

## TIE THAT BINDS

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**Attitude is the Real Disability**

### **Static Cling Decals**

Part of the 3-day training in Sevierville for Employment Services Certificate Program included a discussion on how to market your employment program. Leave it up to Mitzi Boruff and Chris Munger from Employment Enabling Services to give us that “aha moment.”

Mitzi gives supporting businesses a static cling decal to put in their window. It says something along the line of “A Proud Partner of Project Enable.” This has generated a lot of discussion and questions as to what Project Enable is and makes the business recognizable in the disability community.

The most often asked question is “What do I have to do to be a proud partner?” Although it can be individualized for your agency, Employment Enabling Services awards the decals to businesses that hire people with disabilities or businesses that participate in situational assessment sites.

You may want to consider businesses that provide services and goods for celebrations and parties. Any business that goes out of its way to help your agency with its mission may be a good candidate to recognize in the community.

### **Workers Comp Rates**

When approached about doing an onsite assessment, a business is often hesitant because of insurance concerns. Check with the business manager. Most community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) carry a policy that states that a person is coming to the CRP for rehabilitation and is covered by the CRP for that time – today’s rehabilitation just happens to be in the community and is a covered activity.

The more prominent concern has to do with hiring a person with a disability. Businesses will put you off with a statement about their insurance rate going up if they hire a person



with a disability. Be armed with the facts. Insurance rates are established by the classification of the business. Heavy industry will pay a higher premium than clerical, because it is inherently more dangerous. The rate for a particular business is then modified by its number of claims.

So, rates are established by classification and modified by the number of claims that a particular business may submit – not by who is hired.

### **Job Club Ideas**

One of the tools CRPs are using is a job club. The activities of job clubs vary, but one of the constants is discussing work and employment. If the job club is focused on people interested in going to work, concentrate on resumes, mock interviews, mentoring activities, job shadowing, tours of local businesses, and general exploration of the business community and self-discovery of the job seeker. Video taping a mock interview gives the job seeker a new perspective.

If the job club is intended for people already working, concentrate on maintaining the job activities or obtaining a better job. Discussing common work problems or recognizing achievements gives people insight about the quality of their job. Taking tours of the businesses where people work gives those people pride in their workplace and recognizes the workplace.

If the job club is open to both people who want to work and people who are already working, it can be a great motivational tool. Job seekers will see the possibilities of working and those who are working can talk about their successes. People who are working can be the role models for others that community employment is possible.

If you have ideas and want to share what your job clubs are doing, please email them to me and I can share with others.

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## **Killer Phrases**

There are many people working in the disability field with great ideas. But how often do these ideas get shot down, without even thinking about the possibilities? There is a website out there about de-motivation. Have you caught yourself saying or thinking these?

- # Yes, but . . .
- # We've tried that before.
- # That's irrelevant.
- # Don't be ridiculous.
- # It's not in the budget.
- # You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
- # Because I said so.
- # Who will get the credit?
- # What will people say?
- # Be practical.

Visit the website [www.despair.com](http://www.despair.com).

## **Accommodations**

From the President's Committee's Job Accommodation Network, we learn some interesting facts about assisting people with disabilities on the job. The myth out there is that accommodations are costly. Here is what the committee is reporting:

1. 31% of accommodations cost nothing.
2. 50% cost less than \$50.
3. 69% cost less than \$500.
4. 88% cost less than \$1,000.

For more information about job accommodations, visit <http://www.jan.wvu.edu/soar/disabilities.html>

An Internet search on *job accommodations* gives a variety of sites about accommodations. These can provide updated information when meeting with businesses and countering their reluctance to hire a person with a disability because of the cost.

## **Conflict versus Behavior**

By Stephanie Jones, President of TNAPSE

I recently attended my first TASH (Equity, Opportunity and Inclusion for People with Disabilities) conference. One session stood out.

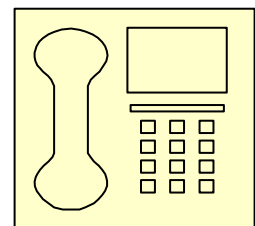
It was conducted by a married couple by the name of Emma Van der Klift and Norman Kunc. Norman has severe cerebral palsy. The session was called *Learning to Stand Still: Non-Coercive Responses to Puzzling Behavior*.

Norman started with the idea that there is no such thing as a behavior problem, only conflict. When a client raises his voice and curses at staff, we call that a behavior problem, right? But when a husband and wife argue by yelling or cursing, we just think of that as a conflict. Why is this? It all comes down to power. If we see ourselves as having power over someone, *they* have behavior problems. When we see ourselves as equals, *we* have conflicts. We all speak of equality, but we need to start walking the walk by treating our clients as our equals and looking at behavior problems as conflicts. When you do this, you give people power.

Can you make people do what you want them to do? No? How about if your boss said all employees who stayed at work until 8:00 pm tonight would get \$1,000? Would you stay? Of course you would. We can make people do what we want them to, but is it right to use coercion to influence behavior? No, because all that does is create a power struggle, which can lead to more conflict. Instead, let's work to understand the person and see how we can resolve the conflict before deciding to persuade someone to act a certain way by using power.

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Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance  
to work hard at work worth doing.

**Theodore Roosevelt**