

# Coaching for Retention and Advancement

**Innovations in Employment Supports**

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# How do I bill for this?

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Billable Service</b>
1	Support the SE reporting wages to Social Security	
2	Practice with the SE to have a conversation with the supervisor asking for time off	
3	Taking the to your local One-Stop to explore new jobs	
4	Assist the SE in creating an information sheet on disability awareness and encourage coworkers to ask questions of the SE	
5	Meet outside of work hours to revisit and update the Discovery Report	
6	Sitting in on SE's work evaluations and initiating opportunities to cross train	
7	Riding the bus to and from work with the SE	
8	Go to the company picnic with the SE	
9	Increase coaching hours to support learning new tasks	
10	Meeting the person off-site to review job tasks on the O-Net	
11	Attend lunch breaks with the SE and facilitate chatting with co-workers	
12	Meeting after work to help the SE learn to make change due to interest in cashiering	
13	Upping the coaching hours because a new supervisor has just started	
14	Assist the SE to compliment a coworker and thank them for their help	
15	Accompanying the person on the way to and from work to learn about some of their habits	



## **The Importance of Natural Supports**

“Natural supports” are methods of inclusion and assistance that exist in any given workplace, and that an employee with a disability can tap into. These supports help the person to perform her role, and also to feel socially included—which is crucial for high performance and job retention.

Natural supports can involve people, procedures, customs, tools, and benefits that are typically available in the workplace, along with individualized supports seen as normative within the setting.

Here are some examples of natural supports:

- An employee with a disability takes part in the typical training and “on-boarding” process that all employees go through, with additional support from human resources personnel to complete forms and review the business handbook.
- Coworkers invite the employee to the usual workplace coffee hour, which happens every Tuesday morning from 8:30 to 9:30.
- The employee’s supervisor goes over the employee’s to-do list every afternoon to keep tabs on what he’s accomplished.
- The employee’s office mate reminds her when it’s time to leave for the afternoon so that she doesn’t miss her bus.

These supports allow an employee with disabilities to engage in social rituals and to become a full member of her workplace. They also help her to strengthen her independence on the job. The supports may be spontaneously generated in the workplace, or they may be facilitated by employment services staff.

All employees (with and without disabilities) seek out help to get their jobs done. For each person, that assistance is based on individualized needs. Figuring out these needs and helping to facilitate appropriate natural supports is imperative as you assist people with disabilities on the job.

### **Social Inclusion: Essential for High Performance**

One key aspect of natural supports is that they increase employees’ social inclusion at the workplace.

This inclusion is critical for professional success. Could you succeed at your own job if you weren’t part of a team, or didn’t communicate effectively with your coworkers? Would you stay at your job if you felt socially excluded?

How well you fit in socially at work goes beyond your job satisfaction. It also influences how your supervisor and coworkers view your job performance, and how they approach solving problems you have on the job.

Establishing a natural support network for a worker with disabilities is an important part of your job as an employment professional. It's also fundamental to fading your own support over time.

### **How Workplace Inclusion Happens**

For many people with significant disabilities, social inclusion at work has been a challenge. While our schools, communities, and workplaces are becoming more inclusive of people with disabilities, we still often make assumptions about what they can and cannot do. Many disabilities, including autism, also affect people's social interactions, and can be misunderstood in the workplace.

The good news is that social connections at work can smooth many bumpy interactions. These connections also affect the formal and informal training and support a worker receives.

Here are some steps you can take to ensure that a person with a disability will be fully included in the workplace:

Create the expectation throughout the job development process that the **employer will provide training and support** for the worker, as they would with any other employee. This can include identifying coworkers who will act as trainers or mentors for the worker with a disability.

If job coaching is part of the support plan, explain to the employer the **role of the job coach**. The job coach is there to supplement, not substitute for, the supports available within the workplace.

Explain to the employer the importance of social inclusion to the **long-term success** of the employee.

Discuss the **specific support needs** of the individual, and how these will be met, in a way that enhances his inclusion, rather than stigmatizing him. Provide functional guidance and information that will invite comfortable interactions. Under what conditions does the new employee do his best work? What are the most effective ways to communicate with him?

Ensure that the area where the person with a disability will be working is not isolated, but is **physically integrated into the workplace**.

Design the job so that the worker has **regular contact and interaction** with coworkers.

Have the employee work a **similar schedule to others**, with the same break times, meal times, etc.

### **Basic Principles to Keep in Mind**

Here are some basic principles to help make sure natural supports function well.

**Each workplace has its own culture.** Learn the informal rules and norms of each workplace, along with the features and benefits that the business offers. This will help you assist a worker in developing supports and social connections—in other words, fitting in. This includes learning about opportunities such as tuition reimbursement and gym membership, as well as the social rituals of the workplace (breaks, lunch, parties, etc.), and how the worker can participate.

**Social integration comes first, not second.** Research has shown that new workers first develop social connections, and then master their job responsibilities. It's often those social relationships that help develop natural supports. Social connections also help create the flexibility that allows natural supports to function.

**External support has multiple effects on the workplace.** The presence of agency staff on the worksite, as well as how you define your role there, influences how the employer and coworkers view and interact with the new employee. Role-model positive interactions, being respectful of the individual and choosing the least intrusive ways to provide assistance.

**Ongoing support requires strong business partnerships.** As employers and coworkers play a larger role in training and supporting workers with disabilities, your role shifts as well. You become more of a supplementary resource, providing backup and consultation as needed.

### **Cautions About Natural Supports**

Natural supports can have pitfalls, like any other strategy. Here are some things to watch out for.

**Don't impose a new model upon the business.** Instead, encourage employers to become more involved, starting with the job development process. You'll be there to support both the employer and the worker throughout the tenure of employment.

**Don't use natural supports as an excuse** to provide skimpy services, or to withdraw agency support. Natural supports aren't about dumping all responsibility on the employer. A key feature of supported employment is that agency support is long-term.

**Don't try to turn coworkers into disability services professionals.** Employers and coworkers will often need your expert guidance to understand and interact with a worker with disabilities. They don't need to become disability experts, but they do need to interact with all employees as unique individuals.

### **The Bottom Line**

Natural supports can help you improve the career experience of the employees with disabilities you serve. They can also be useful as you fade your own presence on the job site over time. So make sure to discuss natural supports with job seekers, new hires, and supervisors.

# Workplace Culture Assessment Tool

Every workplace has a culture -- a set of group expectations, behavioral norms, and social customs that governs what goes on and how it is interpreted. Some aspects of a workplace culture reflect the priorities and style of the management, while other aspects develop among the workforce and are not directly associated with the production aspects of the job. Some aspects are written down, others are more informal and may even be done without conscious awareness. Learning the workplace culture is an important aspect of socialization for new employees. Following key elements of the culture is one of the ways employees come to feel that they “belong,” and largely what people mean when they speak of someone being “included” at a work setting. The sense of “fitting-in” is central to job adjustment and satisfaction - work-culture fit is critical for a good job match.

While every workplace has a culture, some cultures are “stronger” and may extend to more aspects of the setting, involve employees more fully, and offer more support. Certain cultures offer more possibilities for inclusion.

This **Workplace Culture Tool** helps you assess whether a new employee (your client) is taking full advantage of social inclusion opportunities at his / her job.

Use the following chart to note your observations. Also talk with the worker and other employees to gather info during in-person visits to the worksite.

Then summarize your experience per instructions at the end of this assignment.



Trainee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Consumer's Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of visit(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Details / Comment: \_\_\_\_\_ Strategies to increase inclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

<p>1. Are there other workers who have the same jobs in the work area or group?</p>	<p>no <input type="checkbox"/>    yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
<p>2. Have most of the workers been with the company for a year or more?</p>	<p>no <input type="checkbox"/>    yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
<p>3. Are there some tasks that two or more workers perform together to complete?</p>	<p>no <input type="checkbox"/>    yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
<p>4. Are there certain tasks at work that almost everyone does?</p>	<p>no <input type="checkbox"/>    yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If yes, describe:</p>	
<p>5. Is there a time during the day when workers are more likely to: - talk socially? - help one another with work?</p>	<p>no <input type="checkbox"/>    yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>		

		Details / Comments:	Strategies to increase inclusion:
6. Is there a set work schedule?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, Start _____ End _____	
7. Is there a time during the day when workers tend to socialize more?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, describe:	
8. Are there particular places where workers tend to socialize more?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>		
9. Do workers eat lunch together?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, schedule and routines:	
10. Are there other break times shared by coworkers?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, schedule and routines:	
11. Do most workers know a co-workers birthday or spouse's name?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>		

	Details / Comments:		Strategies to increase inclusion:
12. Did coworkers receive help last week to: -remember something? -finish a task? -talk about a personal problem? -figure out a work problem?	no      yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
13. Do employees recognize or celebrate any special occasions, such as birthdays?	no      yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, events and routines:	
14. Are there staff or employee meetings?	no      yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Type and schedule:	
15. Do workers learn their jobs from: -an orientation session? -a co-worker mentor? -a formal company training program?	no      yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> no      yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, type and how arranged: no      yes	

	Details / Comments:	Strategies to increase inclusion:
16. Do coworkers typically play any pranks on a new employee as a type of initiation?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, describe:	
17. Are there special terms or language used by the workers?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, list:	
18. Is there equipment many workers share the use of, like a fax machine or a mop?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, list:	
19. Do workers go to their supervisor to talk over work problems?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
20. Is worker job performance reviewed by the supervisor?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, schedule and format:	
21. Do supervisors ask workers for their opinions or suggestions?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
22. Are there aspects of the job that the supervisor pays extra / special attention to?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, describe:	
23. Do workers feel that the company responds to individual worker needs and preferences?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

	Details / Comments:	Strategies to increase inclusion:																
24. Does the company sponsor any social activities like an annual picnic, or any sports teams?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>																	
25. Are any items issued to employees (locker, key, uniform)?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>																	
26. Is there a typical means for getting paid at the job?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>																	
27. Do workers ever get together outside of work?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>																	
28. Is there a particular code of dress or appearance for employees?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>																	
29. Does the company sponsor or assist with: - Employee Asst. Program? - carpooling / transp. Discounts? - special awards or incentives? - “flextime” work schedules? - wellness or fitness program? - child care? - other supportive program?	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">no</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	no	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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	Details / Comments:	Strategies to increase inclusion:
30. Are there company or department rules and policies everyone must follow?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, what are they?
31. Are worker's names publically listed, such as on mail slots, doors, or posted schedules?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
32. Are there any social customs workers follow to fit in socially (e.g. coffee fund)?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, describe:
33. Is there support for advancement and career development within the company?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
34. Over all, do workers feel that this is a good place to work?	no <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Summarize how the worker can take advantage of your findings in this assessment. Which areas strike you as most powerful? Where are there gaps, or important opportunities missing? What are some concrete steps you can take to maximize the inclusion potential for this individual?



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<p><i>Learning and Development Increases Employee Motivation</i></p> <p>Article from LinkedIn</p>	<p><a href="https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/learning-development-increases-employee-motivation-ren%C4%81rs-alksn%C4%ABtis/">https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/learning-development-increases-employee-motivation-ren%C4%81rs-alksn%C4%ABtis/</a></p>
<p><i>9 Major Benefits of Cross-Training Employees Effectively</i></p> <p>Article on Edgepoint Learning</p>	<p><a href="#">9 Major Benefits of Cross-Training Employees Effectively   EdgePoint Learning</a></p>
<p><i>Supported Employment and Natural Support: A Critique and Analysis</i></p> <p>Full article from PowerPoint</p>	<p><a href="https://worksupport.com/documents/article15.pdf">https://worksupport.com/documents/article15.pdf</a></p>
<p><i><u>Inclusive Workplaces: 22 Best Examples &amp; Tips</u></i></p> <p>Article supporting Inclusion</p>	<p><a href="#">Inclusive Workplaces: 22 Best Examples + Tips (teambuilding.com)</a></p>
<p><i>Natural Supports and Fading</i></p> <p>Article from Institute for Community Inclusion</p>	<p><a href="https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:b4d430c1-2fae-342b-b05c-ae455f9eb64b">https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:b4d430c1-2fae-342b-b05c-ae455f9eb64b</a></p>
<p><i>Job Coaches as Accommodations</i></p> <p>Fact Sheet from Northeast ADA Center</p>	<p><a href="https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:aa2c3792-4420-3f06-99f9-13cdcf604d86">https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:aa2c3792-4420-3f06-99f9-13cdcf604d86</a></p>
<p><i>SEMP Billing Guidebook</i></p> <p>Eleversity.org</p>	<p><a href="https://eleversity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/SEMP-Doc-Billing-Full-Guidebook-9.9.19.pdf">https://eleversity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/SEMP-Doc-Billing-Full-Guidebook-9.9.19.pdf</a></p>
<p><i>Tools for Inclusion</i></p> <p>Article from Institute for Community Inclusion</p>	<p><a href="https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:d7cc2b5b-1400-3582-a570-19464768893f">https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:d7cc2b5b-1400-3582-a570-19464768893f</a></p>