

June 2021

Fading Job Coaching Supports

An important component of any job training plan is to develop a timeline for fading supports. The fading support plan should be developed with input from the employee, employer, job coach, supervisor, and any other professional or person involved with supporting the employee with a disability. The information below provides helpful tips to fading job coach supports.

Communicate Expectations for Fading Early

Job coaches should clearly explain expectations for fading during the hiring and onboarding process. The job coach should stress that the role of the job coach is not to replace natural lines of training and supervision. The job coach can assist the employer when issues arise and offer suggestions about how to train, support, and supervise the employee with a disability.

Developing Natural Supports

The job coach should help the employee with a disability develop natural workplace supports. Natural supports refer to the “existing social supports in the work environment that are available either informally (from co-workers and peers on the job) or formally (from supervisors and company sponsored employment programs)” (Fabian, Edelman, & Leedy, 1993). One of the roles of a job coach, therefore, is to develop and help facilitate relationships in the employment setting that allows full integration of the employee.

Begin Fading from Day One

The job coach should look for ways to fade support starting on the first day on the job. The intensity of job coach supports will fade as the employee becomes more independent. A number of factors should be considered when creating a fading support plan. First, the job coach should review whether the employee can independently perform the essential job functions. Second, the job coach should ensure that the employee knows where to seek employment related on-the-job-assistance from co-workers and supervisors. Third, the job coach should develop supports and strategies to ensure the employee initiate work tasks.

Response Prompting and Fading

When teaching an individual with a disability a work task or work-related routine, job coaches often need to deliver specific prompts to elicit a response. Job Coaches should fade prompts as soon as possible. In order for an individual to perform a target behavior independently, instructors must systematically fade the prompts.

Fade Incrementally (e.g., minutes, hours, days, weeks)

The job coach should incrementally fade supports. At first, the job coach may start to fade

support from the immediate area as soon as the employee demonstrates mastery of a specific task or routine. A good fading support plan will begin without actually fading from the employee's "sight". For example, a job coach will move to an area to observe the person doing the job independently. Then, the job coach may leave the area and come back after a certain amount of time has passed (for example, wait., five minutes, 30 minutes, or an hour). Eventually, these "on-site" but "out-of-sight" moments will progress to the point that the job coach is no longer needed at the job site. Gradually, as the employee masters all the essential functions of a job, the job coach would fade and leave the worksite.

“What If” Scenarios

Job coaches can engage in "what if" and role-play scenarios with the supported employee in order to ensure they will be able to respond to certain situations once the job coach has successfully faded their support. For example, the job coach could ask the supported employee questions such as:

- What will you do if you are sick and cannot go to work?
- What will you do if you are going to be late for work?
- What will you do if there is an emergency at work? (e.g., medical emergency, fire alarm, power outage, weather-related problem)
- What will you do if a co-worker, customer, or stranger is bothering you at work?
- What will you do if you are not feeling well while at work?
- What will you do if you are unsure of how to complete a job task?

Additional Considerations:

Life circumstances can be unpredictable for the employee, employer, job coach, and community. When a focused plan of fading is being developed and implemented from the outset job coaches and other support staff are more likely to successfully navigate circumstances such as support staff illness and/or scheduling conflicts, expiration of employment services funding, changes in supervisors, and other unforeseen factors.

Cite Us!

Hase, H. (2021). Fading Job Coaching Supports [Fact sheet]. <https://ceiutah.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Fading-Factsheet.pdf>

References

Fabian, Edelman, & Leedy (1993). Linking workers with severe disabilities to social supports in the workplace: Strategies for addressing barriers. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 59(3), 29-34.