Welcome

...to the TBI Forum...
• We are
  – A place to share information and learn new things
  – A place to meet other interested persons
• We are **not**
  – A therapy group
  – A support group
  – The Doctor’s office
Ground Rules

Everybody gets a turn!

Try not to interrupt!

Questions of general interest!

Keep it short and sweet!
• Can I stay on the job?
• How am I doing physically in relation to job performance and fatigue?
• Do I have difficulties in thinking or with memory?
• Are there other difficulties affecting my working?
• Do I think I could perform with accommodation?
• Do I need to disclose to my employer?
Accommodation Self-Effectiveness:

• An individual with TBI:
  – Knows accommodation needs.
  – Understands accommodation under ADA.
  – Is encouraged to approach employer.
  – Role plays, following a model, an accommodation presentation.

• If accommodation needs are not known (including NP), seeks consultation.
Who Can Be an Accommodation Consultant?

- A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- A Speech and Language Pathologist
- A Neuropsychologist
- An Assistive Technologist
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
- Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC)
Reasonable Accommodations
A Categorical Perspective:

- Procedural Accommodations
- Work Station Accommodations
- Assistive Technology

Warren (2000)
Procedural Accommodations:

• Come to Work Early – difficult activities first, least complex last.

• Paid Co-Worker as Mentor – can best mentor on critical activities in early AM. Co-worker can actually handle critical incidents of a complex nature which slow worker down.

• Co-Worker Training Method – “Tell, Show, Watch, and Coach.”

  
  Curl et al. (1997)

  
  OR:

• Have Home Supervisor “Run Through” a work sample.

• Job Coach – transitioning to Paid Co-Worker as Trainer.
Procedural Accommodations (cont’d.):

- Reduce distractors – hold calls until certain segments of the day.
- In general, reduce disruptions / distractors - if disrupted, yellow “sticky note” or record of what one was doing.
- Reduce cognitive fatigue – rest breaks, lunch nap.
- Use priority lists – check lists.
Procedural Accommodations (cont’d.):

• In general, do least complex work last.

• Politely take some attentional control – ask that presentor “slow down” the speed at which information is being conveyed.

• Decreased workday or flex time.

• Restructure job.

• Flex Time / Telecommute
Work Station Modification:

• Work Product coming to station is optimal / simplified.

• Work Station is well organized (location of equipment, desk space, color-coded tool sequence, etc.).

• Telecommuting (home work station).
Assistive Technology:

- Recorded / Dictated Information
- Faxed Information
- E-mailed / Phone-mail messages
- Personal Digital Assists with alarms
- Microsoft Outlook calendar function / message sorting function
- Voice-activated Software
- Tailored Computer Software Programs for Customer Service, etc.
Employer Disclosure Script

Clarity!
Succinct!
Practice!

My script:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Need to Stabilize Medically, What are My Options?

- Vacation, Sick leave
- Family Medical Leave Act
- Short-Term Disability
- Unpaid leave –
  - Be Creative?
I Need to Find a New Job, What are My Resources?

- State DVR (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- WorkSource: State Employment Agency
- Professional Trade Associations
- College / Training Facility Placement Offices
- Professional Placement Services
- Websites – UWMSRRTC, Craig’s List, Indeed.com, NWjobs
State Vocational Rehabilitation

- Go prepared with Med / NP documentation.
- May need to wait – order of selection.
- Persistence! Persistence! Persistence! *Persistence!*
- Work with a “name.”
What Can State Vocational Rehabilitation Really Do for You?

- Vocational Assessment
- Neuropsychological Testing
- Specialty Consultations, not covered by insurance to include psychotherapy
- Retraining
- Direct Job Placement / Tryouts
- OJT Money
- Sundries (transportation, clothing for interviews, etc.)
- Assistive Technology Consultations
1993 U.S. Department of Labor
Waiver on Unpaid Work

- Vocational exploration 5 hrs.
- Vocational assessment 90 hrs.
- Vocational training 120 hrs.

Total: 215 hrs.
In Addition to the Non-Paid Tryout, What Other Incentives Might You Offer an Employer?

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- On-the-job-training
- Selective Certification
- Job Coaching / Co-Worker as Mentor support
- Barrier removal tax credits / deductions
Employment Resources:

- Do some temporary work (temp-to-perm).
- Networks – Church, Community, etc.
- Chambers of Commerce.
- Fraternal / Charitable Organizations (e.g., Rotary), etc.
- Career Counselors.
- Projects With Industry (NVS).
Reducing Social Isolation – Mood Management:

- Health club – YMCA / YWCA scholarships
- Volunteer work
- Support groups
- Religious groups
- Community groups – Special interests
- Exercise-related
Securing Social Support:

- Finding friends
- Bartering for support
- Tapping volunteer resources (United Way, seniors, church groups, high school, community service)
Transportation:

- Bus pass
- City / County Access programs
- Tapping volunteer sources
- Neighbor / Community drivers

Don’t Be Shy Here!
Doing Your Own Work!

- Do you have your specific job goals identified?
- Geographical area – even neighborhood specific?
- Your important work values identified?
- Potential contacts who can help you secure position?
It is in One’s Best Interests to Utilize All Medical, Neuropsychological and Financial Status Info in Making Pro-Active Vocational Steps!
Disclosure to the Employer?

- On the Job Application
- During an Interview
- After the Interview
- After Offered the Job
- After You Start Work
- After a Disability Relapse
Getting Informational Interviews – A Systematic Process
Informational Interview Format:

- Be able to describe your experience / skills, qualities as a worker, and your goals (3-4 minutes).
- Have questions prepared to ask the interviewer – read annual report, web information, key info about company.
- Ask for résumé feedback in relation to company needs.
- Would any company positions fit now or in the future?
- If not, potential external contacts?
Finances:

- DSHS-GAU
- SSI
- SSDI
- Emergent Funds
- Short / Long-Term Disability
- Food Stamps
- (Salvation Army, Religious Organizations, Food Banks)
Social Security Issues:

- 9-month Work Trial (SSDI)
- PASS plan (SSDI)
- IWRE plan (SSI)
- AmeriCorps
Can’t Work – Applying for SSDI! What are the Issues?

- Maintaining Insurance
- Maintaining Your Income Stream
- Securing SSDI and Working Part-Time < $940 / month
- Individual Work-Related Expenses (IWRE) Lowers Income
Social Security Disability Income (SSDI):

- Based upon the number of credits you’ve earned, if over 31 you need 20 credits in the last 10 years (earn up to 4 credits per year).
- SSDI is often not granted with the first application.
- When granted, benefits begin at 6 months from when you became disabled.
- If no other coverage, awarded Medicare benefits in 2 years.
- IWRE Expenses – can earn < $940.
Social Security Income (SSI):

- Available if you haven’t worked / don’t qualify for SSDI
- Excess savings / income can be put in an Income Cap Trust for you to qualify (not exceed cut off) for Medicaid
- Monthly payment ~ $564
- PASS Plan for work-related costs subtracted from earnings
Financial Debt:

- Bankruptcy, Chapter 7
- Bankruptcy, Chapter 13
- Debt Consolidation
Assess Your Financial Picture!
Think Out of the Box!
Budget!
Benny the Planner vs. Gerry the Non-Planner
In Closing, Remember Accommodations Resources:

- JAN: www.jan.wvu.edu
  1-800-526-7234

- DBTAC: 1-800-949-4232

- EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION:
  www.eoc.gov
  1-800-669-EEOC (-3362)