

LESSON 1.4h – Career Solutions

Learning Objectives:

Unit 1: Awareness / Orientation to the Curriculum

- C. Understanding differences among individuals and the ways in which attitudes, fears, and stereotypes are formed
- D. Identifying what inclusion means in a family, school, and community

Materials:

- Career Inclusion Solutions Worksheet
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Fact Sheet
- Computers with internet access

Time:

Two class sessions

Setting:

Large group and small group

Directions:

Lesson Preparation

In order to facilitate this lesson, review the resources available on the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) website. Familiarize yourself with the Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR) students will use to complete this assignment. Schedule the use of a computer lab for this lesson.

Lesson Implementation

One important focus of the curriculum is for students to learn about civil rights of people with disabilities. As future employees with disabilities, or as non-disabled co-workers, supervisors and employees of individuals with disabilities, a basic understanding of employment rights and job accommodation resources is an

essential skill for high school students who will soon be entering the world of work. Through this lesson, students will develop creative solutions to potential employment access barriers for people with disabilities. In addition, students will explore resource tools and publications available through the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). Knowledge of these resources will better prepare students for future employment-related disability accommodation situations.

Distribute copies of the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Fact Sheet. Students will refer to this document in order to access the Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR) within the JAN website.

Working in pairs or small groups, students will utilize SOAR to complete the Career Inclusion Solutions Worksheet. Review the worksheet with students and answer any questions about disability-related terms. Give students the entire class session to complete their worksheets. Since the process of using SOAR is a critical component of this lesson, it is recommended that students have a second in-class opportunity to complete their worksheets.

The worksheet contains one blank space that may be used for a real-life employment solutions case. Students may choose to complete this space using a workplace accommodation situation relating to a family member, friend or co-worker.

After students have completed their worksheets, review the outcomes in class. Depending on the number of student groups, assign one or more group to report on their solutions for each specific employment inclusion situation. Although each reporting group will identify different solutions, refer to the notes below for suggested discussion topics. When facilitating this lesson, remember to emphasize the fact that appropriate accommodations are determined on a case by case basis. Two individuals with the same type of disability may require different types of accommodations to meet their specific needs.

Employment Case Notes –

Case One: A college student with low vision wants to work at a local coffee stand in order to make extra money for school. He uses computer equipment to magnify printed material for school. The employer is concerned about how the student will manage the cash register when he works solo shifts in the afternoon. The employer is also concerned the student would not be able to read the flavor labels on the variety of flavor mix bottles used for making Italian Sodas.

As needed, prompt students to identify the following topics when discussing potential job accommodation solutions:

- using of a talking cash register or calculator
- using of a magnifying glass to read bottle labels
- developing a product placement system so the employee would know where each item is located (for example the strawberry flavoring is the third bottle from the right)
- lighting at the workstation to increase visibility

Case Two: A baker with mental retardation cannot read or count. The individual has been working with a job coach, but would like to be able to work more independently at baking tasks. The two main challenges are that she cannot read the recipes for the various types of cookie batter she needs to prepare and she cannot count to place a dozen cookies per baking sheet.

As needed, prompt students to identify the following topics when discussing potential job accommodation solutions:

- using a picture recipe system where the item and measurement are represented by photos of the item and the measuring tool and the amount used in the measuring tool
- using a cookie sheet template where holes are cut into a piece of plastic that is put on the cookie sheet while being loaded and then removed before baking
- using a picture guide showing a fully loaded cookie sheet

Case Three: A foster care social worker with dyslexia has difficulty writing case progress notes and quarterly reports about the children on his case load. The notes are recorded in electronic format on a client data base. The reports are created as Word documents and must follow a specific content template.

As needed, prompt students to identify the following topics when discussing potential job accommodation solutions:

- using voice activated software to allow the social worker to verbally enter case notes or report text
- using transcription to complete reports so the social worker would record the report data and clerical staff would type the report

Case Four: A computer programmer with asthma and multiple chemical sensitivity works for a company that recently moved part of their office into a new building space. The programmer began experiencing headaches, respiratory difficulty, and hives after moving to the new building. She suspects the problems are a result of exposure to the fumes from new paint and carpeting materials.

As needed, prompt students to identify the following topics when discussing potential job accommodation solutions:

- using an air purifier system in the employee's work area
- moving the employee's office back to the old building (If this is presented as a solution, discuss the implications of being separated from her work group. How will the employee communicate with project collaborators? How and where will department meetings be held?)
- allowing the employee to work remotely (from home or another location) during part of the week

Case Five: A clothing store clerk has a back injury limiting the amount of time he can stand. He typically works eight hour shifts and spends about three fourths of each shift at the cash register. The other time is spent organizing display areas and helping customers locate merchandise.

As needed, prompt students to identify the following topics when discussing potential job accommodation solutions:

- providing an adjustable stool for use at the cash register area
- providing a cushioned floor mat at the cash register area
- modifying the employee's work shift to allow for periodic breaks to lay on a fold-up cot in the employee break room

Lesson Wrap-up / Follow-up

Review what students have learned about the rights of people with disabilities and the importance of providing workplace accommodations. Prepare students for the next lesson.

Notes: