Capturing discovery through the use of a Profile Document

Positive paper for persons with significant complexities
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Discovery: Charting the Course to Employment

Translating the activities of everyday lives into possibilities for employment.

A Strategy to Provide the Foundation for Customized Employment Planning for Persons with Complex Lives

by Michael Callahan, Norciva Shumpert, and Ellen Condon

Marc Gold & Associates Employment for All

Profiles: Capturing the Information of Discovery

Painting a descriptive picture of a person in words and images.

by Michael Callahan, Norciva Shumpert, and Ellen Condon

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What is a Profile?

- A Profile is a descriptive picture of a person with a disability developed through the process of discovery.
- A Profile involves:
  - a) positive and useful information,
  - b) a format that delineates the information
  - c) an optimistic, narrative report
- A Profile provides an opportunity to see possibilities for the individual.
What is a Profile?

• The Profile document provides an alternative format to the traditional evaluation reports that test and compare persons with complexities to general standards and to others.

• The Profile document allows service providers and funding agencies to see possibilities for the individual.
What is a Profile?

• A Profile is a document that represents the best and most meaningful aspects of a person’s life.
• A Profile is the foundation -- the information source-- for all person-centered, person-directed plans.
• A Profile is a document that requires updates prior to planning to assure it is still an accurate “picture” of the person.
• A Profile is not a plan, but rather the discovery component of any effective plan.
Why do a Profile?

- To discover all relevant aspects of the job seeker’s life, including the complexity of their disability.
- To capture the array of skills that are used in job development efforts.
- To collect the job seeker’s conditions, interests and potential contributions for employment.
Why do a Profile?

- To describe the job seeker in a manner which prepares the job developer to effectively negotiate personalized job descriptions with employers.
- To provide the foundation for employment planning by “putting together the puzzle pieces” in a manner so that the job seeker can be understood by all who participate in the planning process.
Collecting and organizing information

- Formal discovery notes
- Photos, video clips
- Informal descriptive notes
- Interview responses
- “Typical person” inventories
- Examples of individual performance
- Clippings, trophies, certificates, memorabilia
Collecting and organizing information

It makes writing easier if information is collected during discovery and organized in a folder or other device that allows an array of documents and other items to be added to as they occur.

When the facilitator begins to write the profile, this information source can be used to address the specifics of the form to tell the person’s story.
CRP “Discovery” Journey

• Observations/conversation/interviews
• Threads – Pieces of information that link together
• Pattern – “a way the job seeker does something” in this environment
• Translation into Characteristics of Work
Focus of Parts of the Profile

• Part I: Developing identification information necessary to get started
• Part II: Describing the individual across an array of life domains
• Part III: Summarizing the information discovered during Part II as a preparation for the customized plan
When to write the Profile?

_Immediately following the initial meeting:_

Part I of the Profile, the Intake Interview, is completed immediately following the initial meeting with the job seeker and family, as appropriate. This brief section provides the necessary information to connect the living situation of the individual with the local community as well as providing all contact information and a factual outline of education and employment experiences.
When to write the Profile?

**During Discovery:**

Most facilitators prefer to begin writing the profile while still in the process of discovery. This is acceptable but it is important to only address information contained in Part II, the Discovery Profile, at this time. Part III, the Plan Preparation Summary, should not be written until discovery is complete and the Discovery Profile is fully developed. Be sure to make space for additional information learned at a later time in discovery.
When to write the Profile?

**Following the completion of discovery**

Some facilitators chose to wait until discovery has been completed to write both Parts II & III of the profile. This is completely acceptable and allows for all the information to be gathered prior to writing. It is important to wait to write Part III until all of Part II has been completed. It is also important to organize all notes and other materials of discovery during the process so that all resources are available during the writing phase. Be sure to use the sample profile and the guide when writing.
Discovery can lead to a Profile document which is:

- **Narrative:** *It uses complete sentences to describe the person.*
- **Comprehensive:** *It covers all relevant areas of the person’s life relating to employment.*
- **Robust:** *It fully develops aspects of the person’s life so that contributions and qualities can be translated to employers.*
Discovery leads to a Profile document which is:

- **Respectful**: It belongs to the individual and therefore treats carefully the intimate information which is developed.
- **Non-Competitive**: It does not require comparison against any arbitrary norm, skill or other person.
- **Optimistic**: It focuses on the best of who people are rather than on difficulties or shortcomings.
Discovery leads to a Profile document which is:

- **Descriptive**: *It describes the individual and carefully avoids any evaluative or opinion-based statements.*

This is perhaps the most important characteristic of the profile in that all persons can be described, regardless of the significance of their disability.
Help on being Descriptive

• Describe the picture you see in your head.

• By using action verbs, in the present tense, you will begin to think and write descriptively

• Avoid using adverbs they tend to be evaluative – what would you say instead of “quickly”?
Descriptiveness ▶ Competence

By focusing on a description of the performance of the individual, without the evaluative lens of ourselves and others, we have a chance to begin to see possibilities for competence and skills that might be offered to employers.

This is made possible due to the fact that descriptiveness gets at the concrete actions of the individual. These actions have a direct connection to tasks needed by employer.
Observational notes

Task description in the following 5 areas

1. Set up of the tasks—what is the task, how long do they do the task (frequency in hours, weeks, months), how long to get at current performance.

2. Interests = smiles, asking or talking about it, sits and only goes if asked

3. Contributions=identifying existing tasks or activities and consider the following:
   a. Skills
   b. Experiences
   c. Personality characteristics
   d. Credentials
   e. References
Observational notes
Task description in the following 5 areas

3. Supports = environmental both physical and social

4. Connections to the task = persons they do the task with

5. Performance of the task
   a. Pace without evaluation = describe how long to do the task
   b. Consistency of the task
   c. Quality of the task
   d. Stamina
   e. Method of correctness (way they were taught)
Focus on performance

The best way to write descriptively is to focus on observable behavior of the individual – the person’s performance. Since the profile is by nature an optimistic document, the focus should be on competence rather than on deficits.

When an individual’s challenges threaten to compromise the chance for competent behavior, describe the actual behavior and the solutions that work.
Action verbs that describe performance

• Picks up, combines, grasps, lifts, walks, places, cuts

• Rotates, pushes, swings, removes, turns on, types, wipes

• Opens, closes, inserts, sits, stands, says, faces, stoops, climbs
Profile Components

1. Part I of the Profile is facts about the job seeker (no negative)
2. Part II of the Profile is “description of the job seeker at their best”
   - Observations identify *threads*
   - Conversation and further observation clarify a thread is a *pattern* of the job seeker
   - *Pattern* is “how the Job Seeker does a task” or gets something accomplished for themselves
   b. Part II of the Profile = sensitive section
3. Part III = Translated description to “ideal characteristics of work”
   - Interests, contributions, and conditions
Using the Profile Forms

The profile format is basically an outline of a set of categories that, taken together, provide sufficient information for the development of a customized plan for employment.

The profile is divided into three parts: I. The Profile Intake Summary; II. The Discovery Profile; and, III. The Plan Preparation Summary. We recommend that the profile be developed in sequence with Part I to be completed following the initial discovery meeting, Part II completed during discovery and Part III completed following the conclusion of Discovery.
The structure of the Profile Form

• Parts of the Profile
• Categories of the profile
• Sub-categories of the profile
• Sensitive/private information – who will that be shared with
• Using the sample profile to develop your document
• Using the profile guide to help target necessary information
Developing the Profile Documents

The Profile consists of three distinct parts that are developed as different times during discovery:

- Part I: The Interview Intake Form
- Part II: The Discovery Profile
- Part III: The Plan Preparation Summary

Each Part plays a unique role in capturing the information of discovery.
Part I: The Intake Interview Form

This form is filled in during or just following Steps 1 – 4 of the Steps to Discovery. The information contained in this component is factual and can be obtained through interviews with the job seeker and family and/or by scanning existing documentation. This is general information written in a typical professional style. Read the sample and guide for Part I for more information.
Part II: The Discovery Profile

This component of the profile form contains the description of life domains that provides the necessary information for the translation and summarization aspects of Part III. Facilitators are encouraged to provide a descriptive picture of the individual free of personal opinions, presumptions and evaluations.
Section 1: Individual and Family

This information connects the individual to family and their community.

In this section you summarize the basic background information from the family during the initial visit from Part I and then use descriptiveness to capture daily routines, responsibilities, personal health and similar issues.
CRP “Discovery” Journey

• Observations/conversation/interviews
• Threads – Pieces of information that link together
• Pattern – “a way the job seeker does something” in this environment
• Translation into Characteristics of Work
Part II: Section 1

1. Individual and Family
   a. Brief summary based on Intake Interview
   b. Description of typical routines:
   c. Family supports:
   d. Family and Personal Responsibilities:
   e. Physical and health related issues:
Routine Chart

- People to interview
- Tasks to observe: skill/complexity, interest
- Place to go with to observe
- Free time activity
- Responsibilities
- Performance of responsibilities
- Connections
Routines

• Fatigue points
• Time at their best
• Available time to work
• Time they do not want to miss ***
• Full days vs empty days
Profile Part II
Section I, Number 1b

b. **Description of typical routines**: This item describes what perhaps is the most defining aspect of people’s lives -- what they do during a typical day.

- supports the individual needs, any specific strategies which the family uses to support the person to be more independent, and specific skills and contributions the individual may be demonstrating.
- Weekend and week day description of routine
- Describe the activities that the person participates in including their free time.
- Questions or prompts such as “Tell me how this happens.” or “Take me through a typical day from getting up to going to bed.”
Profile Part II
Section I, Number 1c & 1d

c. Family supports:
– What does the family do now to support? Scheduling appointments?
– What has the family expressed they could do?
– Are there other family members or neighbors who provide support?

d. Family and Personal Responsibilities:
– Describes the realities and responsibilities.
– Note logistical chores and tasks performed, transportation schedules, family care responsibilities
d. Family and Personal Responsibilities:

Bart, John’s dad, has a federal job that involves him working a typical five day week, from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Bart spends one to two days per week at Elmendorff Air Force Base, approximately, 15 miles from Eagle River and the remainder of his time in Palmer, about 40 miles from Eagle River. He drives his truck to work leaving the house at about 7:30 AM and returning at 5:30 PM. Doris works mornings, four days per week -- Tuesday – Friday -- in Anchorage, about 25 miles away. Doris leaves at 8:00 AM, after the kids get on their bus for school, and she returns by 1:00 PM, in order to be at home when the children return around 3:00 PM. John does not have set formal responsibilities at home other than the expectation that he complete his homework before watching television or movies.
Profile Part II
Section I, Number 1e

e. Physical and health related issues:
   – Does the individual have any health factors that need to be considered in planning for employment?
   – Are there any allergies?
   – Does the person take meds at a specific time of day that make them drowsy?
   – Are there any health restrictions to be considered when choosing future places of employment?
Section 2: Educational Experiences

This section addresses the academic experiences of the individual. Be sure to distinguish the areas covered as during the *school experience only*.

This section is of particular importance if the job seeker is 25 years old or younger. If the person is 30 years old or younger, just hit the high points with this area. If the individual is over 30, simply focus on credentials, reflections, etc.
Profile Part II
Section II, Number 2a

Section II: this section addresses school, uniquely; the other sections address life outside of school.

2. Educational Experiences
Overall Educational Experiences:
- List the general academic experience the person had in school.
- Were they in an inclusive or in a self-contained class?
- Have they participated with the same class of students throughout school?
- Have they been served consistently by the same special education staff or has their education been disrupted by many moves from state to state and between school systems?
- List any relevant information about attendance or classes of special interest.
- Were any particular accommodations that the individual used?
Part II, Section 2

2. Educational Experiences
   a. Overall Educational Experiences
   b. Academic Programming
   c. Community/Recreation Programming
   d. Vocational Experiences and Programming
b. Academic Programming:
   - Describe specifics regarding course work, academic focus, areas of strengths and interests and other aspects of academic programming

c. Community/Recreation Programming:
   - What type of training or experiences did the person participate in re: community access? Describe the activity; performance, what supports were provided; was there anything about their performance which
   - What type of training or experiences did the person participate in regarding recreation or leisure activities?
d. Vocational Experiences and Programming: What type of vocational programming or instruction has the person participated in?

“In his junior year of school he participated in a jobs class where a group of students with disabilities talked about social skills necessary to maintain employment.” “During his last year of high school he rotated through 3 established job sites, lasting one week each, to gain more information about his preferences for work.” “Once a week he went with a group of three other students to the Humane Society where they walked dogs with teacher supervision”

(Don’t state that the person needed a 1:1, instead describe what the job coach or coworker needed to provide in terms of support.)
Section 3: Employment and Related Activity

This area should start at home and include any employment experiences from school or other sites. This section is particularly important area for translation of conditions, interests and contributions.

Be sure to distinguish the various categories under this section as each targets a unique aspect of work and employment. Focus on discrete tasks performed, indications of interests and conditions for success.
3. Employment Related:
   a. Informal work performed at home and for others
      o Motivation for interest
      o Performance
   b. Formal Chores and family responsibilities:
      o Personality characteristics
      o Conditions for success
   c. Entrepreneurial activities
      o Note if someone has asked them to sell or make them something
   d. Internships, structured work experiences, volunteering:
      o Give basic info; place, job duties, time frame there (yr, mo, weeks and hours per day, days per week plus a description of one of the best tasks
   e. Wage employment
   f. General areas of previous work interest
      o This is a notation without “asking” the job seeker
b. Entrepreneurial activities
   – Earning money outside of wage employment., include informal activities such as occasional lawn mowing, baby sitting, pet sitting, etc

c. Internships, structured work experiences:
   – all the formal experiences of the individual that were designed to provide preparation for employment, including sheltered employment and volunteer work.
   – Location, length of time on site, tasks, description of tasks; performance, interest, supports, connections, skill used or learned
Section 4: Life Activities and Experiences

This section examines the non-work aspect of the individual’s life. Pay particular attention to activities performed at the person’s discretion. Look for embedded skills, connections, interactions and other subtleties.

If you find that people do not have many activities in these areas, use discovery time to begin new activities that might turn into hobbies and favored activities.
Part II, Section 4

4. Live Activities and Experiences

a. Friends and social group(s):

b. Personal hobbies and other personal activities performed at home:

c. Family hobbies and other family activities performed at home:

d. Personal hobbies activities personal activities performed in the community:

e. Family activities performed in the community:

f. Specific events and activities that are of critical importance:
This section provides a scan of the component performance areas of life through the lens of discrete skills, conditions for success and indications of strong interests that might provide a lead to the labor market.

It is important to maintain descriptiveness while writing in this area. Pay close attention to the person’s most reliable strengths.

Who is this person?
Part II, Section 5

a. Domestic/Home:

b. Community participation:

c. Recreation/leisure activities:

d. Academic:

e. Physical fitness:

f. Arts and Talents:

g. Communication:

h. Social interaction:

i. Mobility

j. Sensory (sight, hearing, smell, touch)

k. Vocational:
Profile Part II
Section 5, Number 5a

Section 5: the “heart” of the profile.
Description of Skills, Interests and Conditions in Live Activities:

a. Domestic/Home

– Choose 2-4 areas for focus that provide the richest information about the person, their skills and abilities, and their support needs.
– Describe performance in relation to cooking, cleaning, home maintenance and other tasks that are strengths of the individual.
b. Community participation: based upon what you discovered while participating in familiar and unfamiliar activities with the person.

- How did the person perform at a restaurant,
- How did they communicate what they wanted to order, what assistance did they need in ordering,
- What support did someone who knew them well (or you) provide to them to assist them to participate in the activity?
- Were they safety conscious while crossing streets?
Profile Part II
Section V, Number 5c and 5d

c. Recreation/leisure activities:
   – Note any skills they may have demonstrated in earlier sections; Education, Life Activities
   – Provide an example of the skills with performance notes

d. Academic: Note functional academic skills that relate to life performance in areas such as reading, math, time, money, etc.
   – “When Carley doesn’t understand a word, she will initiate copying the word letter by letter into her touch talker and then press the speak button. The device then reads to word to her.” or, “To review her bank balance Emily obtains her ATM card from her wallet, performs a search on her computer for the bank, copies the name of the bank from the card and inputs it into the computer. When the computer prompts for the account number she again copies the information from her bank card and then hits enter to view the balances of her accounts.”
   – NO test scores
e. Physical fitness
   – the best aspects of the individual’s fitness, stamina, strength, coordination, speed, etc.

f. Arts and Talents:
   – description of the person’s unique artistic abilities, talents and “knacks” that might be used to provide direction for future employment.
   – Rather than evaluating the outcomes in this area, quote the comments of people who know and work with the individual and who are appreciative of their talent.
g. Communication

- *Familiar persons or strangers*
- *Expressing their needs*
- *Understanding information*
- Examples offer the best clarity
Profile Part II
Section V, Number 5h and 5i

h. Social interaction:
   – With familiar people and with strangers
   – In large groups, defined by observation
   – In small groups also defined

i. Mobility:
   – walking, moving in a wheelchair, running, etc
   – For example, “Chase uses his right hand to do activities while he uses his left to stabilized or hold something. When typing on a standard keyboard, Chase will scan the key board with his right hand holding his left until he finds the left control key. He then stations his left index finger on the control key and uses his right hand to depress the letters he want to type in capital letters.”
j. Sensory (sight, hearing, smell, touch):
   – Is there any particular information that is relevant to employment in regard to the individual’s hearing? Sight? Taste? Sense of smell?
   – Are there any particular supports or accommodations that the person uses to compensate for deficits in their hearing or vision?
   – Are there fragrances/odors to be avoided?

k. Vocational:
   – List the person’s vocational skills here and describe their performance on various tasks.
Section 6: Connections

The section identifies all the connections that exist between the individual, family, friends and supporters with others in the community.

Think of the “degrees of separation” that exist between the person and potential employers and connections are the way to reduce those degrees for job development.
Duplication? No

• Academic, Recreational and leisure, Vocational
  – Programming (section 2c)
  – Employment related (section 3)
  – Life Activities (section 4)
  – Skills (section 5)
Part II, Section 6

6. Connections for Employment:
   a. Potential connectors in family:
   b. Potential connectors among friends/neighbors:
   c. Potential connection sites in community relationships:
   d. Connections through clubs, organizations, or groups (such as church or school):
   e. List of local employers (determined by proximity, relationships, interest areas, etc.)
Profile Part III. Plan Preparation Summary

The third part of the Profile is the place at which summarization and translation occur. This section must be completed prior to the Customized Plan and may be completed as an aspect of a Discovery Meeting (optional) held toward the end of discovery. Summary statements, likelihood of occurrence and translations are acceptable.
Discovery

• Listens to the “life activities” of the person
• Sees them in different places for a comprehensive view
• Recognizes “patterns” of “who” the person is
• Seeks “where life works best”
Characteristics of Work

• Creating a vision of “where” the job seeker would be at their best
  – Ideal is used to see the job seeker “at their best”
  – The community is then considered through the “lens” of the job seeker
Characteristics of an Ideal Job

• Interests
• Conditions for Success
• Contributions
Characteristics of an Ideal Job

**Conditions** are features that have been identified as essential to the success of any job to be developed for the applicant.

- e.g. days of work, pay, benefits, location of the job, inside/outside work, time of day, hours per week, supports needed, etc.
III. Plan Prep Summary

1. Conditions for Success

1. Conditions for Success: This section addresses the range of conditions that are felt to be necessary for success, first in life, then translated to employment. The topics of this section include general conditions for individual and family, conditions related to task performance, instruction, environment, supervision, and supports. Additionally, conditions to be avoided are detailed.
Part III, Section 1

1. Conditions for Success
   a. General conditions for participant
   b. General conditions for family
   c. Conditions for task performance
   d. Instructional strategies
   e. Environmental conditions
   f. Supervisory strategies
   g. Supports needed
   h. Conditions to be avoided
Conditions for Success

What works for Ethan

• Routine
• Friendly environment/others initiate conversations
• Use of humor
• Written instructions in large print/ Visual aids
• Consistent workforce
• Full inclusion with other employees
Characteristics of an Ideal Job

**Interests** give direction toward a certain area type of industry or career

- These should be stated in the broadest possible manner, allowable by the applicant.
- Preferences might include: working around other men, office work or working in a retail setting. Do not confuse work preferences with preferentially-stated conditions.
16 Career Clusters

• Expose yourself to different work areas to see “goodness of fit” to an area
• Opportunity to consider “conditions” within the work areas
• Experiences in an area can build “expertise”
III. Plan Prep Summary
2. Interests

2. Interests  This section addresses the most reliable, most certain interests of the individual and family, as appropriate. It is important to address those activities performed with intrinsic motivation, stated work interests and past work that was of interest. Be careful to avoid job titles with bundled responsibilities.
2. **Interests**
   a. General personal interests
   b. General family interests
   c. Activities participant engage in without being expected to do so
   d. General areas of current work interest
   e. Specific areas of past work experience
Motivation from daily life

- Interest - Sports
  - observed
    - in daily routine
    - in conversation and length of time discussed
    - in tone and expressions during discussions
    - observed by others
  - willing to share information
Matt has interests

- Motor sports
- Computers
3. Potential Contributions This area addresses a range of activities performed by the individual that can be turned into employer contributions. Included in this sections are personality characteristics, reliable strengths, best skills, credentials, past employment, and possible recommendations. Be sure to use interests as the lens through which to identify potential contributions.
3. Contributions

a. Strongest positive personality characteristics
b. Most reliable strengths
c. Best skills to offer to potential employers
d. Credential training, certifications and recognized skills
e. Possible sources for recommendations
f. Resources/financial assets
Personality Characteristics

- Dedicated to Karate, UTES, and work
- Likes trying new things
- Stays on task
- Gets the job done
- Meticulous
- Pays attention to detail
- Disciplined
- Physically fit and strong
- Social
- Respectful
- Learns technique and skills well
- Great sense of humor
Ethan’s Skills

- Navigates on iPads and internet
- Maintains cleanliness of buildings
- Stocking merchandise
- Re-stocking soda and ice machines
- Organizational skills
- Food Handlers Permit
- Detail oriented
Ethan is Devoted!

Ethan has earned numerous belts over 10 years of karate.
Ethan’s School Experiences

- Lakeview Hospital
- Knowlton Elementary
- Top Hat Video
- South Davis Recreation Center
- Cinemark Movie Theatre
III. Plan Prep Summary
4. Challenges

4. Challenges  This section addresses the challenging areas in the job seeker’s life that would likely require matching, negotiating, supports or other interventions to resolve. Health and fitness restrictions, behaviors, idiosyncrasies, finances, transportation, and parental concerns are summarized. Be sure to list potential solutions or ways to work around the challenges.
Part III, Section 4

4. Challenges
   a. Areas potentially needing matching to employment sites
   b. Areas potentially needing negotiation with local employers
   c. Physical/health restrictions:
   d. Habits, routines, idiosyncrasies
   e. Challenges associated with disability/Need for accommodation & disclosure
   f. Financial issues
   g. Transportation issues
   h. Promising solutions: Current, past or potential
Finding Solutions

• Work area without flashing lights

• Able to leave the work area when there are flashing lights
5. Potential Employer List This final section asks us to look in the job seeker’s community, directed by conditions, interests and challenges, as appropriate, and begin a listing of businesses that fit these considerations. Be sure to start close to the person’s home and radiate out to the limit of the person’s conditions. A list of 20 – 40 business should be targeted.
Section for Sensitive Information

At the end of Part III, the Plan Preparation Summary, there is a section for describing information that might be sensitive or private regarding the individual or family. Although this section is not to be shared beyond the discovery team, it is useful to write the information as it helps us prepare for how to disclose (with permission) and to get clarity on the issues by having to write about the concern.
Looking for what works……
By looking for where does this not happen.

FINDING SOLUTIONS
Profile Components

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   • Interests, contributions, and conditions