



Integrating Group Discovery into Transition

Abby Cooper

abbylindmancooper@gmail.com

May 27, 2020





Kiersten Sheary

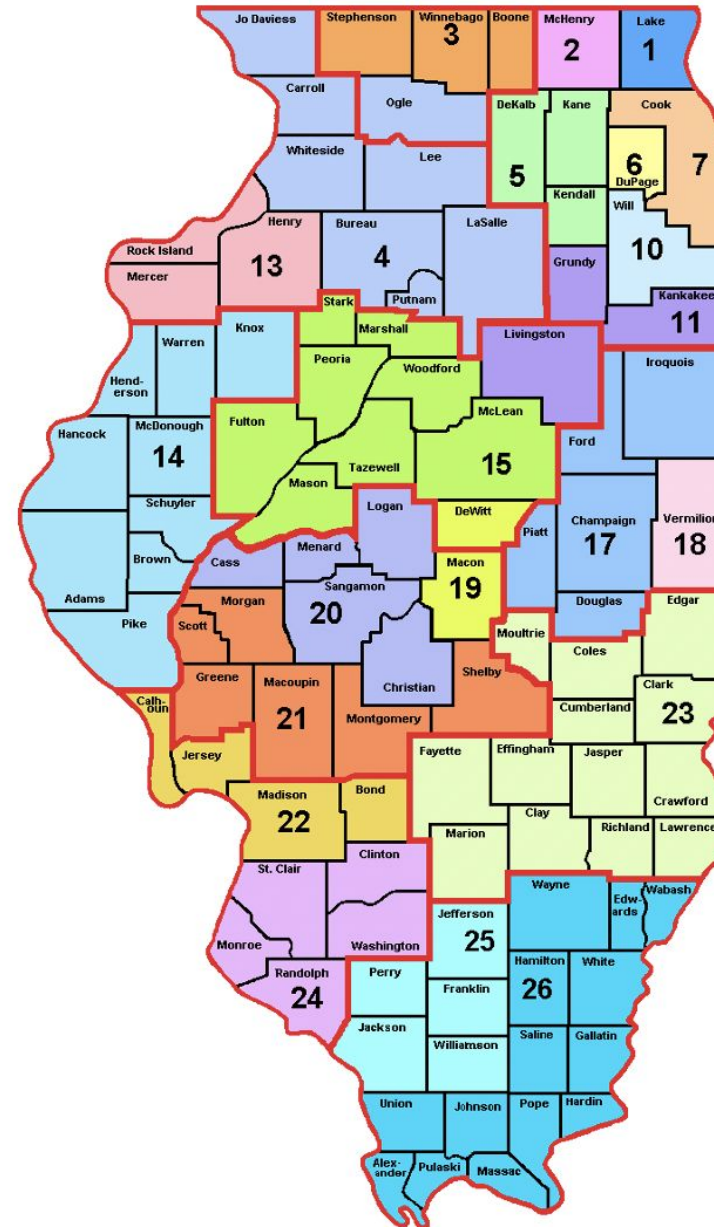
- Online Marketing Coordinator
 - Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support
- ksheary@ilstu.edu
- 309-438-1838



Abby Cooper

- Consultant
 - Kennedy Douglas Consulting and Marc Gold and Associates Organization
- abbylindmancooper@gmail.com
- (206) 851-5371

Where is Your Local Area?





Objectives

1

- Understand how to use Group Discovery as an **age appropriate transition assessments**

2

- To understand how to integrate Group Discovery into transition services

3

- To leave with a ideas for next steps

Transition is a Time To Learn What A Student Needs To Be On The Pathway to CIE



- What we, students and families usually need to know in relationship to employment for the student is vast. Usually what we know about students is just the tip of the iceberg.
- Group Discovery is the process of learning who the student is or can be, in relationship to employment.

Think in Terms of Tasks and Unbundling

- Student who often don't compete well in the job market but still have competencies to offer an employer need different strategies.
- Customized Employment allows employers to unbundle demand into tasks and to take advantage of discrete competencies.
- Group Discovery helps job seekers understand tasks that they can offer an employer that can address an unmet need or improve workplace efficiency.

Group Discovery Principles?

The foundation for Group Discovery is Individual Discovery. Group Discovery builds on the following principles:

- Being strengths-based rather than comparative opens up possibilities
- Students lives are the ideal lens to find successful employment direction.
- All students have valuable skills to contribute, Group Discovery helps them find those skills.
- The transition process helps them build on those skills.
- Competition is not necessary for students to be successfully employed when they graduate.

Group Discovery differs from Discovery in the following manner:

- It is structured so that students are conducting the Discovery process with the support of their peers in a group and a skilled facilitator/teacher interpreting and framing the information.
-
- Many of the steps of Discovery are conducted through completing the homework and bringing that information back to the group for discussion and insights.

Group Discovery

Group Discovery uses the same strategies as Discovery but it is held in a classroom setting.

- It creates belief in students and their families that they can be successful in obtaining employment that highlights the best they have to offer an employer.
- Each approach looks closely at daily routines and activities, where students have connections, interests, tasks they enjoy doing who they are in their home and their community, and what they need to be successful.

Group Discovery

Group Discovery is structured to help students to start to understand:

- What they bring to the table, (their contributions),
- identifying what they need from an employer to be successful (conditions)
- understanding how to look at tasks rather than job titles or given job descriptions to determine employment possibilities that matches their contributions.
- Different components of work

Group Discovery Starts with the Student learning who they might be in relationship to work.

They learn:

- Who they are in terms of employment, through a reflective process and guided conversation,
- The conditions they need to be successful,
- Contributions they have to offer an employer,
- What works and doesn't work for them,
- Interests that align with an employment need,
- The tasks they would like to perform for pay.
- Which local employers might have those tasks and a need for them to be performed.

The Facilitator's / Teacher's Role is Critical for the group's success

The facilitator/teacher helps the group translates the information:

- into tasks a student might want to do
- what student need to be successful,
- reframes negative statements,
- helps the groups see possibilities,
- creates a vision for employment.

Translation

- If you are leading a Discovery Group you will need the ability to identify typical aspects of life and to translate those activities into **conditions** for success, **interests** toward employment and potential **contributions** to be offered to employers or to be built on.

- Frequently performing certain tasks without being asked might indicates
 - The student likes those tasks
 - Wants to be helpful
 - It gets her out of the classroom
 - Thinking about what are the patterns

Two Ways To Think about Integrating Group Discovery Into Transition

Aligns with Assessment

The Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) of the Council for Exceptional Children defines transition assessment as an:

- ongoing process of collecting data on the individual's needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of **current and future working**, educational, living, and personal and social environments.
- Assessment data serve as the **common thread** in the transition process and form the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)" (p

Aligns with Pre-Employment Transition Service

- Provided to a student with disabilities who is receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.); or is an individual with a disability, for purposes of section 504.
- What services
- ✓ Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- ✓ Instruction in self-advocacy

If Structured as A Job Exploration Class or Group

- Would requires 5 to 7 classes once a week for an hour and a half. Each class is followed with assignments to be completed before the next class.
- Could occur during the classroom day, after school as a club or in the resource room.
- Could be broken down so it aligns with what is being taught
- At the end of Group discovery students have the information they need to create a successful direction for Pre-ETS I.e. Job shadowing, Work base Learn, Volunteer experiences.

Information Gather in Group Discovery

- ❖ Situations and settings in which the job seeker is at his/her best.
- ❖ Tasks the job seeker enjoys doing.
- ❖ Typical routines of the job seeker's life.
- ❖ Indications of interest, preference and satisfaction by the job seeker.
- ❖ Conditions that either need to be in place or avoided for successful performance by the job seeker.
- ❖ Financial goals and how earning money will impact the job seeker's life.

For Students Group Discovery Should be a Process That Builds on Information Learned Each Year.

- **Age 14 to 16**

- Tasks to try
- Contributions to build on
- Job Shadow Opportunities
- Volunteer positions
- Build belief that the student can and will work.
- Translate information

- **Age 15-17**

- Work based learning experiences that builds the student's contributions.
- Understands needed conditions
- Translate information for what is needed for CEI

- **Age 17-21**

- Creation of paid jobs
- Job highlights the student's contributions
- Negotiates Conditions,
- Tasks done for pay and reflects interest

Group Discovery Tips

- Depending on the level of your students sessions might need more sessions.
- Having a teacher's aide assist with the group would be useful for students who need more support.
- The group is designed to be interactive.
- Before starting Group Discovery you should know who at home can help students with the homework.
- You might want to have a parent meeting to explain the curriculum, the purpose and how families can assist.

Tips Continued

- A Discovery Notebook should be created for every student that contains materials from each of the sessions and sheets for homework
- Note the hardest part of group discovery is reframing students' comments so they are positive. This first session will take 1.5 hours.

Materials Needed

- Discovery notebook
- Poster paper to create a job board,-the poster should be divided into at least the following sections: contributions, tasks, money, conditions, what works for the student, and employers.
- Teacher should create an example of a completed job board.
- Videos or pictures of people working
- Large paper that can be posted on the wall for the teacher to write on
- Magic markers

May 27,2020

Topics Group Discovery Covers

- The Discovery Process – how it is about what is cool about you
- Different ways people get jobs
- Tasks the student does and would like to do
- What contributions (skills, experiences, personality traits) you have to offer
- What type of situations that don't work for you
- The components of work

Topics Continued

- Your routines
- Your responsibilities
- What you look forward to
- Interviewing you people who know when you are at your best
- Informational interviews
- Type of supervisors
- Type of Work environments

Topics Continues

- Hobbies and interests
- Networking
- Money – wages, taxes, work incentives
- Where you are at your best

Group Discovery Can Answer Questions During Transition

- What are the threads that can be built on to secure employment experiences that fit the student?
- What can be learned from individuals who know the student well?
- When is the student at his or her best how does that translate to the work environment?
- What needs to be learned now and in the future?
- What are the conditions that need to be in place for the student to succeed?
- What works for the student/what doesn't

The Outcome We Want From Group Discovery During Transition

- Belief that the student can and will work in competitive integrated Employment (CIE).
- Having a plan for CIE that is built on over the transition years
- Environmental features that lead to success or hinder it.
- Skills the student can offer an employer and what type of tasks would highlight those skills.
- Effective support strategies that will allow the student to grow.
- For the Student and Family to know the supports needed in different work environments.

In a Perfect World

Schools

- Use Group Discovery as a age appropriate assessment to learn where a student is at their best in terms of employment options. Provides numerous opportunities and exposure to different work settings.

Parents

- To set the expectation that their student will work competitively upon graduation. Create responsibilities at home, share where the student is at his or her best, take pictures of student doing tasks, share what works and doesn't work for the student to be successful. Help the student complete the assignments related to Group Discovery

VRCs

- Share their expertise with schools and participate in Group Discovery. Fund Group Discovery under Pre- ETS.

Recap

- Group Discovery is the process of learning who the student is or can be, in relationship to employment.
- The purpose of Group Discovery is to find the direction during transition that facilitates successful vocational opportunities that lead to successful competitive integrated employment.
- Group Discovery can be structured in a variety of ways.

Questions



Abby Cooper
abbylindmancooper@gmail.com
(206) 851-5371

May 27, 2020