



Person  
Centered Services  
A SHIFT IN SUPPORTER PERSPECTIVE

# Empowering Employment:

Illuminating Success through  
Person-Centered Coaching for  
Supporters of People with Disabilities



In general, Person-Centered Thinking and Person-Centered Coaching skills and techniques are wonderful because they're so flexible and applicable to many areas of life. Applying this training specifically to employment supports and achieving competitive employment for people with disabilities, coaches become armed with skills to help ensure proper placement is made in a job from the very beginning. Coaches also help ensure that continued, successful employment is achieved through the ongoing application of everyday learning, problem-solving, and management skills.

**Let's see how this might play out in four real-life scenarios if you were a trained Person-Centered Coach.**

## 1 Finding the Right Job

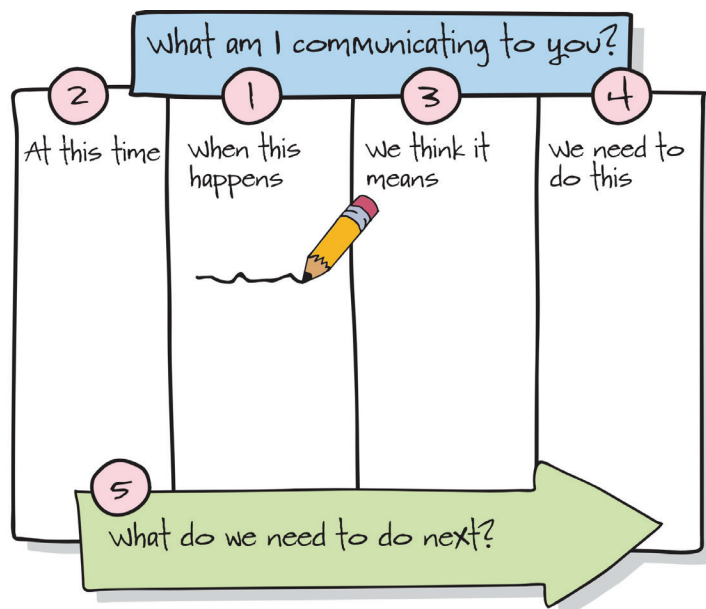
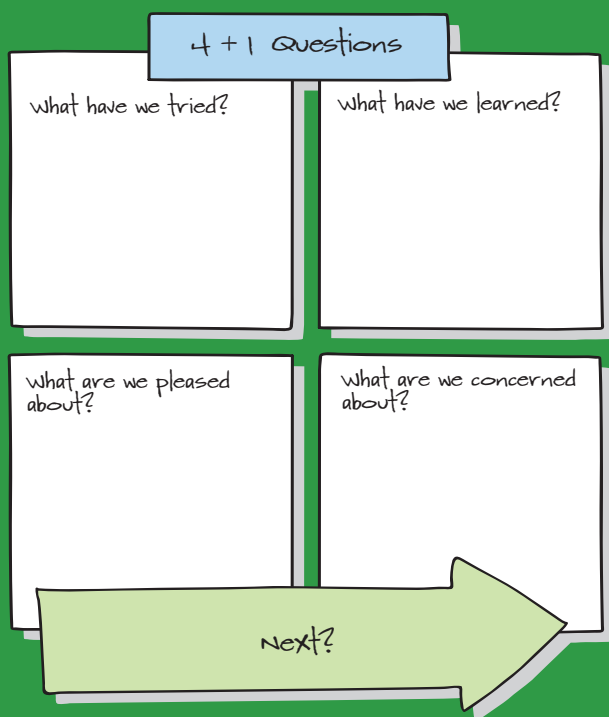
Let's say Mary comes to you looking for a job. Using the Rituals and Routines skill, you sort out what is Important To and For Mary. You discover that it's very important to Mary that she be around people, that she likes to help people, and that she really enjoys a fast-paced environment and staying busy. You also discover that she has a seizure disorder that can be triggered by excessive heat, so it is important for her to be in a cool environment. It would be important to find Mary a job like a cashier at a grocery store, or a clerk in a bank, where Mary can be around people, help them, and be in the A/C. A job as a cart retriever for a grocery store, or in an unairconditioned factory, would likely not be a good fit for her.

## 2 Handling Work Problems

Mary is successfully placed in a position at a local bank as a teller. She often, however, comes home grouchy – "They moved my stuff AGAIN." Using the skills taught as a Person-Centered Coach, you decide to exercise Good Day/Bad Day and discover that switching windows leads to a "bad day" for Mary. You point out that she should express her feelings to her supervisor, and you assist her in navigating that conversation successfully. Mary is no longer asked to switch windows; she continues at her job and is content with the outcome.

### 3 Managing Issues with Coworkers

Mary encounters a problem with a coworker. She notices that he is frequently texting at work and asking customers to wait for him while he finishes sending a text. This bothers Mary. Using The Donut Sort, you address with Mary that it is her responsibility to fulfill her job duties. Using The 4+1 problem-solving skill, you walk Mary through what she has tried to do to let her coworker know his behavior is not acceptable and what she'll do next. Mary negotiates a plan to address the behavior with her coworker and report it to her supervisor if the behavior continues. Mary doesn't get everything she wants, but she feels heard and respected.



### 4 Mitigating Health Obstacles

Mary will often start sweating when she doesn't eat – this is a result of taking her antiepileptic medication on an empty stomach. This behavior can be documented in a Communication Chart and shared with her supervisor so that they can encourage Mary to take a break and have a snack. Mary continues to work safely, and she and her family are pleased to know the situation is addressed before it becomes an embarrassment.

In supporting employment for people with disabilities, Person-Centered Coaches shine a light. They improve initial job placements to better align with personal aspirations and foster a supportive environment. They successfully help navigate challenging situations and pave the way for ongoing growth.

**The bottom line? Person-Centered Coaches take employment support from good to great!**