

Top 10 Mistakes to Avoid in Transition Planning/Evaluation

Mistake #1: Goals Are Too Broad

Goals are too broad and don't include the specific steps a student will need to take to reach the goal.

(Example: Bob will go to college when he graduates.)

Mistake #2: Goals Are Too Specific

Goals are too specific and focus on a minute detail which may not actually impact a student's functioning.

(Example: Bob will not wear blue clothing more than 3 days in a week.)

Mistake #3: Goals Disregard Students Actual Functioning

Goals based solely on the student's or family's hopes, dreams, and/or interests without considering the student's current academic, physical, mental, or intellectual functioning.

(Example: Bob wants to be a heart surgeon but has a 3rd grade reading and would most likely never be able to pass the MCAT to get admitted.)

Mistake #4: Goals Focus Solely on Academics

Goals are focus only on academics and do not include the other two domains mentioned in IDEA: post-secondary employment and independent living. IQ is not always a predictor of success.

(Example: Bob is 17 years old and has a goal of successfully answering 7 out of 10 Algebra problems correctly, but his mother dresses and bathes him every day.)

Mistake #5: Goals Disregard Student's Local Job Market

Goals do not consider the actual job market that the student lives in or is willing to move to and whether it's feasible that they can obtain a position with their training or degree.

(Example: Bob has a BA in History because it's his hobby, but doesn't want to teach.)

Mistake #6: Goals Are Not Student-Centered

Goals are based upon suggestion and influence from others and not necessarily the student's informed choice.

(Example: Bob's parents want him to be an accountant because it pays well and his Dad is an accountant, so they send him to college for that, but he skips class due to lack of interest and doesn't pass anyways.)

Mistake #7: Goals Not Based Upon Vocational Evaluation

Evidenced-based, functional vocational evaluation was either not conducted or, if it was, it was done by staff who lack the appropriate certification, licensure, or training.

(Example: Special education teacher training programs generally provide no training/coursework on teaching or evaluating transition or vocational skills, however many schools unfairly ask teachers to conduct vocational assessments without providing any training or guidance on how to actually administer or interpret the findings.)

Mistake #8: Insufficient Connection to Adult Services

Connection to adult services providers/agencies was either not provided or, if it was, the parent was not educated as to what the agencies actually provide, what their limitations are, and when they should contact them.

(Example: Bob didn't get on the Medicaid Waiver waitlist until he was 18, however the list takes 10 years to receive funding, so he won't have the service when he actually needs them most.)

Mistake #9: Lack of Parent Training

Parents usually receive little, if any, training focused on preparing them for their child's graduation and the many changes that will occur regarding their legal, financial, and educational status.

(Example: Parents did not know their financial holdings and income will impact their child's ability to receive SSI or that adult services are eligibility-based.)

Mistake #10: Not Enough Prep Time

School and/or parents wait too long to start transition planning and services which means the student does not have the amount of time needed to adequately prepare remedy transition-related skills deficits.

(Example: Bob's school waited until he turned 14 to start discussing transition and found that he had significant skill deficits which would take much longer than 4 years to address.)

The Result of These Mistakes:

Workforce Participation Rate of Adults with Disabilities
20.5% versus 68.3% for Adults without Disabilities (includes those employed and unemployed actively seeking work)
(Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, January 2019)

Workforce Participation Rate of Adults with ASD
Only 55.1 percent of young adults with Autism held paying jobs during their first six years out of high school, the lowest percentage among the disability categories examined.
(Shattuck, 2012)

Approximately 85% of college graduates with ASD are unemployed. (Integrate, 2019)

Chronic Underemployment of Adults with ASD

Many people with ASD, including those who are higher-functioning, are in low wage jobs that perpetuate their dependence on the government and their family members.
(Carley, 2016)

Approximately 79% of young adults with ASD work part-time averaging \$9.11 per hour. (Integrate, 2019)

Our Transition-Focused Vocational Services & Evaluations

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A Fun, Intensive Career Exploration & Skills Experience
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