A Key to Successful Employment: Preparing to Teach

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What is Systematic Instruction?

A universally effective approach to teaching when an individual experiences difficulty learning tasks or activities that includes:

- Preparing to teach (task design and task analysis),
- Individualizing teaching strategies, and
- Assessing progress.

An approach that evolved in response to once widely accepted and devastating beliefs...

- That diagnostic labels and/or IQ scores predicted an individual's ability to learn.
- A quote from 1866 by Edouard Seguin, considered by many to be “Father” of the United States movement toward institutionalization.

"Only a medical man could fully appreciate the educational needs of idiots while also providing the necessary diagnostic tools to separate the idiot, who was amenable to training, from the idiot encumbered by other disabilities, who was not."
In the past, lack of expectation was often reflected in the naming of services...

- Established 1906 - Rome State Custodial Asylum for Unteachable Idiots
- Established 1917 - Faribault School for the Training of Imbeciles and the Custody of Idiots
- Formal Implementation of Special Education 1975 – “Tracks” developed for FMR’s, EMR’s and Custodial services
- Special Education High School Classrooms 2000 – Life Skills vs. Transition

Sheltered workshop movement resulted in three main types of workshops (Gold, 1972)

Transitional Shop – clients come in from variety of settings and prepare for competitive employment

Extended Care or Terminal Shop – clients believed to be incapable of achieving competitive employment remain for indefinite periods

Comprehensive Shop – attempts to service both types of clients

Emerging leaders combined research and values in developing teaching strategies Late 60's into 70's and beyond

- Marc Gold, University of Illinois, Try Another Way
- Paul Wehman, Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
- Lou Brown, University of Wisconsin
- Tom Bellamy, University of Oregon, Specialized Training Program
Fundamental beliefs – shared values...

- Individuals previously labeled unable to learn had much more potential than anyone realized.
- All people with disabilities should have the opportunity to live their lives much like everyone else.
- Everyone can learn if we can figure out how to teach them.
- A lack of learning should first be interpreted as insufficient use of teaching strategies rather than inability of the learner.

We must presume competence...

"Assume a person has intellectual ability, provide opportunities to be exposed to learning, assume the person wants to learn and assert himself/herself in the world."

Douglas Biklen
Syracuse University
Essential Component in Moving Forward with Employment First

- Original focus of SI research was for those with greater challenges in learning new and complex tasks and activities.

- Approach to task design, task analysis, and teaching strategies allow for consideration of tasks or jobs that may have been perceived as too complex or technical for supported employment candidates.
Essential Component in Moving Forward with Employment First

- Individualizing use of SI with all learners adds value (independence, success, capacity, satisfaction)
- Teaching strategies focus on increasing independence throughout the task versus a "fade at the end" approach
- A weapon to weaken and destroy the "virtual" readiness model

Systematic Instruction Needed When:

- Loose teaching (incidental or casual learning) is not getting the person where they want or need to be
- Learning style is best accommodated by systematic instruction
- Activity or task has element of risk if not done correctly
Systematic Instruction Important Components

Preparing to teach
- Task Design
- Task Analysis

Teaching
- Delivering and fading assistance
- Identifying and teaching to cues
- Error correction
- Assessing progress
- Addressing difficult steps

Purpose of Task Design: Determining Most Appropriate Method for Completing Task

“Most appropriate” will depend
- What is current design? Has work been standardized?
- Changes to accommodate physical ease and efficiency?
- Designed to support learning and independence?
- Opportunity to determine performance standards: What are expectations for accuracy and productivity?

Task Design: Opportunity to Identify Cues (It’s All About the Cue)

What do you see that would make this task/job easier to learn? (natural cues within the job or task that you will teach to)
- The natural, existing cues that exist in a task are the “clues” about what step is next.
- We need to be prepared to teach to the cues in the task from the first time through or we run the risk of becoming the “cue”.
- Are there opportunities to highlight or add cues?
Task Design Strategies

- What do you learn about this task/job that would make it easier to do? (physical demands of job or task: lifting, fine motor, difficult manipulations)

- What might you add to make it easier to remember? (self-management strategies: pictures, lists, templates)

- Is there an opportunity to design so that possibility of errors would be eliminated or minimized? (Error Proofing)
**Task Analysis – What, When, and Why**

- **WHAT**  Breaks the task into discreet, observable steps and lists in order
- **WHEN**  Following job analysis, identification of job tasks (standard work) and in response to individual need
- **WHY**  A useful tool when the complexity of the task is presenting challenges to the learner (or trainer)
- **WHY**  Focuses trainer attention on the specific demands of the task and cues within the task

**Guidelines in Constructing a Task Analysis**

- Individualize always: Specific to individual, task and trainer
- Prior to writing, practice with learner including any changes to task design
- Break into steps and list in order, including cue for each step
- Record in clear, concise manner

**Keep in Mind**

The task analysis **lists** the steps, it does not **teach** the steps.

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Guidelines for Data Collection

- Collect data on a probe or intermittent basis (a sampling over time)
- Maintain consistent training throughout the probe (assist and correct as needed)
- Give credit (+) if accurate and independent
- No credit (-) is given if error or assistance is given
- At end of probe, count number of steps (-) and record
### Binding Post – Data graphed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Humidity</th>
<th>Dew Point</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1/2018</td>
<td>00:00</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Site A</td>
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<td>1/2/2018</td>
<td>00:00</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Site B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3/2018</td>
<td>00:00</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Site C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Notes:
- Site A: High humidity and dew point indicating potential condensation issues.
- Site B: Moderate conditions, no immediate concerns.
- Site C: Consistent levels, no changes observed.

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4/19/2018
Task Analysis Provides Functional Data

- Efficient method to track skill acquisition, productivity, and safety
- Sensitive to small gains
- Highlights steps that are difficult and may need change in design or teaching strategy
- Easy to interpret and share

Resources

*Systematic Instruction of Functional Skills for Students and Adults With Disabilities* by Keith Storey, Ph.D. and Craig Miner (March 2011)

*Did I Say That? Articles and Commentary on the Try Another Way System* by Marc Gold (1980), Champaign, IL: Research Press

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