

ESSENTIAL SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SHARING PLACES

**BUILDING A
MORE POSITIVE
REPUTATION**

**MAKING
CHOICES**

**GROWING IN
RELATIONSHIPS**

**DEVELOPING
COMPETENCIES**

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Community Presence:

What opportunities does the person have to share places in the community with other citizens?

Where are people spending time now?

What percentage of time is spent in places that are for handicapped people only?

What percentage of time does the person go places with people who are handicapped?

How does the person get places?

With whom does the person go to various places?

What is the variety of places the person goes?

Are people going to places at times and in ways that will increase the likelihood of meeting other citizens from the larger community?

What support and assistance can be provided to increase the number of places people share with people who are not handicapped?

What competencies might the person need to experience greater presence?

What changes in staff, environment and/or the community at large could occur to make the opportunities occur more frequently?

Protection of Rights and Increasing Personal Choices and Interests;

What opportunities does this person have for making choices?

What kinds of decisions does this person make for himself?

What kinds of choices could the person be making in the future?

What would the environment be like which would allow for increased personal choices?

What preferences does/could the person indicate?

What supports need to be provided to enable the person to learn to make choices and decisions?

Does the person have ways to get constructive feedback about decisions?

What support could be provided to manage the risks involved in making choices?

Competence Development:

A competence is a skill or an attribute that is functional and meaningful in natural community environments and relationships. Attributes are functional and meaningful if they significantly decrease a person's dependence or if they develop personal characteristics other people need, want and value. Questions to raise and answer around the issue of competence development include:

What kind of competencies is this person developing?

What individual skills, strengths and interests does the person have that could be the basis for developing skills and attributes that are functional and meaningful in natural community environments and relationships?

What competencies could be built that would develop personal characteristics that other people need and want?

What competencies would be helpful to the person in meeting people and forming relationships? In what ways could the staff/environment change to assist the person in developing particular competencies?

Status Improvement:

How is this person building a positive reputation? What images, labels, stories appear around, or are told about the person?

What has contributed to these stories or things which have been said about the person (e.g. reputation or expectations passed on about the person)?

Do patterns of appearance, activities and personal characteristics promote the perception of the person as a fully human developing citizen?

What could change in terms of the person's possessions, appearance, activities, so that others would value and attribute more status and esteem to the person?

What changes in staff, environment and community at large will assist the person in building a more positive reputation?

Community Participation:

How can the person grow in his life?

Who are the important people in the person's life now?

How much time does the person spend now with people who are handicapped? in programs/ places that are exclusively for handicapped people? with people who are not handicapped?

How do people meet people...what kinds of things do people do/share to meet people and form relationships?

How could staff, the person's environment and the community change to assist the person in expanding his network of personal relationships to include increasing numbers of people who are not also handicapped?

These essential accomplishments and our efforts to achieve them with the people for whom we work require us to think about:

- o changes in the person who is handicapped**

- o changes in programs (staff, environment, etc.)**

- o changes in the community**

Improving Service Quality

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*This article is adapted from the
Blackstone Valley Residential Staff
Training Manual.*

Improving Service Quality is a new method for ensuring that the principle of normalization is put into action. Developed by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle of Georgia, it was introduced to Rhode Island two years ago. Improving Service Quality asks us to shift our focus, from asking "What will these services do?" to "How do we want this to turn out?," and then creating the services to increase chances for success.

To make it simpler, look at what are called the Five Service Accomplishments, and compare the current situation in society to what we hope to accomplish.

1. Community Presence

Current Situation: People with disabilities are set apart by locations and schedules different from those of the general public. There are many places they don't go. They often go out in organized groups.

Our challenge: To include each member of society in the life of the community. To have people with disabilities go to the same places, at the same times, as other people. To have people with developmental disabilities go out with one or more friends, not only in groups with other people with disabilities.

2. Making Choices

Current: Too often decisions are made for people with disabilities. They haven't had the same opportunities as other adults to learn to make choices and to take control over their own lives.

Our challenge: To provide opportunities and support for people with disabilities to make whatever choices they can, and to help them learn to make increasingly complex and important decisions. To also help people to learn to accept the consequences of their decisions.

3. Developing Competence

Current: People with disabilities are too often considered to be unproductive and dependent

Our challenge: To teach personally meaningful and valued skills which are vocational, social, self-care, recreational, etc., and to encourage people with disabilities to take pride in their accomplishments.

4. Improving Status

Current: Adults with disabilities are thought of as "children" or sick. They are often pitied or feared by others.

Our challenge: To value each person with whom we work; to promote community understanding of each person's unique strengths and gifts.

5. Developing Relationships

Current: People with disabilities are very often isolated and lonely. They have few relationships apart from family, co-workers and paid service providers.

Our challenge: To encourage opportunities for meeting people and to help develop social skills for building relationships.

How the Five Accomplishments Work Together

Choices

Community

Relationships

Competence

Status

The five service areas are all interconnected. Making progress in any one means moving forward in all. For example, helping a person improve vocational or work skills is competence building, which can lead to a job in the community, which provides opportunities for developing new relationships, making choices, and increasing status.

What You Can Do

No matter what position you hold, you will be able to assist people with developmental disabilities in one or more of the service areas. Here are some examples:

Community Presence

- Go Out to lunch with the person.

- Walk with them to the bank, pharmacy, or on other errands.

- Teach someone how to use public transportation to get around.

- Go out after work, maybe to the movies, etc.

- Encourage people to act on their interests and tell them about places they might enjoy . sports events, choir, community and church groups, libraries, food coops...

Making Choices

- Give support to people for expressing their opinions.

- Give people opportunities to make everyday choices .ask what they want to eat at meals, what shows they want to see, what they want to buy, etc.

- Encourage people to make more difficult decisions .express an interest in their dreams and long-range plans.

Developing Competence

- Have a positive approach, and expect people to succeed. Remember that responsibility leads to increased self-esteem; support people to try new things. Failing at a task is better than not being allowed to succeed. Remember that responsibility leads to increased self-esteem; assist people in trying new things. Failing at a task is better than not being allowed to try.

- Be a good role model. Show the people you work with the importance of working hard and trying new things.

- Help people learn such basic social skills as appropriate greetings, allowing others personal space, ordering a meal in a restaurant, etc.

Improving status

- Use the same manner of speaking as you would with any person, and listen respectfully to what the person is saying to you.

- Encourage people to dress well and to take pride in their appearance.

- Create a comfortable, homey atmosphere if you support the person where they live.

- Avoid labeling, refer to people by name, or simply as “people”, rather than describing them by disability or role.

Developing Relationships

- Invite people to your home and introduce them to others in the community.

- Talk to people; socialize during lunch and breaks.

- Compliment people on their successes.