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New Employment Training Guide

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The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University is pleased to announce the publication of a training guide focusing on improving the employment outcomes of individuals who rely on AAC. ACETS – Augmentative Communication Employment Training and Supports – is a comprehensive training guide based on the ACETS program funded through the AAC-RERC during 2000 – 2004. Three guiding principles – immersion in workplace culture; acquiring a broad base of employment-related skills and experience, and support of individualized goals – are the heart of the ACETS program.



The ACETS program teaches a broad base of employment-related skills and provides relevant experiences. Participants learn the basic aspects of a job search as well as the aspects that are particular to AAC users, such as managing a personal assistant and handling transportation.

Developing skill with a variety of information technology (IT) is an integral part of the ACETS program and lessons designed to improve IT skills are presented throughout the ACETS training guide. Every class session includes time in a computer lab where participants learn to use the Internet to increase their marketability, productivity, and independence. The Internet is also used as a tool for follow-up support ("e-coaching"). A system of online reporting forms and charts provide a mechanism for tracking progress toward goals and getting support for one's job search. Participants stay in touch with each other and their instructors through email, list serves, and instant messaging.

The ACETS training guide offers teachers, employment training programs, and vocational counselors a promising instructional approach that may be adapted for use in a wide variety of settings, including community colleges, employment counseling programs, and high school transition programs. This training guide provides comprehensive information and materials for the successful implementation of the ACETS program. Contents of the ACETS guide follow:

Module One: Selecting and Preparing Participants to Begin the Program

- Selection Criteria
- Pre-requisites
- Recruitment Strategies
- Applying and Interviewing for the Program
- What the Program Expects from Participants

Module Two: Overview of the ACETS Program/Introduction to Computer Lab

- Goals and Objectives of the Program
- Employment Issues for AAC Users
- Use of the Computer as a Job Search Tool

Module Three: Preparing for the Job

- Where the Jobs Are
- Improving Computer Skills

Module Four: Getting a Job

- Resumes
- Cover Letters
- Networking
- Interviewing
- Internet Employment Sites
- Basic Web Design

Module Five: Realities of Working

- Managing a Personal Assistant
- Job Accommodations
- Rights and Responsibilities under ADA
- Social Security Regulations for Workers

Module Six: Keeping the Job

- Job Analysis
- Project Management
- Communication on the Job/Vocabulary Needs
- Be a Power User of the Web
- Your Responsibilities on the Job
- Self-employment

Module Seven: Career Planning

- Career Action Planning
- Individualized Person-Centered Employment Planning Meeting
- Marketing Yourself Online

Module Eight: Ongoing Support

- Follow-up Tasks
- Ongoing communication between participants and program
 - E-coaching
 - E-tracking with online forms
- Face-to-face meetings
- Technical support
- Identifying additional training needs

For more information about obtaining a copy of the ACETS guide, contact author and AAC-RERC partner, Diane Nelson Bryen, Ph.D., Professor and Executive Director at diane@temple.edu

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