Practical Strength Identification Activity

Determining your job seeker’s practical skills can be difficult. This activity is designed for you to begin getting an idea where the job seeker’s strengths lie, and where the individual may need more support.

To complete this activity, go on a short outing with the job seeker. This can be a 5 minute trip to a coffee shop, or a simple walk down the street. It does not matter where you go, but it would be helpful to chose an activity in which the job seeker would have to interact with another person i.e. a barista or waitress.

While you are out, take an informal inventory of their skills. How do they access their environment? Are they courteous to strangers? What skills are they showing that could be applied to the workplace?

Attached are some questions to help guide your thinking as you reflect on the outing. Alternatively, you may find it helpful to simply take notes and reflect on those later.

While you are out, this is also a great opportunity to start assessing the job seeker’s communication skills (see communication activities).

**Mobility**:

* How is the job seeker navigating his/her environment?
* What supports may the job seeker need in navigating a new environment?

**Pragmatics:**

* Does the job seeker seem comfortable interacting with strangers?
* Does the job seeker:
* Engage in scripted conversation (ordering food, responding correctly to common greetings)?
* Engage in unscripted/social conversation (make small talk, ask meaningful questions)?
* Is the job seeker’s verbal and nonverbal communication appropriate for the setting?
* How is the job seeker communicating his/her emotional state?
* How would the job seeker’s pragmatic skills be useful in the workplace?

**Self-advocacy:**

* Does the job seeker express his or her preferences during the trip?
  + I.e. successfully choose what kind of coffee they want, express their mobility needs etc.
* How does the job seeker communicate his/her needs to you?
* How would these skills benefit the job seeker in the workplace?

**Other:**

* Does the job seeker show proficiency with money?
* How does the job seeker interact/cope with menus or other potentially inaccessible items in their environment.
* Does the job seeker show proficiency with any kind of technology?
* How does the job seeker respond to your instructions/suggestions?