**Customized Employment (CE)**

**Referral Considerations**

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## Background

The Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) funded by the Department of Education’s Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) provides technical assistance and training to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and their partners. WINTAC developed this document to provide guidance to states to assist in making good CE referrals.

### Important Considerations in making good CE referrals

CE is a good strategy for those who need more intensive support in selecting a career; therefore, they need discovery for career and job direction.  Historically, this group has typically been individuals with IDD with more significant disabilities but is also effective for other individuals with complexities that make it difficult to utilize the current labor market. Discovery can help identify interests, skills and conditions of employment that direct them towards a career or job path that works for them and the employer.

CE referrals should target employment seekers whose strengths, capacities, ideal conditions, and vocational direction are better revealed through spending time with them in their lives, talking to people who know them well, and creating individualized opportunities to try new things related to their skills and interests within their communities and local businesses before developing the vocational plan.

CE should be considered for job seekers who:

1. Have been categorized as ‘unemployable’ and therefore unable to achieve competitive integrated employment (CIE)
2. Have not been able to utilize existing resources, including SE, to successfully achieve CIE
3. Need a more intensive level of pre-employment intervention, beyond what SE offers, to assist them in developing a customized job to maximize their strengths, needs, conditions while meeting employer needs, etc.
4. Historically, have not been successful in engaging in the labor market driven approach
5. Need to engage in a more intensive job customization process in order to utilize their talents and meet their conditions to successfully achieve CIE

CE services can meet the needs of employment seekers, regardless of disability label, for whom more standard evaluative practices such as traditional vocational work assessments or typical community-based experiences used in Supported Employment (SE) are anticipated to:

1. Be insufficient for gathering the depth of information necessary to develop the vocational plan, i.e., not likely to lead to clear identification of strengths, skills, capacities, conditions, etc. that will become the foundation for job development
2. Reveal more gaps or factors the employment seeker cannot do than those they can do

**Implications for Vocational Rehabilitation:**

For job seekers who might not be able to successfully compete for an open job, CE offers a customized relationship based on discrete employer needs rather than job openings. CE also offers and opportunity for VR to focus on those individuals with the most significant impact of disability, typically served by developmental disability funding sources, job seekers who often need both a customized employment relationship and on-going supported employment services. Also, CE is designed to identify and address the unmet needs of the employer as part of the ‘customization’ process.

*REF: ‘Supported Employment/Customized Employment Matrix, The distinction between demand employment and a customized relationship’ A White Paper by Michael Callahan, March 2009*

*The contents of this publication were developed by the WINTAC (#H264G150005). However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.*

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