

# ASERT FAQ Sheet

## Providing Job Coaching Supports



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ASERT is funded by the Bureau of Autism Services, PA Department of Human Services

Pennsylvania's leading source of autism-related resources and information.

877-231-4244

This resources provides information about supporting individuals with autism to be successful in the workplace by providing effective and appropriate job coaching services. This service can be provided by a professional who specializes in job coaching but can also be provided informally through the employer and coworkers.

### Role of the Job Coach

- Assist the employee with ASD to learn the job skills and facilitate their inclusion into the work environment
- Support the employee with ASD to become an independent, competent and confident part of their workplace
- Support coworkers and supervisors to feel confident to support their employee or coworker with ASD

### Developing a Task Analysis

- A task analysis is taking a single task and breaking it down into easy to follow steps.
- Identify the setting, materials & supplies
- Observe the task being performed
- Perform the task
- List action steps
- Fine tune and match to learning style of the employee
- Validate with the employee's supervisor that steps are correct
- Identify natural cues for each step
- Consider efficiency
- Eliminate need for judgment by the employee (ensure steps are concrete)

### Teaching

The goal is for the new employee to perform the tasks of their job competently, confidently and eventually independently of their job coach.

- Develop a plan of who will teach the new employee each part of the job.
  - Will a coworker teach the person how to punch in when they arrive?
  - Will the natural trainer (a person whose job it is to train a person in this position) start training the person on the job with the job coach looking on to offer support or advice if they need it?
  - Will you take over the training when it is beyond the extent of what they offer to all employees?

### Benefits of Using a Natural Trainer

- This is one of the first opportunities for an employee to form a relationship with their coworkers and to tap into supports naturally available in the work environment.
- If the job coach steps in immediately to train and supervise the new employee, it sends the message to the workplace that the natural supports may not be skilled enough and may not be needed.

*This Frequently Asked Questions Sheet was developed by the Autism Services, Education, Resources, and Training Collaborative (ASERT). For more information, please contact ASERT at 877-231-4244 or [info@PAautism.org](mailto:info@PAautism.org).*

## Benefits of Using a Natural Trainer (continued)

- The natural trainer will most likely to know the task better than an outside job coach
- By tapping into the natural supports, the job coach makes eventual fading of the paid support easier for the employer and the employee
- Considerations for using a natural trainer:
  - How well do they teach?
  - How comfortable will they be giving information and upholding high standards for the worker with ASD?
  - Will there be a balance between the natural trainer and the job coach? Who will be responsible for teaching and supervising the individual? It is important that these roles are clearly defined for everyone.
- Once the employee starts to know what to do, the natural trainer gradually fades their support, resulting in a competent, confident, and independent employee

## Long-Term Supports

For employment to last, a plan must be developed to sustain support and to trouble shoot possible future issues.

Ideas for long-term supports

- Regularly scheduled meeting time for employee with his supervisor
- Allowing texting/emailing questions or concerns from the employee to supervisor
- Allowing flexible "self-management time" each shift to allow employee appropriate ways to cope with overwhelming frustration or emotion
- Providing visual cues/schedules to help employee proceed from task to task and to manage his/her workday
- Allowing sensory-regulating items (e.g., hat, sound-reducing ear protection, hand-held fidget, sunglasses, gum, etc.)

## Ideas for Additional Supports

- Add visual cues/schedules
- Provide instructions and task analysis with pictures in print along with modeling
- Ask the employee to write down questions

## Tips for Good Job Coaching

- Avoid giving the employee prompts to proceed onto the next task. Give them information so they can make the decision for themselves
- Avoid directing the employee to do X. Teach how to determine if his work is correct or adequate. Teach him to evaluate the end product
- Avoid giving the employee constant encouragement and praise. This isn't typical for people working in real work settings and the learner can become overly dependent on the praise. This may be needed initially, but should be done discretely and eventually faded. Or, when you are teaching use "no news is good news." The learner will figure out what when you are quiet they are correct. You will provide information rather than cheerleading

References:

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