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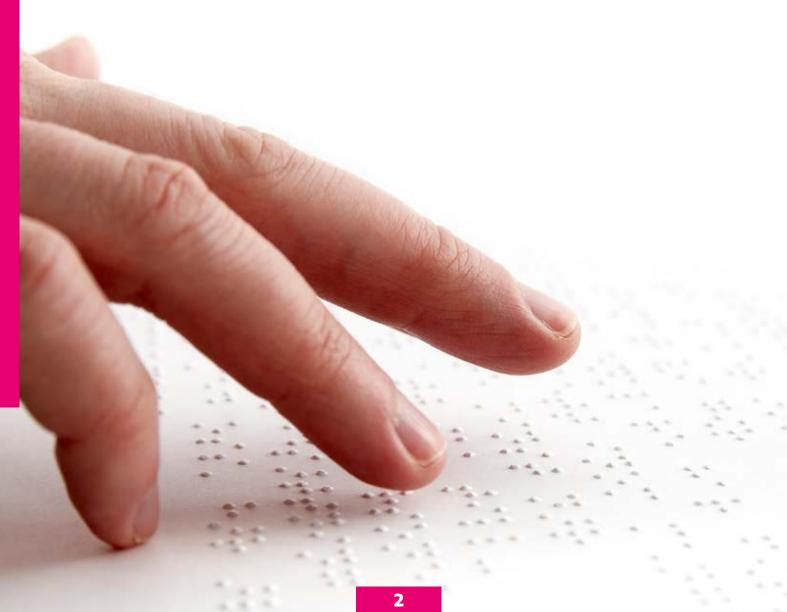

Employment assessment toolkit: Action plan development

Introduction

This document is intended to help the employment advisor use the important information collected from the assessment tool to develop an action plan for your client. The process has two stages:

- Scoring the screening questions
- Action plan development

The employment advisor should initially carry out these tasks after completing the assessment tool. It is important to then discuss the score and plan with your client before finalising. The action plan will then be the basis of the ongoing work with your client until it is agreed to reassess the situation.

The assessment tool is particularly helpful in identifying the core areas your client should focus on in order to become more work-ready. The action plan should identify the interventions required to make this happen. It should bring together the knowledge gained through the assessment tool and scoring process with a set of clear, concise objectives. It is this alignment between the assessment process, scoring the screening questions and the action plan that makes the toolkit so effective.

Scoring the screening questions

This sheet is to help employment advisors to use some of the information collected through the questions to give a rapid indication of their client's distance from the labour market. One of five levels are assigned, which are used to help understand the types of support required:

Level 1: Work ready

Level 2a: Nearly work ready (closer)

Level 2b: Nearly work ready (further)

Level 3: Longer term support needed

Level 4: Foundation work required before employment services

The method involves three simple steps:

1. Summarising the screening questions in the following seven areas:

    - employment experience
    - flexibility of access to information
    - computer skills
    - independent travel
    - explaining vision
    - education, training and skillset
    - focus and motivation.

2. Adding up the scores and assigning your client to the appropriate level.

3. Interpreting and summary (considering contextual variables such as your client's age, vision, local employment opportunities, and disabilities other than sightloss).

1. Summarising the screening questions

Note: for yes/no questions, yes=1 and no=0.

Employment experience

Question	Score
Q1 Time not working (1-6)	
Q4 Worked with a visual impairment (0-1)	
Total score (1-7)	
Closer to work or further from work	

If the total score is between 5 and 7 (inclusive), then "closer to work" (C)
or
If the total score is less than 5, then "further from work" (F)

Flexibility of access to information

Here we are interested in the range of methods of accessing information available (through print, computers, or braille). Drawing upon Q14 (print), Q16 (computers), and Q17 (braille):

If your client can access written material using a computer, and read text from the printed page or braille, then "closer to work"(C)

If not, then "further from work" (F)

Question	Score
Closer to work or further from work	

Computer skills

Question	Score
Q32 Confidence: Writing documents (1-6)	
Q33 Confidence: Email (1-6)	
Q34 Confidence: Internet (1-6)	
Q35 Frequency: Writing documents (1-6)	
Q36 Frequency: Email (1-6)	
Q37 Frequency: Internet (1-6)	
Total score (6-36)	
Closer to work or further from work	

If the score is 27 to 36 (inclusive), then "closer to work" (C)
or
If the score is less than 27, then "further from work" (F)

Independent travel

Question	Score
Q40 Local mobility confidence (1-6)	
Q41 Local mobility frequency (1-6)	
Q42 Unfamiliar mobility confidence (1-6)	
Total score (3-18)	
Closer to work or further from work	

If the total score is between 14 and 18 (inclusive), then "closer to work" (C)
or
If the total score is less than 14, then "further from work" (F)

Explaining vision

Question	Score
Q48 Explaining vision to employer / self advocacy (1-6)	
Q49 Requesting adjustment (1-6)	
Total score (2-12)	
Closer to work or further from work	

If the total score is between 10 and 12 (inclusive), then "closer to work" (C)
or
If the total score is less than 10, then "further from work" (F)

Education, training, and skill set

Question	Score
Q58 Employment advisor's view of education and training (1-6)	
Closer to work or further from work	

If the score is between 5 and 6 (inclusive), then "closer to work" (C)
or
If the score is below 5, then "further from work" (F)

Focus and motivation

Question	Score
Q7 Search activity (0-1)	
Q53 Importance of work (1-6)	
Total score (1-7)	
Closer to work or further from work	

If the score is between 6 and 7 (inclusive), then "closer to work" (C)
or
If the score is below 5, then "further from work" (F)

2. Adding up the scores

Applying final seven scores to the segmentation model:

Level 1:   Work ready; if all 7 categories are "closer to work"

Level 2a: Nearly work ready (closer); if 6 are "closer to work"

Level 2b: Nearly work ready (further); if 4 or 5 are "closer to work"

Level 3:   Longer term support needed; if 2 or 3 are "closer to work"

Level 4:   Foundation work required before employment services;
                     if less than 2 are "closer to work"

Segmentation level is:..

3. Interpreting scores – your professional judgement

The method described above will generate a level for your client. However, your professional judgement is also important in the process of interpreting this assessment. Evidence suggests that other variables are important predictors of likelihood of employment as well. For example, four important variables are age, vision, local job opportunities, and disabilities other than sight loss. These variables in particular should be considered when discussing with your client the most appropriate interventions.

Considering the segmentation level above, other evidence you have gathered, and discussion with your client:

Revised segmentation level (if appropriate) is: ....

Segmentation model

This model is based on many years' service delivery experience, wide-ranging input from employment support teams, and relevant research. The model is indicative of the different types of job seekers, and therefore the different kinds of support required.

Level 1 – Work ready

People in this group are articulate, independent and motivated. They are likely to have been recently employed (ie, in the last 6 months), with a consistent employment history. They may have been through higher education or additional vocational training, and have many disability-specific skills (ie, assistive technology skills, mobility skills and knowledge of how to obtain support and services). These individuals do not usually require a great deal of assistance.

They may require specific information (for example, how to become self – employed), specific job-brokerage assistance (for example, with inaccessible employer websites) or support for a limited amount of time.

Level 2a – Nearly work ready (closer)

People at level 2 are fairly motivated, independent and want to work. They are likely to have experience of employment and some qualifications. This group have some disability-specific skills (for example, in assistive technology, mobility and independence), but there may also be gaps that require development and support. They are most likely to want support with job-brokerage (for example, job search, completing application forms, interview techniques and disclosure. There is likely to be a balance between assisting with these tasks, and encouraging these individuals to carry out tasks for themselves. People at this level may already have done voluntary work to gain experience, and support is likely to focus on how well they apply their disability-specific skills and their motivation to work hard at finding employment.

Level 2b – Nearly work ready (further)

These individuals are similar to those in 2a, but in need of greater support over a longer period of time in order to plug the gaps in their employment history, qualifications, work-related skills and disability-specific skills. They often need to do voluntary work, skills training or college-based learning to improve their ability to convince employers to consider them for employment. They also draw upon job-brokerage, but the support required to find suitable jobs, make applications and prepare for work will be greater than for those individuals at a higher level.

Level 3 – Longer term support needed

This group of people require a great deal of sustained, structured support, most likely over several years. They would like to work, but may have limited literacy and numeracy skills, a lack of information technology and assistive technology skills, or a lack of mobility and independence skills. This group may not have worked for many years and are likely to have little knowledge of the current labour market. They may not fully appreciate employer expectations, and so may have unrealistic career aspirations. They may be engaged with your employment services, and may have used many others in the past, but they are a long way from being ready to work and will require intensive input and support.

Level 4 – Foundation work required before employment services

People at level 4 often require a great deal of help before they can even think about work. Typically this group of individuals face multiple barriers, including other disabilities. These are compounded by additional barriers such as limited or an absence of disability-specific skills, a lack of mobility and independence skills, low literacy and numeracy levels, and little or no information technology or assistive technology skills. They may have no expectation or motivation to work, although there are individuals at this level who do wish to find employment. Some people at level 4 might helpfully be seen as potential customers of wider services, such as independent living support or welfare advice, rather than employment services. These people may have little or no opportunities for social interaction, and so support initially may be about ensuring they have access to these wider support services. They may then be better placed to seek employment in the future.

Action plan development

The design of the assessment tool should have already prompted some discussion with your client about potential actions they might be supported in taking. This final section involves bringing those initial discussions together to develop and agree an action plan. These might be usefully considered under the following headings:

- Job search approaches
- Steps toward employment (for example, voluntary work)
- Access to information and computer skills
- Travel and mobility
- Vision and health-related matters
- Target job or job area
- Other areas of intervention, for example, courses and qualifications; referral to other services (such as benefits, housing)

Once specific interventions have been agreed, we suggest you use the following structure to create an action plan:

- Overall aim – what does your client want to achieve? A particular job, voluntary work, paid work, part-time, full-time, additional qualifications or vocational skills? Is this to be achieved within a specific time frame?
- Objective – for example, to gain experience of administration work. Is this to be achieved within a specific time frame?
- Related area of the assessment tool and score (for example, target job or independent travel, both scored further from work)
- A breakdown of the objective into steps (SMART goals)
- Identify who is involved – for example, internal or external providers
- Is there an additional cost? How will it be paid for? Which provider will be paid?

An action plan template is included overleaf for reference or use.

Actionplan template

Overall aimis: ....

Headings (use relevant sections only)	Objective (list for each section)	Related area in screening tool and score (F,C) for example, Employment	A breakdown of objective into steps (SMART)	Who is involved? Internal/ external providers?	Start date	Proposed completion date	Additional costs? Name of provider?
Job search approaches	1.						
	2.						
	3.						
Steps towards employment	1.						
	2.						
	3.						
Access to information and computer skills							
Travel and mobility							
Vision and health – related matters							
Target job or job area							
Other areas of intervention							

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