

**The LCBDD**  
**Description of the Vocational Discovery Process**

Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities program staff believe that all individuals can achieve integrated community employment with appropriate supports. The following is a description of the Discovery Process, designed to assist in matching an individual to an appropriate job site.

The Discovery process is an individualized determination of an individual's strengths, interests, preferences and accommodation and support needs resulting in the development of a vocational profile that is used to assist in choosing a community-based employment option.

The Discovery process uses a team approach to get to know the person beyond the public face presented. Team members participate in the stages of discovery which include an initial family visit, a Discovery team meeting, interviews and observations which result in a vocational profile. The vocational profile describes what is learned during Discovery and guides the team during the final meeting. During the final meeting, called the Employment Planning Team Meeting, the profile is shared and team members identify vocational themes and employment possibilities that can be pursued.

The process begins with an Introduction to Discovery Meeting. The individual and his team members meet and are introduced to the process by obtaining copies of the Discovery Flow Chart and two Vocational Profile examples (The Positive Personal Profile and the Discovery Staging Record). The expectations of the team members during this process are explained, and the individual agrees to begin the process. Release of Information forms are signed, transportation arrangements are determined and dates for the Home Visit and Discovery Team Meeting are decided. Finally, the SASS discusses ISP content and/or revisions.

The home visit is an opportunity for staff to further explain the Discovery process to the family and to begin learning about the individual's interests, chores completed in the home, community activities that the person participates in, friends and transportation options. . An example of a completed profile is shared with the family in order to familiarize them with the end result of the Discovery process. The Discovery Team Meeting date, time and location is confirmed.

A neighborhood observation is also conducted to identify potential social and vocational opportunities that may possibly match the interests of the individual that are close to home.

The Discovery Team meeting brings together team members to discuss the individual's strengths, talents, interests, personality traits, habits/routines, activities, dislikes, and needed accommodations and supports. Prior to the completion of the team meeting, discussion occurs among members, identifying the types of vocational observations that can be conducted and possible job sites where those can occur. Previous staff and/or

teachers that have worked with the individual are identified and arrangements are made to interview those people.

Interviews that are conducted with staff and/or others help to identify the individual's learning style and provide a baseline for understanding the individual's employability skills. This information verifies and expands on understanding the individual's interests and accommodation and support needs.

Social Observations are conducted with the individual to determine social connections, connections to community activities, accommodation, supports and/or training needs. When an individual is not actively engaged in any social activities, staff will arrange to go with the individual to activities that reflect their interests.

Vocational observations are arranged in employment settings that match the individual's stated interests. They consist of one to three 2-3 hour job try-outs where the individual can partake in specific job tasks that are identified as those matching the interests of the individual. Notes are taken during those observations that capture information about the motivation of the individual, skill level, the quality of performance in terms of pace, correctness, stamina, and observable employability skills.

All information obtained during the many stages of Discovery are summarized in the vocational profile which summarized the individual's interest and preferences, life and work experiences, skills and knowledge, dislikes, accommodation and support needs, transportation resources, and other general observations. The profile is sent to the individual/family to obtain their permission to disseminate the document to the team members in advance of the Employment Planning Meeting.

During the Employment Planning Meeting, employment themes to pursue on behalf of the individual are identified along with the identification of conditions necessary for successful employment based on the individual's complexities and individual preferences. Conditions are features that need to be in place in order for the individual to be their best and to make the greatest contribution to the workplace. The team also discusses the employment option to be pursued for the individual. Notes from this meeting are summarized into an Employment Planning Summary which is attached to the vocational profile.

The Vocational Profile and the Employment Planning Summary documents are readily used by staff who pursues employment for the individual and by a job coach who uses it to develop a training plan and strategies to assist the individual in becoming independent on the jobsite. Staff will also use the profile to explore specific segments of the labor market that match the interests of the individual and identify specific contributions that the individual might offer to employers.

The Discovery process is ideal for individuals with complex challenges. It captures information in a positive way, yet identifies information about the accommodation and support needs of the individual in a way that enhances the individual's chances of successful employment.