



Employment and Self-Determination

TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR FOSTERING SELF-DETERMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

What Is Self-Determination?

- Making Choices
- Goal-setting
- Communicating
- Problem-Solving
- Taking Responsibility
- Advocating (Speaking Up)

When looking for a job, self-determination means that the job seeker discovers their own wants and needs, determines their employment goals, and chooses the resources to achieve those goals. The job seeker is the decision-maker and, decides the direction of the job search, chooses who will help, and controls the planning that leads to a job. The job seeker is responsible for identifying his or her own strengths, job requirements, and interests.

The Center for Self-Determination has defined five principles of self-determination. These relate to employment in the following way:

1. **Freedom.** Individuals have the freedom to pursue meaningful employment. They have the freedom to choose services and providers and to choose assistance when needed.
2. **Authority.** Having control over how financial resources are spent, including employment service dollars
3. **Support.** Job seekers should be able to choose who provides support, including supports from agencies and organizations,

family and friends; school personnel; or perhaps no one.

4. **Responsibility.** Job seekers are responsible for spending public employment funding and resources wisely, and to contribute to the community and the employment process.

5. **Confirmation.** Job seekers should help improve services and supports. Examples include providing feedback on their experiences or acting as mentors to other job seekers with disabilities.

Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination

If self-determination is having the freedom to make choices about your own life; self-advocacy is having the skills to speak up about what choices you want to make, what is important and why it is important. Self-determination and self-advocacy are not the same - but they are both important for people seeking employment.

How Do I Get Advocacy and Self-Determination Skills?

- Do role playing
- Volunteer
- Take classes
- Project STIR
- Visit your local Independent Living Center

Contact Your Local Regional Office Youth Transition and Employment Resource Coordinator or Advocacy Specialist For More Information





Resources:

Self-Determination Project, Virginia Department of Education

<http://www.imdetermined.org/> Provides a variety of training modules, resources, films, guides and apps related to self-determination, self-advocacy and employment.

It's Money, Baby

<http://itsmoney.kheaa.com/> A financial literacy database on helpful resources, asset development and self-determination sponsored by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority

My Choice, My Future

www.elarc.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=238 A handbook to individuals with making choices on employment and future planning.

Real People, Real Jobs

<http://www.realworkstories.org/> A collection of success stories which support the importance of employment and self-determination. A site which is sponsored by the Institute for Community Inclusion

Wisconsin Dept of Public Instruction

<http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/tranopndrs-self-determination.pdf> Self-help book with step by step process for planning for after high school. Provides valuable information and guidance to prepare for transition from high school to employment.

Institute for Community Inclusion

www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=205 Article on how self-determination and employment can work together. It provides guidance on how to improve the job seekers self-determination skills while working towards employment.

Healthy Place.Com

www.healthyplace.com/other-info/mental-illness-overview/speaking-out-for-yourself-self-help-guide/menu-id-198/ A self help guide to enhancing one's advocacy and self-determination.

People First of Missouri

<http://missouripeoplefirst.org/> A self-advocacy agency assisting individuals with developmental disabilities.

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability

<http://ncwd-youth.info/> Information and resources about employment and youth with disabilities.

