

## Book Reviews

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**Cary Griffin, David Hammis and Tammara Geary,** *The Job Developer's Handbook: Practical Tactics for Customized Employment*, P.H. Brookes Publishing Co., Baltimore, MD, 2007. ISBN 9781557668639

Making Customized Employment Work is a topic heading used early in the introductory chapter of *The Job Developer's Handbook: Practical Tactics for Customized Employment* by Cary Griffin, David Hammis, and Tammara Geary. It is a fitting summary statement on the guiding theme and content for this most timely and invaluable handbook for practitioners on customized employment. The Handbook is truly a complete and detailed step-by-step guide and provides a valid and constructive contribution to the existing literature addressing the employment of individuals with disabilities.

The authors present a realistic, historical context of the continued underutilization and funding of supported employment/community based employment in comparison to segregated programs. Griffin, Hammis and Geary describe a legacy in which individuals with disabilities have experienced persistent, vocational and social exclusivity. This historical inequity, coupled with the fiscal and outcome efficacy of employment approaches that focus upon getting people out into their communities, are a compelling argument for inclusion.

Building upon the best practices of supported employment and person-centered planning, the authors offer a definition of customized employment presented by the Office of Disability Employment Policy. Customized employment means:

“... individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs and interests of the person with a disability, and designed to meet the specific needs of the employer.”

They pragmatically contend that the labor market has almost no impact on the employment rate of people with disabilities. Good job development techniques will reduce the stigma associated with people with disabilities and positively affect access to the labor market.

Furthermore, by focusing job development efforts upon small businesses, employment results will be enhanced.

The hallmark of customized employment is the negotiated job. Customized employment has demonstrated potential to capitalize on the abilities and interests of a variety of individuals with disabilities who have to date faced significant challenges in securing employment. The potential of customized employment is grounded in recapturing the zero exclusion value commitment found in the presumption of ability articulated in the Rehabilitation Act. The authors view the tools and techniques used in the employment process as malleable; building upon earlier generations of application in an effort toward continual refinement. There is a pathway to employment for each person for whom employment is a personal goal. This pathway is marked by a number of key stepping stones, which include:

- Using a *discovery* emphasis as a first step in a person centered approach to supporting an individual with a disability in developing an employment goal and plan. The purpose of discovery is to build a foundation of accurate and useful information upon which person centered employment plans can be based.
- Focusing *job matching and analysis* on creating the best possible working conditions for an individual. Included in this matching and analysis process are identification of any modifications and employment-related supports needed for the person to be successful. By exploring the ecology of a worksite and determining the goodness of fit to the job seeker job retention will be enhanced.
- Following a *person-centered job development* strategy that seeks out job possibilities that potentially do not exist in the traditional job market but that can be identified and negotiated with employers.
- Putting in place *active and effective employer councils* that leverage the networking power in the community.
- Using a variety of tools such as *resource ownership, interest-based negotiations, and job carving*

to create/maximize job opportunities matched to a person's abilities and interests. Resource Ownership is described as self-determined economic development that is a mutually beneficial process that can be profitable for the employer and provide competitive wages for the employee. Interest based negotiation, problem solving and conflict management are used to meet the needs of both the job seeker and the employer. Job carving accesses the "hidden" job market and utilizes the unique abilities of the job seeker while fulfilling employer needs.

- Understanding and utilizing *Social Security Work Incentives* as a powerful tool integral to supporting customized employment. This includes building relationships with benefits planners.
- *Supporting families* as active partners and creating a working alliance in the employment process.

Finally, the authors stress a critically important topic frequently overlooked in guides for practitioners, organizational commitment. The final chapter is titled *Organizational Commitment to Customized Employment: The Role of Leadership in Facilitating Careers*. A commitment to a true zero exclusion approach is an organizational commitment that is not limited to a particular unit or staff team within an organization. Effective applications of customized employment occur most consistently in organizations where leadership is committed to assisting each person realize his/her employment goals.

The process of system transformation begins with changing the image that society holds of people with disabilities as marginalized members and concurrently improving the marketing image of the programs (special education, community rehabilitation programs etc.) that provide services to individuals with disabilities. The authors challenge organizations to engage in transformational leadership to facilitate careers and to pursue social capital by: establishing partnerships and collaborations anticipating mutual benefit; practicing the politics of cooperation and supporting people and places versus structures.

The format is user-friendly and offers applicable scenarios, check-lists, and forms.

Each of the topics in this Handbook is described with clarity and detail using practical explanations and examples with individuals who have successfully entered employment through a customized employment approach. Resource materials and formats such as a protocol for completing a job analysis and for a customized employment management plan are included.

A sample Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) is provided.

This guide is exciting and should empower service providers to engage in a process of discovery that is mutually beneficial to the job seeker as well as the employer.

The Job Developer's handbook is a "must have" for pre-service professional development, new and seasoned employment specialists, as well as managers who work to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities. It is a complete reference and how-to guide on Customized Employment. Those who follow the very clear pathway to successful job outcomes described in this publication will make customized employment work.

Amy J. Armstrong, Ph.D, CRC  
Grant Revell, M.S., M.E.  
VCR-RRTC  
Richmond, VA 23284, USA

**Anthony M. Gamboa, Jr. and David S. Gibson**, *The New Work Life Expectancy Tables: Revised 2006; By Gender, Level of Educational Attainment, and Level of Disability*, Vocational Econometrics, Inc., Louisville, KY, 2006.

Vocational rehabilitation counselors engaged in forensic activity regarding loss of earnings potential can be quite competent in assessing loss in annual salary or hourly wage, but the perspective of work life expectancy for an individual with disability or consistency over a lifetime of actual work force engagement often receive less attention. Worklife expectancy involves the total number of years that a person is expected to be both alive and actually employed. As opposed to assuming active work status until a given age, work life expectancy as presented by these researchers is a statistical probability and utilizes U.S. Department of the Census data to provide a worklife expectancy value most like the individual to whom the value is assigned. The tables presented in this text can be appropriately utilized by vocational rehabilitation forensic experts and consultants to more accurately assess both pre-injury and post-injury work life expectancy. The U.S. Census Bureau conducts multiple surveys that assess the impact of disability on employment. Two of these surveys are the Current Population Survey (CPS), which assesses the impact of work disability, and the American Community Survey (ACS), which assesses the impact of diverse disability (e.g., physical, cognitive).

The revised 2006 edition of *The New Worklife Expectancy Tables* from Vocational Econometrics, Inc. provides significant changes from previous editions. The authors, A.M. Gamboa, Jr., PhD, MBA and David S. Gibson, MBA, CPA, provide for the first time worklife expectancies specific to functional limitation that include both physical (e.g., walking, lifting, etc.) and cognitive (e.g., learning, concentrating or remembering) disability. Also, worklife probability software is available which delineates the actual probabilities of life and employment used to calculate worklife expectancy values.

As in previous additions, the 2006 Tables provide worklife estimates based on the concept of “work disability” as defined by the US Census Bureau in the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS disability data classifications range from nondisabled to severely disabled.<sup>1</sup>

The worklife estimates derived from the newer American Community Survey (ACS)<sup>2</sup> for persons with functional limitations represent the most notable feature of the new Tables and provide a fresh perspective on the effect of physical and cognitive limitations on employment. In addition, the authors generate worklife expectancy estimates for those defined as having severe physical or cognitive limitations. The category is created by combining limitations associated with ‘self-care’ and/or ‘going outside the home alone’ with physical or cognitive limitations.

The format utilized in the new Tables is similar to previous editions. After a brief introduction there are sections devoted to the following: worklife expectancy models, data sources, use and misuse of Tables, and challenge issues.

Worklife estimates are disaggregated by age (16–75), by education (less than high school up to baccalaureate plus), by gender, and by disability status. The Tables present worklife estimates derived from the CPS under the following categories: nondisabled, all persons (nondisabled and disabled), not severely disabled, severely disabled, and all disabled. ACS derived worklife estimates are categorized as follows: nondisabled, all persons, physical disability only, physical disability severe, cognitive disability only, and cognitive disability severe. One should note that the CPS disability classifications “not severely disabled” and “severely disabled” are categories defined by the Department

of Commerce,<sup>3</sup> whereas the ACS disability classifications “physical severe” and “cognitive severe” were developed by Vocational Econometrics [1, pp. 23–28] as previously discussed.

The Tables present worklife estimates derived from the CPS and the ACS side-by-side which allows the reader an opportunity for quick and easy comparisons.

Since 1981, an expanded version of the CPS present employment rates for persons with and without a disability.<sup>4</sup> These rates provide the building blocks for the work disability worklife estimates provided in the Tables. Disability policy researchers have relied on the CPS data to examine the effect of disability on the US population and to provide policy and program options to the government and others. When the Census Bureau first published disability data from the expanded CPS it noted:

One of the issues that this country has tried to address through the Federal statistical system is the extent to which persons with a disability are able to discourage discrimination and encourage training and rehabilitation, but the success of these programs and policies cannot be measured without some type of statistical monitoring system. Statistics on persons with a disability are obtained from two sources: program statistics and household surveys. While the former source is critical for certain purposes, the basic unit in a statistical monitoring system must be household surveys. Only through household surveys is it possible to learn how their situation changes over time [2].

While the CPS disability data has received widespread acceptance and utilization in the field of disability research, it has been the focus of criticism by some in the field of forensic economics. The challenge issues section of the Tables addresses these critiques noting that there is broad support for use of the CPS disability data to examine the labor force status (employment rates) of persons with a disability, and that both the CPS and the ACS disability data clearly meet the requirements of US Supreme Court decisions in *Daubert* and *Kumho* [1, pp. 49–58].

As noted, the Tables provide worklife expectancy estimates based on ACS data for persons with functional limitations. The questions used to identify persons with a disability are the same as those used in the 2000 Decennial Census and very similar to those under con-

<sup>1</sup><http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/disabcps.html>.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Sbasics/index.htm>.

<sup>3</sup><http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/disabcps.html>.

<sup>4</sup><http://www.census.gov/cps/>.

sideration by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to meet its mandate under Executive Order 13078. The Order requires BLS to develop prevalence statistics for persons defined as disabled under the Americans with Disability Act.

Vocational experts assessing earning capacity before and after injury have traditionally examined disability from the perspective of whether or not there exists a reduction in physical or cognitive function as a result of impairment. From a forensic perspective, the prime vocational issue in question is whether or not a person with a disability can work and, if so, what kind of work that person can perform. Since the Tables provide worklife estimates for the persons with a disability by physical or cognitive function, these estimates should provide valuable insight to the vocational expert regarding not only on the impact of disability on the probability of employment, but also in an issue equally important, namely, the duration of employment over a lifetime. This can be a dramatically more important issue than post-injury projected salary level.

The Tables use the Life, Participation, Employment method to calculate worklife. As a result, the appendices presented in the Tables also provide a forensic economist with the joint probability of participation and employment (employment rates) by age. This allows a more statistically accurate method for discounting to present value than that provided by most worklife expectancy models.

*The New Worklife Expectancy Tables* provide yet another illustration of the difficulties encountered by persons with disability vis-à-vis labor force participation and employment. Vocational Rehabilitation experts and forensic economists are keenly aware that the era of Daubert and Kumho requires a scientific basis for estimation of lost earnings. Assessments lacking this firm scientific foundation are subject to challenge. From this perspective, it is particularly notable that every large survey that attempts to measure the impact of disability

shows significant impacts in earnings and employment. Despite all the evidence to the contrary, many analyses of lost earning capacity consider the impact of disability on earnings, but fail to recognize the impact on the consistency of employment or actual work engagement over a lifetime (worklife expectancy). *The New Worklife Expectancy Tables* provide the only barometer to gauge such a measurement, and as such, to provide an evidenced-based foundation for assessing the impact of disability on worklife.

It is important to remember that the worklife estimates are averages specific to age, gender, education, type of disability (work, physical, cognitive) and severity of disability (non-severe to severe). These averages, based upon individuals' work histories and other variables, may be modified by vocational rehabilitation expert opinion. It is the clinical judgment of the vocational rehabilitation expert, combined within the context of the statistical average, that provides a more likely than not future estimate of worklife expectancy specific to a particular individual with a disability.

## References

- [1] G.M. Anthony, Jr. and D.S. Gibson, *The New Worklife Expectancy Tables: Revised 2006; By Gender, Level of Educational Attainment, and Level of Disability*. Louisville, KY: Vocational Econometrics, Inc., 2006.
- [2] US Census Bureau, *Labor Force Status and Other Characteristics of Persons With a Work Disability: 1982. Current Populations Reports, P23-127*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1983.

*Robert T. Fraser, Ph.D.*

Associates in Rehabilitation & Neuropsychology  
1600 East Jefferson Street, Suite 602  
Seattle, WA 98122, USA  
Tel.: +1 206 320 3888  
Fax: +1 206 320 3865  
E-mail: rfraser@u.washington.edu