**Career Counseling for Individuals with Disabilities**

**Elements:**

1. Self-advocacy, self-determination and high expectations
2. Identify the individual’s desires for employment including type, pay, hours, benefits, etc.
3. Ensure informed choice
4. Review of any assessment information available
5. Primary employment factors
6. Strengths
7. Interests
8. Abilities
9. Capabilities
10. Resources
11. Priorities
12. Concerns
13. Informed Choice
14. Person-centered planning
15. Marketable skills
16. Soft skills (current and where development is needed)
17. Use of labor market information
18. In-demand occupations
19. Job exploration
20. Education and experiential requirements
21. Pay
22. Hours
23. Functional capacity requirements
24. Career pathways
25. Electronic resources and navigation fundamentals
26. SSA Benefits Planning

When engaging in career counseling with individuals with disabilities, rehabilitation professionals should ensure that they are aware of cultural differences and that they discuss the available options such as supported or customized employment. A discussion of the need for assistive technology or reasonable accommodation on the job is important to maximize the potential for success. It is helpful to assess the individual’s support system and to provide information on available resources for the individual.

**Information and Referrals to Other Programs**

What programs or agencies would be included in the phrase, “Federal and State programs and other resources in the individual’s geographic area that offer employment-related services and supports designed to enable the individual to explore, discover, experience, and attain competitive integrated employment?”

1. Other core partner programs in the Workforce Development System in the State
2. Title I adult, dislocated worker and youth programs (One-Stop Career Centers, now known as American Job Centers).
3. Title II programs – Adult Education and Literacy
4. Title III programs – Wagner-Peyser (often indistinguishable from Title I services). Disability Employment Initiative (DEI).
5. Community rehab programs that offer employment services.
6. Ticket to Work Employment Networks
7. Centers for Independent Living as appropriate
8. Developmental Disability Departments
9. Home and Community Based Waiver programs
10. Regional Centers (in some States)
11. Veterans’ Administration (as applicable)
12. Community College or secondary school programs in some areas, often through a third party cooperative arrangement with VR
13. Other local agencies in a service area, including some faith-based organizations

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