

Tip Sheet

Providing Leadership to Employees with Developmental Disabilities



Accessful
The right start unlocks success

Resources for
Employers



1 Do not make assumptions about what they know or that they understand instructions. Always give direction one step at a time—and ask an employee to repeat back the instructions.

2 Do not say “I already told you that.” Give instructions again—but use simplified wording. Investigate the person's learning style. Preparing a “task list” or making a picture to describe the goal can be effective instructional aids.

3 Give individuals time to answer your questions. Respect their thought process.

4 Check in frequently.

Ask: “How are you doing?”
Give feedback immediately. Offer praise self-improvement, rather than perfection.

5 Offer a structured environment to support dependable routines.

If you're planning to introduce a changes, give advance warning. Remember that “task lists” will encourage success for out-of-routine jobs.

6 Introduce one new task at a time and give that person time to learn and repeat the task several times before introducing a second one.

7 Use a “cue word” if employee is losing focus on task at hand.

“Focus” or “Track” will signal that you want to help them renew their attention. When or if appropriate, involve other co-workers in this “reset” technique.

8 Recognize that training may take longer. However, if the job is a suitable match to the person's capabilities and strengths—and once they are comfortable in their environment—they can be reliable, productive and amazing employees!