

## VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

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As special educators, the ultimate goal for all of our students is for them to reach the greatest level of sustainable independence possible to live fulfilled lives as contributing, responsible, and equal participants in society. All people benefit from the sense of pride and dignity that comes with serving a purpose and/or earning a paycheck. Focusing on independence and vocational training must be a primary goal for secondary special educators.

The information provided in this section of the portfolio encourages pushing students toward independence and vocational exploration. Regardless of the severity of a student's disability, we must find ways for all students to benefit from the satisfaction of having control over parts of their lives and/or some degree of independence and choices during daily routines. Becoming a contributing member of one's community will look different for individual students, but is equally important for all.

Although this section may seem like something to start in transition, like most areas of the Portfolio, the earlier you get started, the more comprehensive and prepared your student will be for life after school—the ultimate goal.

A combination of assessments will provide the most reliable information about your student's vocational interests. Therefore, the following forms will help build a comprehensive vocational portfolio for your students as they enter the workforce.

### **PREVOCATIONAL SKILLS/CHORES INVENTORIES AND SUMMARIES (SCHOOL AND FAMILY)**

To get started, review the Prevocational Skills and Chores Inventories so you can gain information about what work skills your student possesses and what the priority level is.

The Inventory Summaries act as a visual reminder of the specific areas to address and determine programming. Like the Quick Reference Forms, in order for the inventory information to be put to good use rather than lost in the Student Portfolio, we have included these summaries for use by team members working directly with the student throughout the day.

**NOTE:** Refer to the Portfolio section of the Assessment Teacher's Manual for complete instructions and samples of filled-out inventories.

### **STUDENT VOCATIONAL INTERVIEW**

A less formal way to gather information about a student's vocational interests is to interview the student about the types of activities he or she enjoys doing at home and in the community. The type of chores the student does at home may provide information that will further help identify the student's strengths as well as support needs when performing these tasks.

However, with students who have more significant disabilities, an interview format does not typically provide the most reliable information.

Using the interview format presents the same challenges as those found with using commercial interest inventories. Initially you are asking students—who generally have no work experience—to

identify jobs that interest them. Students who are non-verbal are often unable to answer most questions in an interview unless they are phrased as *either/or* questions, such as *Do you want to be a carpenter or a banker?* Even when phrased like this, you face the challenge of determining whether or not the student actually knows what a banker or carpenter does. Consequently, it is not recommended that you use an interview format for students who are nonverbal or who have more significant learning challenges. Instead, you will need to rely upon the other information gathered throughout this portfolio and observation. When doing this, make certain it is as much from the student's perspective as possible.

This interview is a sample with questions about generic interests and everyday (observable) skills rather than about specific work skills. Use this interview format with students who are verbal and who can reliably answer questions about their daily lives (i.e., what they do at home such as chores, about things they feel they do well, and more). You can also use pieces of this interview, combined with the Resume Worksheet, to gather information from IEP/ITP team members when doing a Person-Centered Plan for a student who has difficulty expressing himself or herself.

### **RESUME WORKSHEET**

Many young people with disabilities do not have a resume because often times it is difficult to know what to put on it. The misconception is that only prior paid competitive employment positions can be listed. This is not true. Employers understand that most young people do not have a wide variety of prior job experiences to list on a resume. What they are typically looking for is proof the person wants to work, and has taken steps to build work skills on his or her own.

This worksheet is intended to provide a place to gather less common, yet critical information to include on a resume. It is recommended both the teacher and the family fill this out. Whenever possible, it is also a good idea to ask a family friend or care provider and/or another educator (e.g., paraeducator, related service provider, past teacher) to fill out a copy. The more work-related information collected, the better!

### **RESUME POWERPOINT**

Creating an ongoing resume that is up-to-date is a great way to introduce a prospective employer to a potential hire. Many supported employment agencies are using this tool to successfully market their clients. The PowerPoint generally includes much of the same information found on a resume but it can also include pictures of the student working—providing a unique perspective that encourages employers to consider hiring a person with a disability.

Creating a visual resume of your goals, skills, and accomplishments can make your student stand out from other applicants. A visual resume is especially useful for students who may have difficulty discussing these points during a job interview. This format allows for deeper personalization by using pictures, graphics, and sound.

There are several examples of visual resumes that can be found online. Use the Student Vocational Interview and Resume Worksheet for your student to personalize the provided PowerPoint template (or create one using a program of your choice) and get creative with graphics and sound.

**RESUME WORKSHEET**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date updated: \_\_\_\_\_

This worksheet is one of many tools used to create a vocational portfolio, resume, and transition plan for your child/student. In order to accurately list all skills, attributes, and work experiences, we need information from the family, school, and student.

Please be assured, your child/student will have the opportunity to contribute directly during the student vocational interview process. It is recommended both the school and family (with input from the student as appropriate) fill out, add, and update this worksheet.

**I. PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. JOB OBJECTIVES**

What places do you think your child/student might be able to work that include his or her interests or things he or she likes to do?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

What type of work do you think he or she desires or would like to try?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything we need to know in order to keep your child/student safe at work?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

**III. SPECIAL COMPETENCIES**

This section will provide us with special personality traits and attributes to highlight on a resume, as well as, help provide direction for future job experiences.

What do you admire most about your child/student?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

What strengths/gifts does your child/student have that an employer would like?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

What strengths/gifts does your child/student have that co-workers would enjoy?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

What settings (environments, places, situations) do you think your child/student would do well in?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

What settings (environments, places, situations) do you think your child/student should avoid?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

What job or job shadowing experiences would you like your child/student to have?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. WORK SKILLS**

In this section, list all of the skills your child/student has that will help him or her become a successful employee. Some examples of skills are: using a computer, filing, cleaning, organizing, listening, taking care of pets/animals, money management, etc.

What work skills does your child/student have:

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

**V. HIGHLIGHTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Some examples of accomplishments might be: receiving a certificate, being a part of something (e.g., Special Olympics, swim team, community service group, or youth group), earning an award or honor at school or work, or getting recognized for something.

What accomplishments has your child/student earned that you are most proud of?

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. WORK EXPERIENCE AND VOLUNTEER HISTORY**

Include any experiences your child/student has had either as a volunteer or as a paid worker. Include school work experiences.

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Employed (months & years only) FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

**WORK EXPERIENCE AND VOLUNTEER HISTORY, CONT.**

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Employed (months & years only) FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Employed (months & years only) FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Employed (months & years only) FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**VII. EDUCATION**

Education includes the schools and/or training programs your child has attended.

High School Attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

Transition Program Attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

Degrees / Certificates / Licenses / Special Training, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**VIII. REFERENCES**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**REFERENCES, CONT.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



**STUDENT VOCATIONAL INTERVIEW**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are some things you like to do in your spare time?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are some of your special skills and talents?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. List the jobs/chores you do at home regularly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. List the jobs you have done away from home.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What paid jobs have you had? List the most recent job first.

Job/Duties: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Dates: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Job/Duties: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Dates: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Job/Duties: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Dates: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which jobs did you enjoy the most?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Which jobs were you best at?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. What do you think you might do after you finish high school?

Work:  Yes  No      What kind of work? \_\_\_\_\_

Work in your hometown:  Yes  No      Work out of town:  Yes  No

Military Service:  Yes  No      Community College:  Yes  No

Vocational Technical School:  Yes  No      College or University:  Yes  No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Would you like to take vocational classes in high school?  Yes  No

10. Are there any job experiences you would like to try?  Yes  No

11. Are there any jobs you would like to shadow for a day?  Yes  No

12. List three vocational classes/programs/job experiences in which you are most interested:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_