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## **Intellectual Output 4: How to organise work placement on campus for People with Intellectual Disabilities**

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# 1 HOW TO ORGANISE WORK PLACEMENT ON CAMPUS FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES: INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION

People with an intellectual disability (ID) indicate that they feel more part of society by performing work. Mainly regular work has a positive influence on their autonomy, self-esteem and quality of life (Cardol, Speet, & Rijken, 2007). In addition to financial independence and social interaction, the chances of employment also offer them the opportunity to learn new tasks and acquire new skills. For people with intellectual disabilities who are working, this employment can offer additional benefits. Some examples include the increase in self-confidence, better inclusion in society and the conviction that labour can 'camouflage' their disability (Stevens & Martin, 1999).

The policy for the employment of people with an occupational disability can be based on two principles: exclusion and inclusion. The exclusive policy is based on the principle that people with an occupational disability who cannot (temporarily) provide for their own income must receive a benefit. The inclusive policy, on the other hand, wants to help these people to work and thus increase participation (Heylen and Bollens, 2007). Of course we opt for the latter and look for a meaningful interpretation of this inclusive policy.

In this document, practical guidelines are provided for the university campus as an employer to make the working environment as good as possible for people with an intellectual disability.

We hope that by reading this document, when recruiting new people you will have an eye for the fact that there may also be people among the applicants who, despite their disability, can deliver excellently qualified work on a higher education campus. It also offers insight into what it can mean for an employee with an intellectual disability, to be employed on a higher education campus.

First let's clarify some of the terms we use. When we speak of an '*employee*' with an intellectual disability, this can be a permanent employee, but also a trainee with an intellectual disability or even someone with an intellectual disability who works temporarily or just once on campus. A '*job coach*' is a permanent employee on the campus who takes on the supervision of a student or employee with an intellectual disability. In a sense he acts as an employer with regard to the person with a disability. A 'place of employment' for people with an intellectual disability can include regular employment, but we also use it for 'volunteer work' and for 'place for internships'.

We give you an overview of a number of parts of the work and its meaning for an employee with an intellectual disability on a university campus.

We highlight consecutively

- the macro perspective: what place does an employee with an intellectual disability have according to national and international legislation?
- the meso-perspective: possibilities and limitations of a higher education campus as a place to work for people with intellectual disabilities
- the micro-perspective: the relationship between the employee with an intellectual disability and the job coach on the campus

Each of these topics is briefly described and enriched with practical tips and points for attention. Where possible, we immediately give suggestions for solutions that have been tried out by others and that might perhaps be of interest to you. Some of the tips may apply to your campus, others may not.

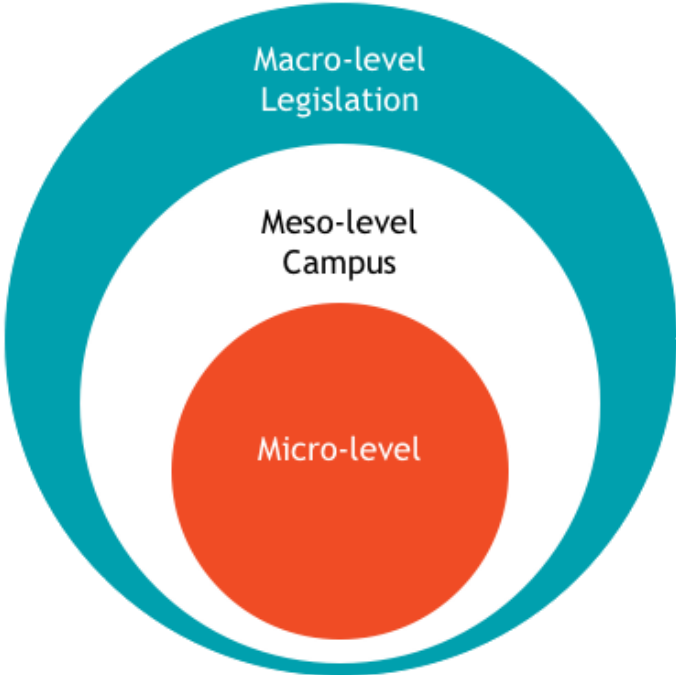


Figure 1: Micro- Meso- Macro perspective

## **2 MACRO-PERSPECTIVE: EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION WITH REGARD TO WORKPLACEMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

### **2.1 EUROPEAN REGULATION**

Although people with disabilities make up about 15% of the world's population, today they still encounter many obstacles that prevent them from active and actual participation in political, economic, social and cultural life. In order to put an end to this situation, the General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously approved the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 13 December 2006.

The Treaty states in art. 27 that all persons with disabilities should be able to enjoy all human rights, such as the right to equality and non-discrimination, the right to accessibility, the right to equality for the law, the right to freedom and security of the person, the right to living independently and being part of society, the right to education, the right to work, and so on. Sometimes a person with a disability cannot exercise his or her human rights to the same extent as others due to certain obstacles. Then he or she is entitled to reasonable adjustments to remove these obstacles.

The CRPD defines disability as the result of the interaction between people with disabilities and social and physical barriers that prevent them to fully participate in society. It seeks to remove those thresholds, with the goal of creating an inclusive society. The treaty thus replaces the medical model of disability with a social model of disability. It is therefore society that has to adapt to people with disabilities. The ultimate goal is an inclusive society. In addition to a number of general obligations, the CRPD contains a wide range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, each time focusing on the specific needs of people with disabilities.

The countries that are part of the Convention must establish independent authorities to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the Convention. These bodies must ensure that work is being done towards a society in which people with disabilities can fully assert their rights.

The independent authorities must carry out their duties in close consultation with the sector of people with disabilities. They must also comply with the Paris Principles, which regulate the functioning of national human rights institutions and guarantee their independence and pluralism.

The importance of work is multiple. Apart from the need to meet everyday living costs, it allows people to help build society. Employment is part of the identity of the individual and the appreciation of every person. People with disabilities do not make an exception to this. Work is an important factor for these people, since it can boost their self-confidence and promote participation in society.

Several international legal instruments already protected the right to work for people with disabilities before the CRPD. The Vocational Rehabilitation Recommendation No. 99 of 1954 of the International Labour Organization stipulates that persons with disabilities must be able to rely on rehabilitation and vocational training. This was later confirmed in a legally binding instrument, namely the Vocational and Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention No. 159 of 1983 of the International Labour Organization, which added that this should promote their participation in the regular economy. The UN's non-binding

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Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities with Disabilities 1994 also stipulate that discrimination on the grounds of disability is forbidden in the field of employment and that States have to ensure access to the open labour market for people with disabilities.

Everything stands or fails with the implementation of national legislation. Many countries provide adjusted measures, but these are usually insufficient to enable many people with disabilities to work in a free labour market.

## 2.2 FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND LEGAL REGULATIONS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

In a number of cases, as an employer, you are entitled to financial compensation for employees who are employed by you and who, for one reason or another, are limited in carrying out normal activities. These include wage cost subsidies, allowances for the purchase of support tools and the accessibility of the building and the workplace.

Employees with a clearly demonstrable disability are entitled to support in financial matters, among other things. Due to the fact that financial regulations vary a lot from country to country and can change quickly and therefore become obsolete, these are not elaborated in this document.

In general one can say that the European countries provide for all kinds of variants of the following measures in their legislation:

- A financial intervention to the employer to compensate the loss of return of persons with a disability and to coach this person.
- Premiums for environmental adjustments so that the activation of the employee is facilitated.
- Supervised working: the individual and trajectory guidance of a user who cannot be engaged in the existing regular or protected work circuit, in order to promote the individual development and social integration of that user through an offer of unremunerated work activities. The facility is responsible for taking insurance policies that insures the user for physical accidents and civil liability
- In most countries, the work activities performed by people with intellectual disabilities are unpaid.

It goes without saying that the national way of implementation of art. 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is fundamental as a base for the employment of persons with intellectual disabilities in higher education campuses. With regard to this matter, there are big differences between countries that ratified the treaty. Yet in all countries, the regulations of employment for people with intellectual disabilities still have gaps. For each Higher Education campus, it is still a bit of searching within a grey zone of regulation.

### 3 MESO-PERSPECTIVE: A HIGHER EDUCATION CAMPUS AS EMPLOYMENT PLACE FOR PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

#### 3.1 SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Internationally, Supported Employment is regarded as the best practice to guarantee the chances of success on the 'normal' work floor (van Hagen, 2008). It is a method to support people with a (work) disability and other vulnerable groups to find and keep paid work on the regular labour market. He / she receives support before, during and after finding a job. But the employer is also supported; here the focus is on the possibilities of the person rather than on the limitations. International literature also shows that Supported employment is more effective as support increases.

In their research Heylen and Bollens (2007) described the 'supported employment' method as 'the set of measures that support both the employee with an occupational disability and his employer, making it possible for a person with an occupational disability to take on and maintain a paid job in the normal economic circuit ".

The following pillars were drawn up for 'supported employment':

1. **Inclusive:** The person with an (intellectual) disability can cooperate with others who do not have a disability, and thereby participates in all tasks in his position.
2. **No lower limit:** Everyone should be able to get access the SE system, regardless of the severity or nature of the restriction. The person cannot get and keep a job in the NEC without support.
3. **Empowerment:** Trusting the possibilities of the client without ignoring the limitations of reality. Within SE people trust that these people can make their own choices that relate to the organization of their lives.
4. **Competitive:** This concerns work in a competitive segment. This implies that there may be several candidates, possibly also persons without limitation, for the job with which one competes.
5. **Place then train:** First the placement, then the training. The employee receives the training at the workplace.
6. **Support:** The employee will receive support that is tailored to his job. Possibly this is permanent.

The method consists of five phases:

1. **Assessment:** Find out what the possibilities and wishes of the participant are.
2. **Job finding:** Searching for a suitable job.
3. **Job matching:** Linking the possibilities and wishes of the participant to the requirements of the employer.
4. **Training on the work floor**
5. **Follow-up coaching**



Figure 2: Phases of supported employment



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In practice, usually these five phases are preceded by a pre-stage. This pre-stage aims to select the people who need this support to find a sustainable job in the NEC (Heylen and Bollens, 2007).

Within 'supported employment' we work with a job coach who, demand driven, is looking for a job tailored to the person with an intellectual disability. The job coach uses all sorts of techniques in training and guiding the person with an intellectual disability according to the needs.

How Supported employment can be further defined can be found in chapter 4 of this document: the micro perspective.

### 3.2 A WORK ENVIRONMENT THAT WELCOMES AND SUPPORTS DIVERSITY AND PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

People with intellectual disabilities indicate that equal treatment and sense of equality is one of the most important success factors for them to do their job well and happily (Coenegracht, Coertjes, Smets & Vaes, 2018). Changes to the workplace and an adapted working environment are not unimportant, but fade in importance with a good ambiance in the workplace in which people and intellectual disabilities feel respected. In addition, there is also overwhelming evidence (Parmenter, 2011) that people with intellectual disabilities lose their jobs faster due to negative social behaviour than due to their inability to perform certain tasks.

People with intellectual disabilities need support in various areas (Alexander et al, 2017): understanding instructions, problem solving, being able to adapt to varying demands of work tasks and settings, working independently and working together with others, communication, reading and math skills and work-related social skills. Yet the main success factor appears to be in human capital: employers and colleagues who show understanding and provide the necessary support are the important factor for the success of employment for people with intellectual disabilities. Support from employers and colleagues, training courses, opportunities for social integration and job growth ensure a high level of satisfaction among people with intellectual disability.

Achterberg et al. (2010) state that labour-supporting adjustments, the willingness and personal positive experiences of the employer and acceptance of colleagues are advancing factors for a good labour participation. Lack of understanding and support from other employees creates a sense of frustration among people with intellectual disabilities. An involved support is needed to provide structure to people with intellectual disabilities. Van Ruitenbeek et al. (2013) described several studies that show that job counselling by a direct colleague or informal support is the most effective in the workplace for the degree of integration in the workplace, the level of productivity and thus the wage value of the employee, the labour satisfaction of all employees and the sustainability of the employment contract.

How the employer relates to his employee with an intellectual disability has a great deal of influence on the functioning of the employee. Van Ruitenbeek et al. (2013) describes the desired personal characteristics and competences for a work supervisor in his research: helpful, involved, calm, patient, alert and having good

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communicative and problem-solving skills. A purely commercial attitude of the employer can have a negative influence on this cooperation.

Sometimes adjustments need to be made on the work floor. These are preferably as small as possible and in such a way that they are integrated so that, for example, also other colleagues can use them. It is important that the adjustments are in function of the more effective execution of tasks and does not prevent the work of others.

### 3.3 AN ADJUSTED ENVIRONMENT

A disability is experienced completely different in a well-adapted environment than in a badly adapted environment.

Some environments are so crammed with information boards, indications, warnings, signals, symbols that also ordinary people can really get lost. These instructions then lose their function and effect. People with an intellectual disability can have more problems with this.

It starts with good accessibility of the building by public transport; a clear and understandable signposting outside; clarity about where the door or entrance is located; clarity about positioning of the doorbell, intercom, mailbox; clear route to reception; clear signage inside, e.a.

A tool that employees with intellectual disabilities may need is pictures instead of texts. An instruction with pictures works better for them than an instruction with text.

For this section look at: 'Intellectual Outcome 1: Campus Accessibility' of the IC Life project.

### 3.4 WHICH JOBS ARE POSSIBLE ON MY CAMPUS

The number and nature of the jobs for people with an intellectual disability on a higher education campus are countless. They can be employed for almost all tasks: cleaning aid; cleaning up coffee tables in the teacher's rooms; maintenance of green areas outside; help in the kitchen; support for the secretary; support or co-teaching with the teacher; all kinds of chores; etc.

Therefore the difficulty is not to find a suitable job, but to meet the necessary preconditions for this employee to be put to good use. For this we refer to chapter 4 of this document: the micro-perspective.

### 3.5 JOB CREATION

Almost all employees with an intellectual disability do not fit into the existing positions in the regular labour market. There will be virtually no vacancies that fully fit an employee with an intellectual disability. This automatically means that you will have to create new functions for employees with intellectual disabilities, with tasks that are appropriate for their capabilities and abilities. A method that you can use for this is the Job Creation method.

Job creation is the all-encompassing word for setting up business processes differently; and redistributing tasks, so that higher-skilled or more experienced personnel can be better deployed for the work for which they have been trained. Simple tasks are merged into one or more functions and re-recorded in the work processes. These functions are then suitable for employees who would otherwise be excluded from the work process because they cannot be inserted into existing positions. This also makes the execution of this work more cost-effective and creates an economic added value for the organization.

From the research by van Ruitenbeek, Mulder, Zijlstra, Nijhuis, & Mulders (2013), job carving appears to be an effective method for creating work for individuals. This method is aimed at creating a specific function that is tailored to the possibilities of a person with disabilities. For job carving, the primary focus is on the process of matching the employee's possibilities and creating a specific job. Job carving is an individualized approach that is less suitable for large-scale use. New functions are created by splitting up certain simple parts of an existing function.

In practice, we work in a demand-driven way. Together with the job coach, the person with an intellectual disability looks for a suitable workplace for him. Exceptionally the demand comes from the employer. Firstly, the job coach usually looks for work activities in places that want to work together with a person with an intellectual disability. Here they test, among other things, whether the motivation of the employer is correct. Furthermore, together with the employer, they look at which useful sub-tasks can be offered. On a campus there are many tasks that can be taken up by employees with an intellectual disability.

In order to find out what possibilities there are on your higher education campus, you can ask advice from a job coach who has the task outside the campus of coaching people with an intellectual disability to a regular job. Walk through the campus with him or her! The emphasis should not be on what tasks can be performed precisely because these are countless! In fact, a lot of executive tasks can be performed by people with intellectual disabilities. The recording of the possibilities and impossibilities of job implementation should rather focus on the thresholds and obstacles that may be there for employing people with intellectual disabilities. For example: the maintenance of green areas is possible, but what are the obstacles for people with intellectual disabilities to perform this work well and independently?

### 3.6 POSITIVE ASPECTS OF EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

There are many advantages to employing people with intellectual disabilities on campus.

First, it gives a more realistic picture of society as a whole. By having someone with an intellectual disability in their midst, colleagues can often better put concepts like illness, lack and limitation into perspective. So there is also some sort of social effect.

Most people with an intellectual disability are not demanding and adapt to the extent that they can. What you offer them makes them happy. They like to come and are happy that they count as an integral part of the whole. That gratitude radiates in the workplace, you automatically become happier in the stressful environment that a higher education campus often is.

Jobs that, in your view, might be 'boring and monotonous' give maximum safety to employees with intellectual disabilities. And that is what they really appreciate.

## **4 MICRO-PERSPECTIVE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND THE JOB COACH ON CAMPUS**

### **4.1 PROFILE OF THE EMPLOYEE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

Below we outline the profile of the employee with an intellectual disability, while we are well aware that 'the' profile does not exist. Every person is different. Yet here we outline a profile that is often recognizable by people with an intellectual disability, to reach out to university campuses that want to employ people with an intellectual disability.

Employees with an intellectual disability like to work on the condition that the work environment guarantees them a certain level of safety. They are faithful and often loyal. They enjoy routine work and they are happy with a fixed day structure. They like regular routine. They like that it is clear what exactly is expected of them. They want to be appreciated and accepted as 'employees' of the company and they are proud of their work.

People with an intellectual disability are usually low-skilled or according to the standard 'unskilled'. They have often attended a type of practical education or adapted primary education.

The intellectual disability comes with limitations in social self-reliance. People with an intellectual disability are less able to adapt to their environment. This can be difficult for both the environment and the person himself. Someone with a mild intellectual disability is often not recognized as such. Their appearance usually does not show that they have a disability. Often they are verbally very skilled. As a result, they are systematically overestimated, while in fact there is a lack of social skills and problem-solving ability. People with intellectual disabilities find it difficult to function in various social situations and they lack the ability to properly assess the reactions of others.

The person with an intellectual disability usually realizes that he is different. This often leads to a negative self-image and fear of failure. They also regularly suffer from additional problems in behaviour and in their social contacts. These usually arise from a lack of self-management and self-reflection and the inability to control their own emotions, which can result in aggression. He is strongly focused on himself and his own situation and therefore cannot easily empathize with others. In difficult situations, the person with an intellectual disability can panic. You will not easily recognize this as such because he is very good in disguising it: he wants to "do and be able to do everything well".

People sometimes think that people with intellectual disabilities can do nothing or that they do not take on anything. In everyday practice we see the opposite. Like everyone else, they get up every day, get dressed, go to school or work, and do activities in their spare time. People with intellectual disabilities do as much as possible on their own and if necessary, they receive help. And they can learn, albeit at a different pace, and their total learning ability is less than that of most other people.

When they just start working in a job, the employees with intellectual disabilities are quickly distracted. Then, for example, they cannot work for a long time on a task. After a somewhat longer than average training period, they are able to do this very well. Therefore it is possible to then expand the number of tasks. It is however important that they continue to be single tasks that take place consecutively; no two tasks mixed up.

For their concentration it is important to allow people with intellectual disabilities to work on the same task for a long time. They can concentrate well on that one task and are generally not distracted by noise or other stable stimuli. You may think that this is not pleasant for them, because the average employee is

different. When placing people with an intellectual disability in the right work process, you can certainly benefit from this: they love routine work and the long-term work on the same task. People with an intellectual disability will usually appreciate it if they can do a lot of the same and if there are not too many changes.

Do not be surprised if employees with an intellectual disability still do not do what you ask of them after the fifth time that you explained it to them. Do not think they want to bully you by still not doing it the right way after the sixth time. They simply need more time and repeated explanation; then they go like a train.

Employees with an intellectual disability have more difficulty learning than other employees of the same age. They have difficulty understanding that an event often stems from something that preceded it. The relationship between cause and effect is difficult for them to see. In the work situation this means that they do not see the relationship between a mistake they make and the consequences from it. They will keep on repeating the wrong act. Depending on the environment where they work, this requires a reasonable to great alertness from the person who coaches the employee. In this case, being alert means paying attention to what goes wrong, explaining what goes wrong and how to act well.

The work pace is often lower than average. On the other hand, they work evenly, at that own pace. Employees with an intellectual disability are happy to work alone and independently on a task. If the environment is set for this. This means that there must be a fixed structure, a permanent contact point nearby and a predictable work situation.

They are often not aware of time. This means, among other things, that they are unaware that a next task is waiting for them when they have completed a certain task. It requires a lot of training to teach them to 'do something' after a task is finished, where they can see what their next task is. Better is an unambiguous package of tasks and someone who tells them what the next task will be, when they have finished the first task.

A small group of people with intellectual disabilities have Down syndrome. People with Down syndrome are characterized by certain characteristics that are almost universally valid for all of them. We therefore pay special attention to this. Workers with Down syndrome like working, they like to arrive on time and they only omit when they are really ill. They would prefer to continue working during their holidays. They need the same safe work environment as other employees with intellectual disability, also the range of tasks is comparable. What typifies them are a number of positive qualities that make it pleasant for colleagues to work with them. It concerns the following characteristics: they are cheerful and have an unconditional love; they brighten the moods of others; they are pure and authentic; they are spontaneous, unconventional; but also straightforward, stubborn and confrontational; they are socially skilled with a strikingly large non-verbal understanding. It is fine to work with a colleague with Down syndrome, but it is necessary to follow the 'instructions' as described further in this brochure.

## 4.2 COMMUNICATION

In dealing with students and teachers, there are constantly changing situations. On a higher education campus, social functioning relates to students, lecturers, board members, cleaning service and other facility services, secretarial staff, external staff, etc. For many employees with an intellectual disability, this work environment is chaotic and good support is required to perform optimally. On the other hand, it also happens that they immediately see all colleagues as friends.

The understanding of messages and symbols and the understanding and application of instructions for use and work indications are also forms of communication. It is important to know that employees with intellectual disabilities have difficulty understanding language and understanding what someone says. Especially figurative language use and jokes are difficult to understand. In their response it happens that they use difficult words in the wrong way. They also have difficulty reading and writing due to their intellectual disability. Yet many of them can easily read plain and simple instructions. People with intellectual disabilities have a lot of difficulty with math, weighing, clock reading and measuring. Especially a digital clock is difficult to understand. It is almost impossible for someone without an intellectual disability to understand that someone really cannot do that, even not after repeated exercises. The sooner this is accepted by colleagues and the manager, the sooner the safe working environment arises and they work to full satisfaction and make a valuable contribution to the work performances on campus.

People with an intellectual disability have difficulty dealing with their own feelings and talking about them. They cannot easily empathize with someone else, they mainly respond from themselves. They sometimes respond violently and without thinking, to the feelings of others. People with an intellectual disability usually find it difficult to make and maintain new friendships. It will take some time before they take steps to make social contact with colleagues. They want to be as normal as possible and want to hide their disabilities as much as possible. This can sometimes lead to problems in dealing with colleagues.

Collaborating with colleagues on certain tasks is certainly possible. Preference is given to tasks that the employee can do by himself, at his own pace. If colleagues have a similar pace and do not distract him too much by, for example, chatting, that's fine too.

If you have consultations with employees with intellectual disabilities and you want to check to which extend your message comes across, ask standard open questions. Ask for who, what, where, how? Avoid the why-question, because it can sound reproaching and thus affect the safe working environment. They find it difficult to choose (this requires a high level of abstraction that they find difficult to comprehend), keep this in mind when you consult with them. Employees with an intellectual disability prefer practical instructions. To show, to imitate, to do together, works better than written or oral explanation. If a written instruction is required, use simple language, write short sentences and write it in such a way that it can only be explained in one way.

Employees with an intellectual disability are easily influenced and therefore also vulnerable. They see virtually everything that is being told to them as true. It is essential that colleagues and supervisors know this, so that they can take this into account in their communication and behaviour. And so that they understand better why the employee with an intellectual disability does an assignment the wrong way in the eyes of the colleague: the cause may be the instruction.

## 4.3 CARRYING OUT THE WORK

### 4.3.1 The nature of the work

Important is the nature of the work task. This will almost always have to be a single task, in which the employee performs one or a few simple actions after each other. This also means that this employee should not be asked to 'do something in between'. The work should also not be sensitive to peaks. Peak activities always go hand in hand with unexpected situations, and people with intellectual disabilities usually have difficulties dealing with this. Such situations can cause panic to employees with intellectual disabilities. They can deal with peaks if this has been discussed in advance, so that it is no longer unexpected.

When assigning tasks to an employee with an intellectual disability, a supervisor should always remain alert for the capabilities of this employee. Often, after their appointment, employees are assigned various tasks for which they were initially not hired. In the case of an employee with an intellectual disability, this situation also occurs, especially if their intellectual disability does not stand out. An employee is then given responsibilities that he cannot (properly) handle and of which he does not know how to deal with it.

Employees with intellectual disabilities often have an 'acquired helplessness'. They indicate that they cannot do something, where the question is whether this is actually the case. You can then address their own responsibility and ask them the question: "how would you handle it?" And then support them in solving it so that they still carry out the requested task. This is important for, among other things: controlling the computer, operating devices, using the telephone, lifting objects, prolonged sitting or prolonged standing. By the way, the motoric characteristics in the sense of standing, walking and using their hands are no different from the average employee on the campus.

### 4.3.2 Points of time of the work

Some people with an intellectual disability can work full-time, but usually - for various reasons - people will opt to work one or a few days a week or half days or other parts of the day.

Employees with an intellectual disability start working when the signal 'to start' is activated and stop working when the signal 'to stop' is activated. They stop their activities as soon as they hear the signal. That can happen in the middle of performing a task. This once again has to do with the clear work structure, which they strongly adhere to and in which they can work well.

### 4.3.3 Learning on the job

People with an intellectual disability learn best 'while doing'. Theoretically explaining how something should be done and this for example in a different environment than where they have to carry out the task is certainly wrong. Try to explain the tasks 'while doing them', for example by first doing it together several times. Then you immediately see what is difficult and what goes smoothly. What sometimes seems self-evident for a person without intellectual disabilities, is often not the case for people with intellectual disabilities. Tasks are best split up into sub-tasks. For example, do not explain how they can make soup, but divide this into: washing vegetables, cutting the carrots, then the tomatoes, etc. You can work with cards on which the various tasks are mentioned (written and / or with pictogram or photo). If the employee likes it, he can choose what he does first and what he does last, but for others this can be confusing and the order should better be fixed.



Most people with intellectual disabilities like routine tasks. Especially the fact that they learn over time which tasks have to be done when and they can do this independently without any instruction, strengthens their self-confidence. Tasks such as 'collecting the mail every morning' and then 'dividing the mail' or the task of copying the documents that have been prepared right after lunch are examples of routine tasks that can be learned very well by people with intellectual disabilities.

You have to be open to the fact that people with an intellectual disability may take longer to do a task. In itself this should not be a problem, since otherwise you will spend time on that task yourself and now you can do something different.

Employing an employee with an intellectual disability has to be a win-win situation. The work delivered has to be meaningful for both the employer and the employee. It should not be occupational therapy! Occupational therapy will put weight on the job coach, but also on the employee with an intellectual disability who also realize this. In the initial phase you have to sense and scan what the employee's possibilities are, but that time investment does pay off after a while. Because routine tasks and purely executive duties are often perceived as ballast by the average employee, there are a lot of opportunities to realize added value by employing a person with an intellectual disability. The quality of the work has to be good, you have to train on that. For example, it is not OK if you as an employer have to redo the task, because the work delivered was not properly handled by the employee with an intellectual disability. Then check what it is that is too difficult for your employee and train that part several times. If the task is really too difficult, it makes no sense to put this into the job package of the employee with an intellectual disability. It only creates frustrations to the job coach and the employee. Of course not all tasks are equally pleasant, also people with an intellectual disability have to learn that. That is why it is important that they know that they are doing useful work. Annoying tasks can also be done together with the job coach.

As a job coach it is important to see things as much as possible from the perspective of the person with an intellectual disability. People with an intellectual disability often do not understand a number of things that are taken for granted by the other employees. Therefore each time carefully and with simple words explain to them why they do a certain task, for example for which event the labels have to be glued, etc. Communicate clearly and do not jump from one thing to another. As a job coach on the campus, from time to time it is best to proactively ask whether it works. Occasionally explicitly ask: "Do you like it?". This way you will timely receive information about what is going on with the employee.

People with intellectual disabilities need someone to fall back on. They do not always need concrete guidance, it is more about having one person they can speak to if there are ambiguities or problems. That does not have to be the same person, it could also be that they can fall back on someone who is clearly recognizable to the employee, for example by a certain workwear or by a badge.

Learning and developing people with an intellectual disability is undoubtedly a relevant point of attention. Learning and developing is an important part of a working situation. By learning and developing we mean: selecting, taking in, processing, integrating, fixating and using information, with an outcome of change and growth in attitude, knowledge and skills of the employee. Learning can arise both unconsciously and consciously. Where in most cases the employees learn to get 'to the top', the employee with an intellectual disability will be concerned with learning to 'better implement the existing work package'. The growth takes place within the implementation of the existing function and is often not aimed at achieving a 'higher' function. The tendency of the managers to offer 'more' is often present and also seems to be desired by the employee. However, practice shows that the employee is often overestimated and ultimately ends up frustrated, with all the negative consequences for the work that goes with it. For those who are involved in learning and developing the employee with an intellectual disability, it is important to take these aspects into account and to make the learning package compatible with this. Learning 'on the job' works best here,

with direct training and corrections. And finally, making small steps in learning, ensures greater satisfaction for both the employee and the department he works for.

When learning takes place externally, it is important to choose an educator who has shown expertise in the learning and training of people with intellectual disabilities. References from other organizations that have used the services of this trainer are the best guarantee for this.

Traveling can be a problem for people with intellectual disabilities. If he has to travel for work, it is good to check if the employee can travel independently. If this is the case, check the possibilities for this with the employee and the job coach. The latter can give the employee of training on this subject.

#### 4.4 CONCRETE TIPS FOR LEADING PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Here we give some very concrete tips.

To do:

- Give clear instructions. Exceptions to the rule must also be made explicit
- If you have scheduled a meeting, always clarify the purpose of the conversation
- Indicate which points will be discussed in the conversation
- During the conversation, only discuss the essential things you want to know or say
- Take one topic, do not use any clauses
- Explain things step by step
- Ask a question with one subject, do not use any clauses with any extras
- Prepare the employee in time for changes that are to come.
- Provide structure through fixed tasks, a fixed daily schedule, a fixed point of contact.
- Give the employee the time to answer and check whether the employee has understood by having him repeat it in his own words.
- use simple and direct language
- use examples of the 'world' of the employee
- give visual support to your message wherever possible
- always use the same sentences for the same situation
- the four w's: what, where, when, with whom, to check whether an assignment has been clearly communicated

## **4.5 RECRUITMENT**

### **4.5.1 Screening**

## 5 CONCLUSION

Art. 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that people with disabilities have the right to work. Appropriate measures must be taken to make it possible for a person with a disability to function in a job. Although the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ensures that the countries that have signed the Convention respect the Treaty, we notice that most countries do not leave much room for employment for people with disabilities.

With this document we want to inspire university campuses to give a workplace to people with an intellectual disability. There are countless possible jobs on a higher education campus for people with an intellectual disability, although often 'job creation' will have to be done because these people are better employable in a certain part of the current jobs. However, this can generate a win-win situation, because people with an intellectual disability like executive and routine jobs, which exactly is the part of the package of tasks that the average employee would rather not do. Employees with an intellectual disability usually also come to work in a good mood, they especially enjoy being treated equally. The environment can be adjusted slightly where necessary, but preferably to the minimum and as integrated as possible.

It is important to realize that people with intellectual disabilities can continue to learn, just like everyone else. Only it will require more time and their total learning ability is less than that of most other people. Usually things have to be explained several times, but once they understand it they can perfectly perform that task autonomously and they often continue to do the same tasks with equal pleasure. Tasks are best split up into sub-tasks. People with an intellectual disability learn best 'while doing'. Theoretical explanations are understandably not for them. It makes no sense to have people with an intellectual disability perform a job as occupational therapy. There are enough jobs on a university campus where people with an intellectual disability can have added value.

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