markers
- Paper or notebook
- Session 7 Handout #1 & #2
- Session 7 Homework Worksheet (HW7)

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce Job Interview topic.
- Introduce objectives.

Warm up:

- Ask students if they have ever experienced or had to do an interview for a job.
 - If someone has, ask them what it was like for them, what kind of questions did they ask, how were they feeling?
 - If someone has not, ask them what they think about participating in an interview, if they are nervous or excited?

Activity:

(Co-led with a vocational rehabilitation counselor)

- Introduce what a job interview is and what is involved with them.
 - An interview consists of a conversation between a job applicant and a representation of an employer whom will ask questions to assess whether the applicant should be hired.
 - Most interview questions consist of open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are designed to encourage a detailed, meaningful response that is used to explore the person's knowledge, thoughts, and feelings. They are not answered in a yes or no fashion like closed-ended questions.
(YourDictionary, 2017)
- Discuss with students the reasons why job interviews are important.
 - Some of the reasons could include:

- It allows the employer to get an understanding of an applicant's skills, experience, and their personality.
- Allows an employer determine how an applicant would fit in to the work culture.
- It allows the applicant the opportunity to assess if the facility meets their employment needs and interests.
- Gain an understanding of what their job obligations would encompass etc.

(SHRM, 2015)

- Ask students to think about all the different skills they think are needed to perform a job interview.
 - Some of the skills could include: social skills, communication skills, eye contact, interpersonal skills, processing skills, cognitive skills, advocating skills etc.
- Ask students to think of job interview attire
 - Job interview attire could include: a dress shirt, button up shirt, dark blue jeans, dress pants, a nice sweater, a dress, heals, dress shoes, etc.
- Group students into pairs and hand out the job interview questions handouts.
 - Session 7 Handout #1 should go to one person in the pair, and Session 7 Handout #2 should go to the other person in the pair.
 - Students will practice asking and answering the questions provided on the handouts

Sharing:

- Ask students to share one benefit that they took away from the interview activity.

Processing:

- Is there an impression you give to the person interviewing you when you dress in professional clothing?
- Do you feel that you have gained knowledge that could help you during an interview?
- Do you more comfortable going in to an interview situation?

Application:

- What would you wear to your future job interview for your identified career?
- What type of questions would anticipate having to answer in a job interview for your identified career?
- What can you do to better prepare yourself for a future job interview?

Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce Session 7 Homework Worksheet.

- Students will continue on their research project by addressing job interview in the worksheet and how it relates to their chosen career.
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Introduce students to next week's topic (assembling the job portfolio and project presentation)

References

- Nochajski, S. M., & Schweitzer, J. A. (2014). Promoting school to work transition for students with emotional/behavioral disorders. *Work, 48*(3), 413-422.
- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). (2015). *Interviewing Candidates for Employment*. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tool-and-sample-toolkits/pages/interviewingcandidatesforemployment.aspx>
- YourDictionary., (2017). Examples of open-ended questions. Retrieved January 14, 2018, from <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-open-ended-and-closed-ended-questions.html>

Session 7 Handout #1

Directions: Below are some sample questions that employers might ask you during an interview. Not all of these questions might be asked during an interview and there are a variety of other questions that can be asked. For this activity, come up with a work environment that your partner would like to apply to. Then ask your partner the following questions and allow them time to respond. The notes section below the question is provided to you, so you can write down how your partner answered the question.

Question 1: How would you describe yourself?

Notes: _____

Question 2: How do you handle your stress?

Notes: _____

Question 3: Why do you want this job?

Notes: _____

Question 4: What is your greatest strength?

Notes: _____

Directions: Once you have finished asking your partner the questions above, write down some areas that you thought they answered well and maybe ways that they could improve. This is a time for you to help your partner, give a clear reason for your thoughts and answer any questions that they may have.

What did they do well?

What do they need to improve on?

Reference

Smith, J. (2013). How to ace the 50 most common interview questions. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/01/11/how-to-ace-the-50-most-common-interview-questions/#53b964294624>

Session 7 Handout #2

Directions: Below are some sample questions that employers might ask you during an interview. Not all of these questions might be asked during an interview and there are a variety of other questions that can be asked. For this activity, come up with a work environment that your partner would like to apply to. Then ask your partner the following questions and allow them time to respond. The notes section below the question is provided to you, so you can write down how your partner answered the question.

Question 1: How would you describe yourself?

Notes: _____

Question 2: Why did you choose to apply to _____ organization?

Notes: _____

Question 3: Why should we hire you?

Notes: _____

Question 4: Do you work well with other people?

Notes: _____

Directions: Once you have finished asking your partner the questions above, write down some areas that you thought they answered well and maybe ways that they could improve. This is a time for you to help your partner, give a clear reason for your thoughts and answer any questions that they may have.

What did they do well?

What do they need to improve on?

Reference

Smith, J. (2013). How to ace the 50 most common interview questions. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/01/11/how-to-ace-the-50-most-common-interview-questions/#53b964294624>

Session 7 Homework Worksheet

Research Project

Directions: Sometimes questions can be difficult to answer on the spot because they are open-ended. With those types of questions it is better to rehearse your answer, as best as you can, with a family member, friend, or even speaking out loud in front of a mirror. Below are some open-ended questions that you may be asked. Write your answer down on the lines below and practice answering these questions like you were participating in an interview for your desired job.

Question 1: What is your greatest strength?

Question 2: What is your greatest weakness?

Question 3: Why should we hire you, compared to other applicants?

Question 4: What are your goals for the future?

Consider adding this to your research project

Reference

Smith, J. (2013). How to ace the 50 most common interview questions. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/01/11/how-to-ace-the-50-most-common-interview-questions/#53b964294624>

Session 8

Assembling The Job Portfolio & Project Presentations

Webb, Repetto, Seabrooks-Blackmore, Patterson, and Alderfer (2014), emphasized that the basic tenant to career development is that for learning to be meaningful, it must be connected to the real world.

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session will address the students' <i>knowledge</i> and <i>understanding</i> of pre-vocational skills that they have learned throughout the semester.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •<i>Physical</i>: Homeroom classroom; two students per table facing front of room. •<i>Social</i>: Students will present their research project; occupational therapist, homeroom teacher, vocational rehabilitation councilor and para-professionals will be available to help facilitate discussion and offer assistance as needed. •<i>Temporal</i>: Session will last approximately 90 minutes in the designated time slot that is deemed appropriate by the school. •<i>Cultural</i>: Incorporate pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>present</i> their research topic regarding their career of choice to the rest of the class.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: This activity provides the students the opportunity to give a presentation to a group of people, which is a task that may be required for a future career that they hold.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Prevent occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Session 8 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will present their research project regarding their career of choice to the class.
- Students will complete a self-satisfaction evaluation form to provide feedback regarding the course.

Materials:

- Access to an electronic device
- Access to a projector
- Session 8 Handout #1

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome students to the session.
- Introduce presentation topic.
- Introduce objectives.

Warm up:

- Ask each student and adult to share their favorite part of the course that they experienced over the semester.

Activity/Sharing:

- The activity for this session is to provide the students the opportunity to share the information they have gathered over the course of the semester regarding their research project.
 - The presentation is an accumulation of the skills that they have learned throughout the semester.
 - For example the students will have to use their social/communication skills to verbalize their project to the class, they may feel nervous and will need to employ their coping skills to present their project, and will need to advocate for any materials that they will need for their presentation etc.
 - Each student will be given 5-7 minutes to present his or her project.
 - Students may use a PowerPoint presentation, poster, or some other form to relay their project to the class.
 - This is also an opportunity to share their job portfolio that they have been working on throughout the semester
 - Note: The job portfolio is a resource that the students will be able to take after they have completed this course to utilize in their job searching process.

Application/Processing:

- How did you feel about your presentations?
- Did you feel prepared giving your presentation to the class, why or why not?
- What specific skills did you use that were discussed in this course prior to your presentation or during your presentation?

Wrap up:

- Handout and introduce course evaluation (Session 8 Handout #1).
 - Students will be allowed approximately 10 minutes to complete the evaluation form.
- Reiterate course objectives.
- Thank students for their work throughout the semester

Reference

Webb, K., Repetto, J., Seabrooks-Blackmore, J., Patterson, K. B., & Alderfer, K. (2014). Career development: Preparation, integration, and collaboration. *Journal Of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 40(3), 231-238. doi:10.3233/JVR-140688

Session 8 Handout #1

Course Evaluation

Directions: Please rate the following questions on a scale from 1-5:

1. The information covered throughout the course was presented in an engaging format.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree

2. It was beneficial to learn about pre-vocational skills in a group environment.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree

3. I feel more confident in my ability to enter the workforce.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree

4. I feel like I have a better understanding of the skills needed to find, procure, and maintain a job.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree

5. I feel more confident in my ability to advocate for myself, and find and use resources when I am looking for a job and when I obtain employment.

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree

6. What suggestions would you make to improve this course in the future?

Thank you for your participation!

Section II

Individual Session Outlines

Overview of Section II

Section II is a compilation of the two individual sessions for this course. Both sessions include an introduction page that relates the EHP components to the session, as well as a brief explanation of current research that supports the session. Every component of each session is labeled to increase ease of use.

The first individual session will be conducted by an occupational therapist and is an opportunity for the therapist to conduct an assessment or multiple assessments to determine how each student's skills, contexts, and task performance relate to work-readiness. A brief overview of several possible assessments that can be utilized is provided, but therapists are encouraged to find and use different work-related assessments that are more appropriate for their students and setting based off their clinical judgment. From the assessment results, each student will collaborate with the occupational therapist to establish a mission statement; a vision statement for the next 5, 10, and 20 years; and short- and long-term goals that relate to their vocational aspirations.

The second individual session will also be conducted by an occupational therapist and delves further into the topic of self-advocacy that is tailored more towards each individual student. Students will be given an educational brochure that provides information regarding resources and supports that they can utilize to help them become better advocates for him/herself and provide them occupational justice. Students will also complete an *I* statements activity to address assertiveness, a self-advocacy skill. This session will also have an accompanying homework assignment where students will research what accommodations are available to them based on their diagnosis for their research project career.

Individual Session 1

Assessment

Levinson and Palmer (2005), state that use of a comprehensive, trans-disciplinary, vocational assessment is a major component of a successful school to work transition program. The goal of assessment is to promote vocational and educational planning (Levinson & Palmer, 2005).

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session uses assessments to evaluate the students' <i>physical</i> , <i>psychosocial</i> , and <i>sensorimotor</i> skills necessary to participate in the occupation of work. This session will also address each student's personal vocational goals.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical</i>: Occupational therapy room; materials dependent of assessment(s) being used. • <i>Social</i>: Students will collaborate one-on-one with the therapist. • <i>Temporal</i>: Session will last for approximately 30 minutes per student. • <i>Cultural</i>: Incorporate pre-vocational skill training assessment for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in a variety of assessments that relate to skills necessary for vocational participation. Students will also create personal goals for their vocational future.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: Skills that the students may want/need to improve on to meet their vocational goals.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: Students are provided information that they may use to determine which contexts may need to be altered to meet their vocational goals.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Students are provided information that they may use to determine which tasks may need to be adapted or modified to meet their vocational goals.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Information provided that is used to help prevent the students from missing out on vocational exploration and participation.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Information that can be used to create opportunities for students to learn more about their skills and how it will affect them regarding employment.</p>

Individual Session 1 Outline

Objectives:

- Students will participate in a variety of assessments that relate to vocation and skills needed for vocation
- Students will establish or create goals related to their vocational future

Materials:

- Writing utensils
- Assessments (subject to change based on therapist and student's needs)
- Action/goal plan (Individual Session 1 Handout)
 - Additional materials may be dependent on the assessment utilized and may need to be adapted or modified according to the student

Introduction:

- Welcome student to the session
- Introduce assessments topic
- Introduce objectives

Assessment:

- Below is list of assessments that could potentially be used to evaluate the person, context, and task related to vocation.
 - Keep in mind available time and resources, as well as special certification needed to conduct assessments.
 - Consider a specialized evaluation tool to fit facility needs and resources.
- The list is categorized into the components of the EHP model.
 - Person
 - The Scales of Independent Behavior Revised (SIB-R): This assessment measures motor skills, social interaction and communication skills, personal independence skills, and community independence skills to assist with program evaluation (Bruininks, Woodcock, Weatherman, & Hill, 1996, as cited in Crist, 2014).
 - Needs additional training, administrators must be certified to give this assessment.
 - Valpar Component Work Sample Series and Dexterity Modules: This assessment provides information on a person's ability to be a successful worker by analyzing skills, factors, and work-related aptitudes needed to complete tasks (Valpar International Corporation, 1994, as cited in Page & Tuckwell 2014).
 - Context
 - The Transition Planning Inventory-Updated Version (TPI-UV): This assessment determines the strengths and needs of high school students transitioning into a variety of post-high school settings (Patton & Clark, 2014, as cited in Page & Tuckwell, 2014).

- Craig Hospital Inventory of Environmental Factors (CHIEF) Version 3.0: This assessment helps individuals identify elements of the environment that restrict or facilitate participation in the environment (Whiteneck, Harrison-Felix, Mellick, & Brooks, 2001, as cited in Gitlow, 2014).
 - **Task**
 - WorkHab FCE system: This assessment is designed to assess the capacity for physical work. It can also be used to develop plans for return to work, workplace modifications, and pre-employment testing (Roberts & Bradbury, 2006, as cited in Page & Tuckwell, 2014).
 - Needs additional training, administrators must be certified to give this assessment.
 - Joule Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE) Version 3.0: This assessment is used to match a worker's ability to a particular job by comparing the person's abilities to the job demands (Valpar International, 1997, as cited in Page & Tuckwell, 2014).

Discussion/Goals:

- After completion of any of the assessments above or any assessments that are deemed to be more appropriate to the student's needs, the therapist should collaborate with the student to establish 1 long-term goal and 3 short-term goals. The therapist and the student should also determine the student's life mission and vision statement. The action/goal plan worksheet can be utilized to help guide the goal forming process.

Summary:

- The therapist should provide a summary of what was accomplished throughout the session and answer any questions the student may have.
- Reiterate course objectives.

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Individual Session 1 Handout
Action/Goal Plan Worksheet

1.) Life's Mission (What do you care about, what are you passionate about, what is your purpose in life, what are your values?):

2.) Vision Statement (Where do you see yourself in...)

5 years

10 years

20 years

3.) Goals

Long-Term Goal :

Short-Term Goal #1:

Short-Term Goal #2:

Short-Term Goal #3:

Individual Session 2

Self-Advocacy Continued

Downing, Earles-Vollrath, and Schreiner (2007), state that for students to self-advocate they must have an accurate and realistic understanding of themselves and use that knowledge applicably. Dryden, Desmarais, and Arsenault (2014), found that self-advocacy interventions improved students' self-advocacy knowledge, confidence, and behavior.

EHP	Connection to Session
Person	This session will further explore each student's <i>thoughts</i> and <i>feelings</i> regarding their ability to advocate for themselves. It will also address each student's <i>knowledge</i> and <i>understanding</i> of what self-advocacy is, what resources are available to him or her, and assertiveness skills.
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical</i>: Occupational therapy room at desk or table. • <i>Social</i>: Students will collaborate one-on-one with the therapist. • <i>Temporal</i>: Session will last approximately 30 minutes per student. • <i>Cultural</i>: Incorporate pre-vocational skill training for students with a common interest in pursuing a vocational track after high school.
Task	Students will <i>participate</i> in discussion with the therapist regarding what self-advocacy is and resources that are available to them. The student will also <i>participate</i> in an activity to address assertiveness.
Intervention Approaches	<p><i>Establish/Restore</i>: This activity will provide information to students regarding resources that are available to them and how to be assertive using <i>I</i> statements.</p> <p><i>Alter</i>: This approach is not applicable due to the fact that the course context is not changing; could possibly be used as course grows and evolves.</p> <p><i>Adapt/Modify</i>: Adaptations and modifications provided as needed.</p> <p><i>Prevent</i>: Preventing occupational injustice.</p> <p><i>Create</i>: Creating opportunities for students to learn more about skills needed for employment and help students build their skill set related to their vocational interests.</p>

Individual Session 2 Outline

Objectives:

- Student will further discuss their understanding on what self-advocacy is and the resources available to them in a work place setting
- Student will participate in an *I* statement activity to develop assertiveness skills that may be needed in a workplace setting.

Materials:

- Writing utensils
- Self-advocacy brochure
- Individual Session Handout #1 & #2

*Materials may need to be adapted/modified based needs of students.

Introduction:

- Welcome student to the session
- Introduce self-advocacy topic continued
- Introduce objectives

Activity:

- Therapist will handout the Self-advocacy brochure to student
- The therapist and student will then have a collaborative discussion regarding the information that are on the brochures
 - This is an opportunity for students to ask questions and explore the resources that are available to them on the brochures
- Transition to *I* statement activity
 - Give student Individual Session 2 Handout
 - Discuss what it means to be assertive
 - To be assertive is to be self-assured and confident without being aggressive.
 - Help student complete *I* statement handout.

Sharing:

- Ask student to share something they learned from the self-advocacy activity.

Processing:

- What are the benefits of using *I* statements?
 - Maintain relationships, establish good communication, allow yourself to be heard etc.
- What can you do to improve your ability to use *I* statements?

Application:

- What information provided on the brochures could you use to assist you in your future career?
- Besides *I* statements, are there any other ways you could self-advocate for yourself in your future workplace setting?

Summary:

- The therapist should provide a summary of what was accomplished throughout the session and answer any questions the student may have.
- Handout and introduce Individual Session 2 Homework Worksheet.
 - Students will use the JAN website to find and identify accommodations and modifications they can utilize in their work setting depending on their diagnosis.
- Reiterate course objectives.

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Individual Session 2 Handout #1

I Statements

- To advocate for yourself, you must first begin the conversation.
- I Statements are used to help you take control of your emotions (assert yourself) when upset, frustrated, or angry without resorting to aggression.
- I Statements allow you to communicate while minimizing blaming the other party.
- 3 Steps
 - 1. Honestly state how you feel “I feel...” “I felt...”
 - 2. State the specific situation “...when...” “...that...”
 - 3. Explain why you are having those feelings “...because...”
- Ex. “I feel hurt when you tell others my secrets because I trusted you with personal information.”

Practice

From the scenarios below, create I statements to express how you might be feeling if you were in that situation.

Scenario: Your boss has promoted a coworker to the management position over you despite the extra time and work you put into your job at the coffee shop. You have been working at the shop longer and believe you were better qualified for the position.

“I feel/felt _____

_____”

Scenario: You and your coworker have been working on a project for your architectural firm that is due to your supervisor next week. When you meet with your coworker to check in on progress, your coworker reports that they have not completed their share of the work.

“I feel _____

_____”

Scenario: Your managing partner at your law firm consistently assigns you cases that are outside of your area of practice. You are not comfortable with these cases and are not sure how to handle the situation.

“I feel _____

_____”

Reference

Adapted from: Therapy Aid. (2018). I statements. *Therapist Aid*. Retrieved from <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/i-statements/communication/adults>

What is Self-Advocacy?

- Self-advocacy is the ability to speak up for oneself. Individuals are allowed to have control over their resources and actions, even if they need support from others. Individuals have the right to make their own life decisions. (Crist, 2011)

Be Your Own Advocate

1. Acknowledge your disability
2. Be aware of your rights and responsibilities
3. Be aware of your wants and needs
4. Make the effort to compromise and negotiate issues related to self-advocacy
5. Understand where to go for support and to find resources
6. Set goals and make plans to be successful
(Crist, 2011)

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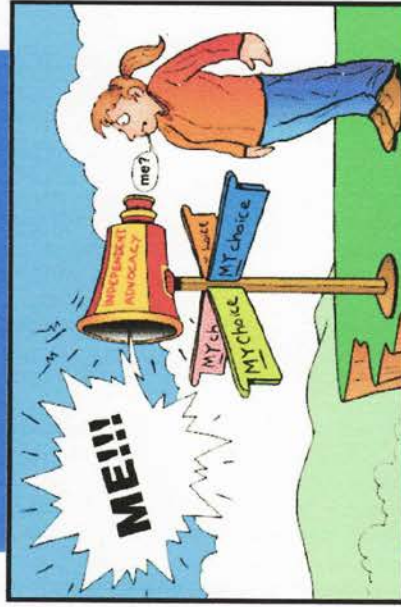


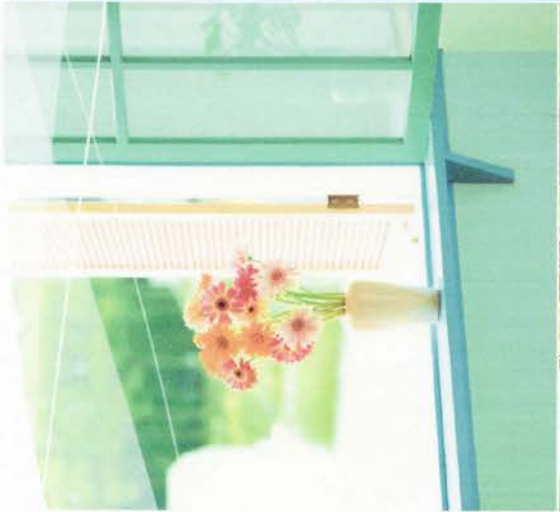
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Self-Advocacy

Your Rights & Options

Resources to Access

- Job Accommodation Network (JAN): JAN is a free resource located online that provides information and guidance regarding workplace accommodations and employment issues for individuals with disabilities. To learn more visit <https://askjan.org>
- ADA: A Guide for People with Disabilities Seeking Employment. A brochure providing information to individuals with disabilities regarding their rights. To learn more visit <https://www.ada.gov/workta.pdf>



Relevant Laws & Regulations

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

This federally mandated law ensures that youth with disabilities have access to public education, including adult transition services. Students with disabilities are to be provided with specialized support to achieve post-secondary education, vocational training, employment, and/or community living outcomes. To learn more visit <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

ADA is a civil rights law that addresses access and discrimination in public and private schools, business establishments, and

public buildings. ADA works to eliminate barriers and provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To learn more visit <https://www.ada.gov/>

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act:

Section 504 provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who are unable to qualify for IDEA. Section 504 is also responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to students who are eligible. To learn more visit <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>

(Bazyk, & Cahill, 2015)

Individual Session 2 Homework

Directions:

1. Open up Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Fire Fox, or Safari on your computer or electronic device and type in <https://askjan.org> into the space provided.
2. Look for the link labeled *A-Z of disabilities and accommodations* near the right top of the website page, select the link.
3. Once the *A-Z of disabilities and accommodations* website has been opened up, locate the *by disability* bullet on the left hand side, select the link.
4. Locate the link that applies to you, select the link.
5. Once you have selected the link, select the *Accommodations and Compliance Series* link.
6. Scroll down the webpage and locate the *accommodation ideas*. Under the *accommodation ideas* you will notice tabs that called *physical limitations, visual problems, maintaining stamina during the workday* etc.
7. From the categories below, pick 3 categories that pertain to you. Write down 2 accommodations that you believe would be beneficial for you, that either you or your future employer could utilize in the workplace setting. For the final step, explain how the accommodation could help you in your future career.

Categories:

Physical Limitations, Visual Problems, Maintaining Stamina During the Workday, Maintaining Concentration, Difficulty Staying Organized and Meeting Deadlines, Memory Deficits, Problem Solving Deficits, Working Effectively with Supervisors, Difficulty Handling Stress and Emotions, Attendance Issues, and Issues of Change.

Category #1: _____

Accommodation #1: _____

Accommodation #2: _____

Importance to work: _____

Category #2: _____

Accommodation #1: _____

Accommodation #2: _____

Importance to work: _____

Category #3: _____

Accommodation #1: _____

Accommodation #2: _____

Importance to work: _____

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