

# What is a job coach?

## Job Coaching for the Paraprofessional

- Transition Improvement Grant
- Pre-work Day 1



On behalf of the WI Department of Public Instruction and the Transition Improvement Grant, welcome to the second annual Job Coaching for the paraprofessional. My name is Alicia Reinhard and I am the Statewide Transition and Graduation consultant to the Special Education Team at DPI. One of the privileges I have in this role is serving as the Grant Director for TIG. The TIG team (or Tiggers as we like to call ourselves) and I are so excited to learn with you all over the next few days. To begin our training, the TIG team has developed a few pre-work topics that will ground us for the learning. We will begin with building an understanding of what a job coach?

# Job Coach or Paraprofessional



## *Paraprofessional*

*A multi-tasking  
educational rockstar  
who lives to inspire  
and loves  
to encourage. They're  
kind of a big deal.*



Before we dig in, however, I want to acknowledge that the role of a paraprofessional goes much deeper beyond a job coach or support staff. I found this quote describing the impact of a paraprofessional and I feel like it best describes the critical role of paraprofessionals in all learning environments. When I was teacher, the paraprofessionals I worked with would often go from job coach to teacher to counselor to advocate in a matter of minutes. Our training over the next few days will focus on supporting students in community based learning especially on the job, however we know your job does not end there. Thank you for all you do to help our students be successful!

# What is a “JOB COACH”?

A job coach is a person who uses structured techniques to assist individuals with disabilities to learn and accurately carry out job duties. Job coaches provide on-the-job training and support the individual to adjust to their chosen work environment. With this support, individuals are able to become independent employees that can maintain employment (NTACT, 2017).



As I mentioned previously, our training is going to specifically focus on strategies and resources for supporting students in the community and on the job. The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition or NTACT, defines a job coach as a person who uses structured techniques to assist individuals with disabilities to learn and accurately carry out job duties. Job coaches provide on the job training and support the individual to adjust to their chosen work environment. With this support, individuals are able to become independent employees that can maintain employment.

# Keys to Coaching

- Assist
- Learn
- On the job training AND support
- Independent employees



Reflecting on that definition, a few things stood out to me:

**Assist:** This is probably the primary role of a coach. An effective coach does not complete tasks for their student but rather provides assistance for them to learn to complete the task on their own.

**Learn:** The ultimate goal of coaching is independence. A job coach is continuously helping their student learn new skills to maintain their maximum level of independence.

**On the job/support:** This teaching and learning is not traditional in the sense of supporting a student in a classroom. This learning takes place away from the classroom, most likely in an environment the student will participate in as an adult.

**Independent employees:** An effective coach often coaches themselves “out of a job” and that is OK. Providing learning and support that leads to an independent employee, leads to better job retention, improved post school outcomes and effective use of resources for those who may need more support than others long term. That being said, each student is an individual and their level of independence will look different and involve different tasks, skills, supports etc.

While these key components, define a “job coach” there are many other qualities that make a paraprofessional an effective coach. Next, we will complete a self assessment that will help define each of your strengths and opportunities for improvement as a job

coach.

# Job Coaching Readiness Self Assessment

- Complete the assessment
  - 1 - being most challenging
  - 6- easy or an area of strength
- Begin building list of skills and strengths on back

**Job Coaching Readiness Self-Assessment**

This form will help you determine your strengths and the things you can work on to improve your success as a coach. On the scales below, circle the number that reflects how difficult you think each task will be for you. Circle 1 for "very challenging" and 6 for "very easy."

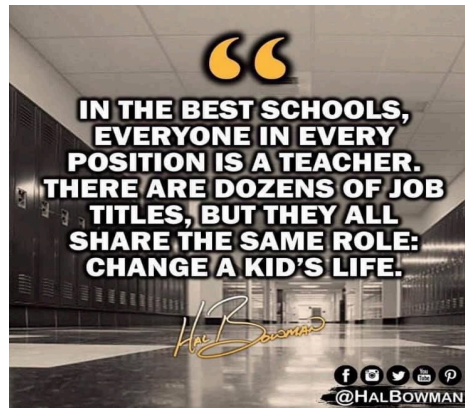
	Challenging					Easy
Box 1						
Prepare for each job coaching session.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Teach tasks according to company standards.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Check for trainee understanding.	1	2	3	4	5	6



To complete this section of your pre-work, we ask that you take approximately 10 minute to complete the Job Coaching Readiness Self-Assessment. If you click on the snip of the assessment, it will lead you to the assessment document. In addition, you will find this document in your resources for the pre-work today. The assessment uses a scale from 1 to 6. Circle 1 if the task is challenging to you and circle 6 if this task is easy and you feel confident in your ability complete this task on the job.

Finally, on page 2 of the document fill in the table with your current skills, experiences or certifications in regards to supporting students on the job. Keep track of your answers as we will use them in our first session tomorrow to connect a paraprofessional's role to the transition process.

# See you tomorrow!



Before I sign off a quick reminder that no matter your role or assignment as a paraprofessional you are also teachers. As the quotes states above, each person in a school building, or community learning for that matter, has an impact on each student's life!