



## Secondary Transition

# Customized Employment

Customized employment is a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer. Customized employment utilizes an individualized approach to employment planning and job development — one person at a time . . . one employer at a time.

Customized employment will often take the form of:

### Task Reassignment

Some of the job tasks of current staff are reassigned to a new employee. This reassignment allows the other employees time to focus on the critical functions of their jobs (i.e., primary job responsibilities) and complete more of the central work of the job. Task reassignment typically takes the form of job creation, whereby a new job description is negotiated based on current, unmet workplace needs.

### Job Carving

An existing job description is modified to contain one or more, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description.

### Job Sharing

Two or more people share the tasks and responsibilities of a job, based on each other's strengths.

### Self-Employment

Self-employment allows for an individual to receive assistance in the creation of an independently owned small business (typically a microenterprise, under five employees). This is based on the strengths and dreams of an individual and the unmet needs of a local market, while incorporating the individualized planning and support strategies needed for success.

Indicators of an educational program that supports customized employment:

- Job seekers interests drive employment outcomes
- Ongoing assessment and data collection to inform the process
- School administrator support
- Parental support
- Flexible scheduling to allow for community-based experiences
- Options to provide credit for experiences
- Program implementers who are highly qualified educators
- Trained, experienced job coaches/ employment specialists with a background in working with people with disabilities and engaging community employers
- Planned course of study to build employment skills
- Rich community/business relationships
- Post-employment follow-up
- Planning for transportation needs
- Planning for financial independence
- Provide connections to community agencies such as supports coordination, state vocational rehabilitation, mental health providers, and centers for independent living
- Consider accommodations and supports for the workplace, including technology through the Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

## What families can do to support good results in customized employment:

- Presume that the youth CAN work!
- Provide opportunities for responsibility at home
- Provide opportunities for community involvement and experience
- Provide models for positive work behaviors
- Provide opportunities for healthy living options
- Help youth understand disability, and self-advocacy
- Provide opportunities for building community networks
- Gain an understanding of Benefits Planning (SSI, SSDI, MA) and work incentive programs
- Actively participate in the individualized education program (IEP) meeting
- Plan for transportation needs
- Plan for financial independence
- Attend transition fairs and job fairs

## Resources for customized employment:

- **An Overview of Customized Employment**  
<https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/customizedemployment.htm>
- **Job Accommodations Network**  
<http://askjan.org/index.html>
- **Q & A on Customized Employment: Employment Negotiations**  
<https://vcrrtc.org/resources/viewContent.cfm/493>

