

# FAMILIES MUST PREPARE THEIR CHILDREN FOR WORK

## CHORES AND ACCOUNTABILITY BREED COMPETENCE AND CONFIDENCE

Jobseekers should seek out an employment agency with skillful job developers to represent them to employers. These professionals have resources that individuals do not. However, families are often the best advocates for their family members with developmental disabilities. Families can prepare them for success by seeking out and providing job opportunities early - before they try to enter the general workforce. Jobseekers with developmental disabilities are seen as atypical, in any hiring process. They must work to overcome employers' perceptions about their capabilities.

## Actions to do from a young age

- ♦ **Give the family** members real chores - not busywork
- ♦ **Instill accountability** in them - let them know the parameters of the job, when is a job done and when is a job done well
- ♦ **Look for opportunities** to volunteer in the community - help them apply their skills to a world outside the home
- ♦ **Look for part time work** during the school years that matches their interests, abilities, and skill sets

When looking for work, jobseekers must understand that they need to overcome negative perceptions and to demonstrate to potential employers that they are employable.



Watch Video

*"He was exposed to different jobs and different opportunities that helped with him getting the idea of a job as well."*

## What do individuals need to be employable?

**Abilities.** Do they know what skills are required for the job? (not to get a job) Do they have them?

**Motivation.** What is their willingness to go to work and do the tasks involved?

**Access** to the job market. Do they realize the amount of job market access they will get through their own efforts and qualifications? Do they know the number of employers that seriously entertain the jobseekers' application for work?

**Credibility** with the person hiring. How will they gain an employer's confidence that they can do the job? How can they demonstrate that what they say they can do will meet the employer's needs?

To be successful, is not just about the jobseeker's skills and wishes, but also one has to consider the needs of the employers. Having an agency that knows what the employers need will allow jobseekers and their families to help shift employer perceptions and even those of other employment stakeholders.

## What do employers want?

♦ **Capable** - a person who can complete tasks with minimum requirements.

♦ **Available** - a person who can start work immediately

♦ **Reliable** - a person who will show up on time, ready and willing to work everyday

♦ **Dependable** - a person on task and working to their best ability

Focusing on the particular strengths of the jobseeker is key to success in getting an employer to 'take a chance' on someone they see as an atypical jobseeker.

Family members' willingness to vouch for, support and be an advocate for the jobseekers can also be important.