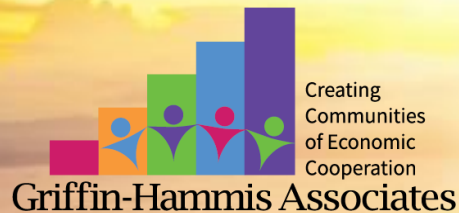


# Discovering Personal Genius™

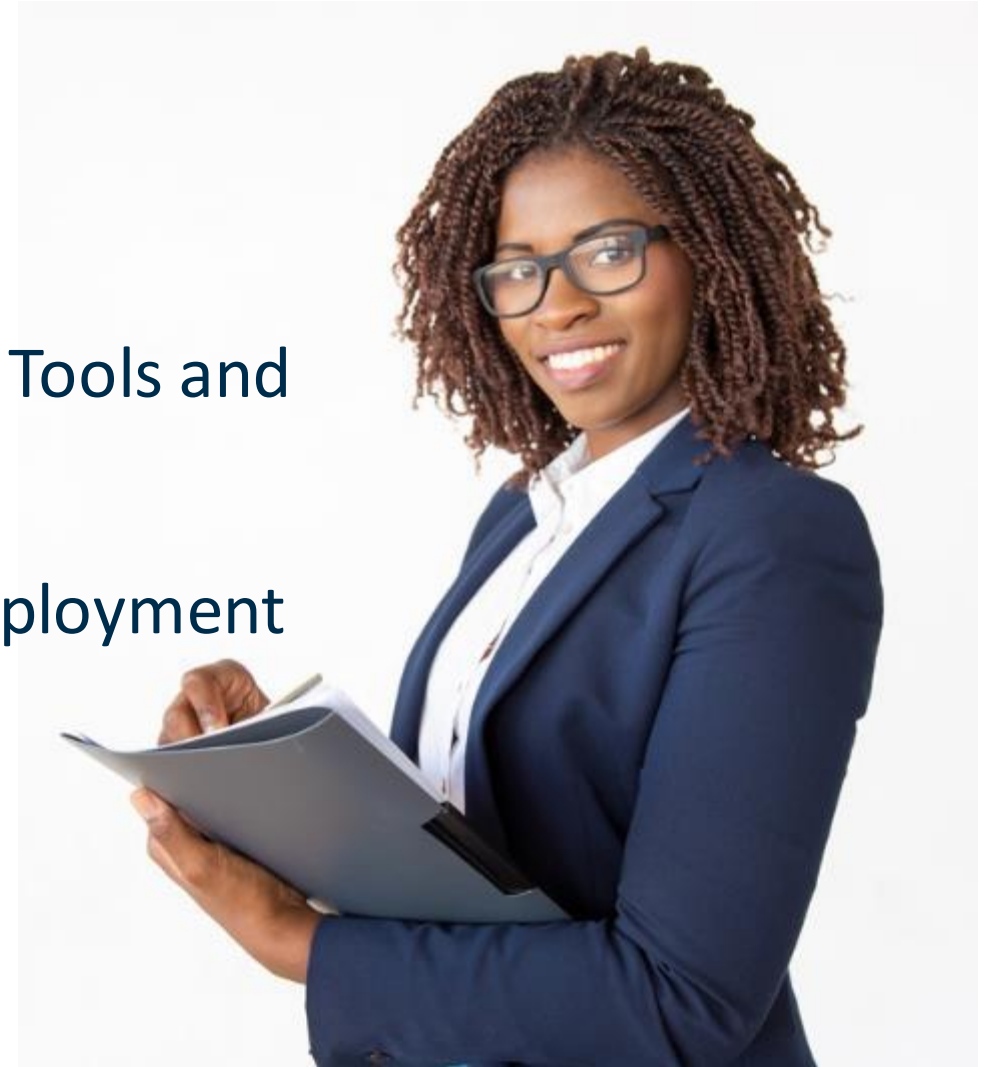
*Going Where the Career Makes Sense*

**Patty Cassidy, Senior Associate**  
**Marsie Hartman, Senior Associate**  
**Griffin-Hammis Associates**



# What We Have Learned

- History and Foundations of Employment
- Evolution to Customized Employment
- An Overview of Customized Employment Tools and Techniques
- Social Capital is critical to Customized Employment
- Team Approach to CE



# The Phases of Customized Employment



# Activity



What is your “dream job” ?

If you could have any job in the world what would it would be and why?

Chat box, please type in your "dream job" and explain why.

# Seinfeld: George Costanza Ponders Potential Jobs



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LCggmsCXk4>

# Group Discussion

- How do you currently get to know job-seekers?
- What kind of information are you looking for?
- When do you determine that you know enough?





# Discovering Personal Genius™

- Activity-based process
- Answers the question of what work should look like ... not if work is possible
- Foundational assumption that ALL can work!!



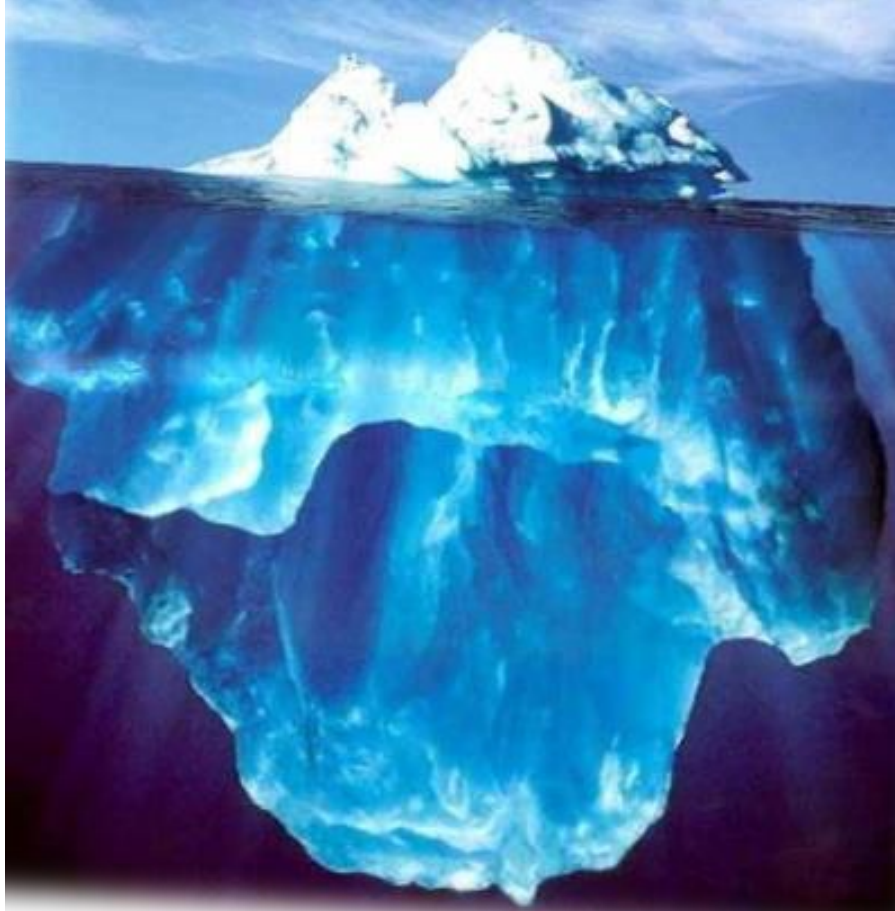
# Discovery ...

- Answers the question “Who is this person?”
- Does NOT suggest what job would be best for this person.
- YOU CAN'T FAIL DISCOVERY!





# DPG/Discovery



- Exploration to learn:
  - More about person, and
  - More about community
- Answers the questions:
  - Who is this person?
  - What are the ideal conditions for employment?
  - What themes will drive job development?

# Discovery: What Is It?



Provides individuals the space to showcase:

- Who they really are
- What they can do in the environments that mean the most



*Are you at your best when being tested or rather when you are exploring familiar and/or new places, people & things?*

# Keys to Discovery



- About the person, NOT the job
- Information learned during Discovery later helps determine if a particular job “fits”
- Biggest challenge is not jumping to the job!

# How should I approach DPG?

It requires a different set of skills for the job developer or employment specialist.

It also requires a different attitude about the person and the future.

It begins with a Conversation



**If we go through Discovery  
and don't learn anything new about a person,  
we haven't really discovered anything.**



# DPG Benchmarks

- 26-60 hours of Discovery
- Over a 2 to 6-week period
- Using 2 or more team members



## INTRODUCTION:

# Discovering Personal Genius Staging Record (DSR)



- Form used to guide process & record information
- On-going work in progress
- Goal: provide enough information so that the reader “sees” the same picture as you do

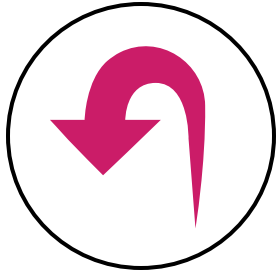
### Discovering Personal Genius Staging Record

Name			
Date initiated		Date Completed	
Person(s) completing DPG Record			
Family Contacts			
Phone		E-mail	
Additional Contact Information			
Team Members			
Consultants/Experts to Contact			
Comments/Considerations			

Stage One: Home & Neighborhood Observation	
Initial Interviews <i>Begin with the individual's home and/or family home (if residing there).</i>	
Date	
People interviewed & relationship to Individual	
Recap of Information (attach field notes, pictures)	
Observations of home, bedroom, property, belongings that seem relevant	



# DSR Tips



Stick to the form... at least the first few times



Use team to debrief each section and provide feedback



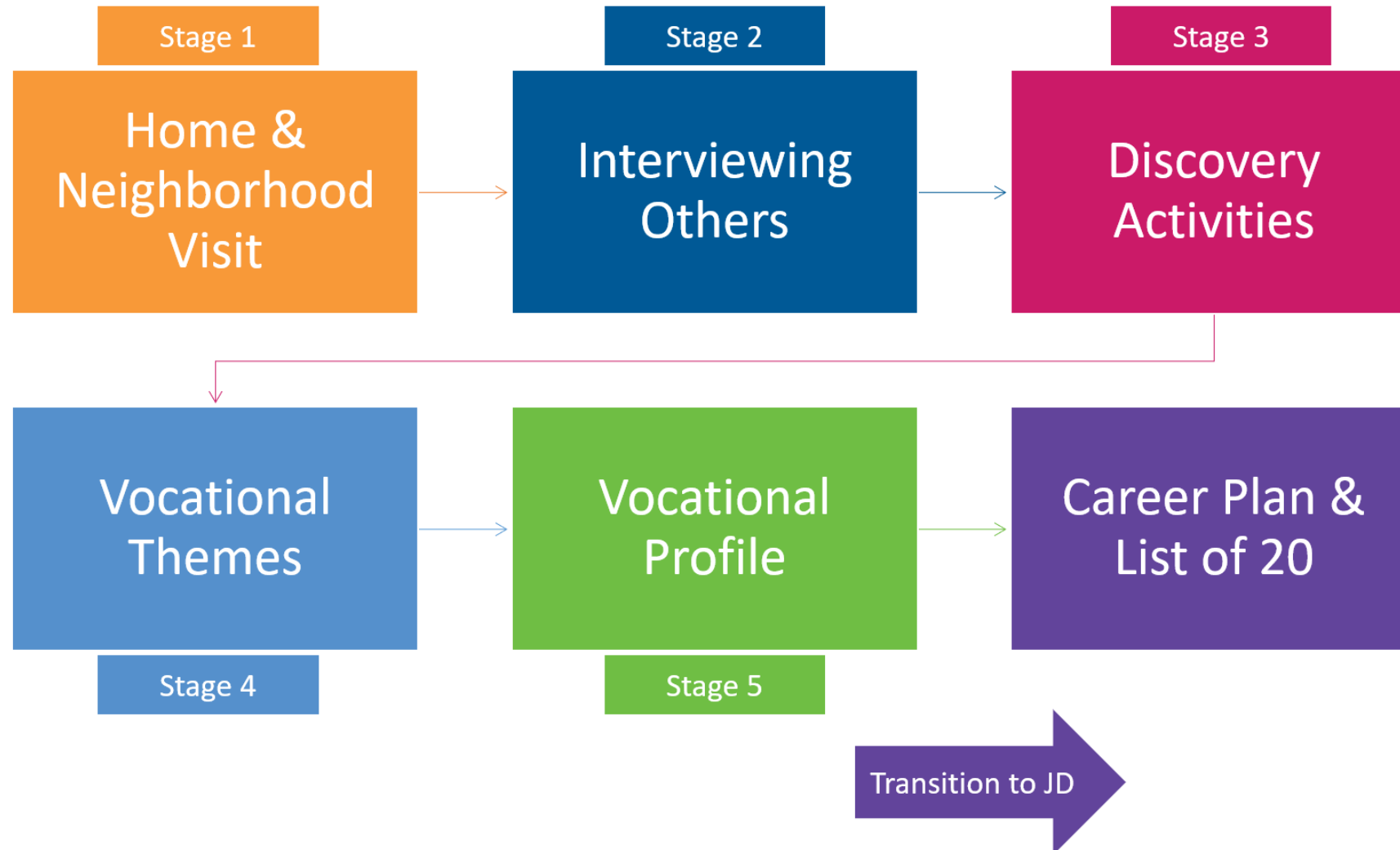
Aim for a “360°” view

# Writing/Recording DSR Info



- Objectively state what was learned/observed
- Leave out personal interpretation/assessment/inferences
- State all relevant information completely... but do not bog down with unnecessary detail
- Stick to the positive
- Easy to say... tough to do!

# Steps in Discovery





# Stage One: Home & Neighborhood Observation



# Stage One: Key Components



The Home Visit



Observation of tasks and activities



Neighborhood exploration



Interviews with family, friends, staff... people who know the person well



Financial review (for resource planning)



Technology referral when appropriate

# Getting to Know You: The Home Visit

- DPG starts at home
- Most familiar environment
- Introduce DPG and CE to family, support network, etc. prior to the home visit
- Initial opportunity to learn about person



# The Home Visit

- Typically no more than 2 staff members
- Practice smooth listening
- Coordinate around individual/family schedule
- Plan on 1-2 hours for initial visit
- Evenings, weekends may be best





# Things To Explore...

- Skills & talents
- Hobbies, sports, collections,
- interests
- Where person spends time & money
- Favorite pastimes, activities, people, places
- Typical daily schedule
- Routines & chores that detail skills/interests





# Things To Explore ...

- Family employment & community connections
- Supports needed to perform routines & chores (and who assists)
- Methods used to teach new skills
- Activities, situations, locations to be avoided



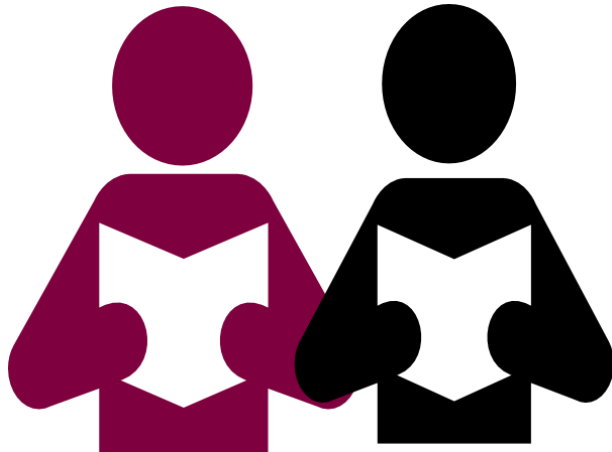
# Smooth Listening



## Nancy and Smooth Listening

<https://youtu.be/6elojDLbjtA>

# Smooth Listening Activity



Pair Up.

Find 2 Skills that each has. (A skill is something that improves thru practice)

No Questions Allowed!

# Continued Exploration

- Schedule follow-up to come back and observe
- Follow-up conversations with family
- Identify other people to interview (stage 2)
- Goal: gather enough information to identify Discovery activities



# Plan for Observations for Next Stage

Identify things the person currently does that showcase skills

- Activities, hobbies, chores, etc.

Observe & learn

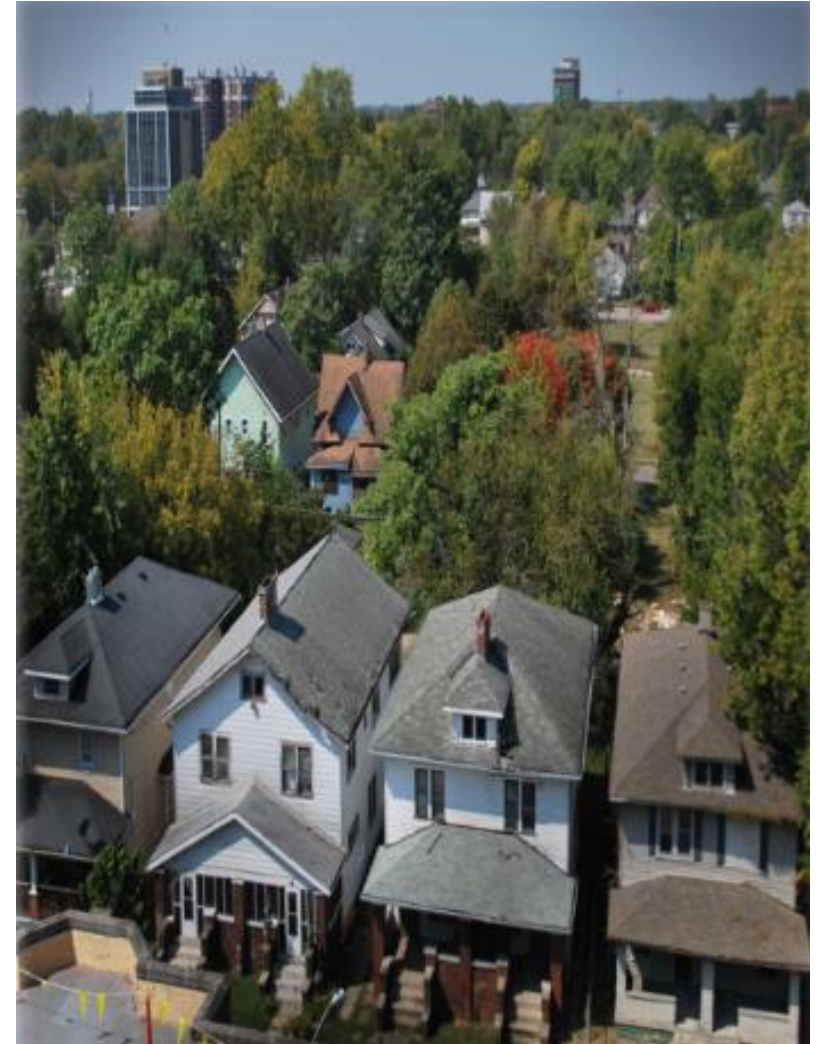
- Fill in the details on the sketch
- What does “he’s great with the computer” actually mean?



# Stage One: Neighborhood Mapping

- Resources
- Employers
- Transportation options
- Neighbors of interest
- Activities
- Civic Engagement

*Why is Neighborhood Mapping important?*



# Home Visit ... Things to Remember

- Everything is not learned on the first visit
- Amount of information varies from person to person
- Setting expectations and gathering clues for DPG activities is the goal
- Remember this is not an interrogation!



# Interests

Important in terms of  
linking to motivation

Ultimately person must  
be “interested” and like  
what they do (other  
factors influence)

Initial identification  
frequently general and  
somewhat universal

- Pizza, animals, shopping,  
watching TV, video games

May not involve  
underlying skill set

What is the evidence of  
an interest??

More than just an  
expression of interest!

# Skills



Overt ... ***Covert***



Tasks, hobbies, chores: By choice vs. assigned/required/negotiated



Activities at home and in community

- Making models vs. watching tv
- Going to movies vs. helping out at Bingo



A skill is a skill! – Emergent vs. Expert



**Remember  
Don't...  
Jump...  
To The Job!!!**



# Learning About the Job Seeker and Their Social Security Benefits



In Stage 1, learn about the job seeker's current benefits.



Assist the job seeker to obtain a Benefits Planning Query (BPQY)



Get the assistance of a Benefits Specialist to understand and explain the Work Incentives available to the job seeker

# Stage 1 of the DSR

By understanding the person's SSA benefit status we are better able to address:

- Myths and fears of loss of benefits or a reduction of a check
- Identify and Address the Ideal Conditions of Employment (hours and pay)
- Understand how work incentives might support the employer  
(PASS – Business Within A Business)

We will continue to address this through Discovery!



# Your Answer Can Be As Simple As:



“It is not necessarily true that a person will lose cash or healthcare while working!”



“It is understandable that this is a concern . . .”



“That is not necessarily true . . .”



“I know that there are work incentives . . .”

# Why is it important that we ask about public benefits?

While in Discovery you need to get to know . . .

- Does the job seeker receive a check from SSI or SSDI?
- Healthcare through Medicaid and/or Medicare?
- What is the person's status?

We'll continue to talk about this . . .

# Two Disability Cash Programs

## *Supplemental Security Income (SSI)*

- *Strict income and resource limits*
- *No work history required*
- *\$783 - 2020 Federal Benefit Rate*
- *\$1,175 – 2020 SSI Amount for a couple*

## *Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)*

- *Based on work record*
- *No income or asset limits*
- *Amount depends on work record*



# SSI Work Incentives

*Student Earned  
Income  
Exclusion*

*PASS Plan*

*Earned Income  
Exclusion*

*Impairment  
Related Work  
Expenses*

*1619*

*Report all  
Income to SSA &  
DHS!!!*

# SSDI and/or Childhood Disability Beneficiary (DAC)

- Trial Work Period (TWP) \$910 (2020)
- Extended Period of Eligibility (EPE)
- Substantial Gainful Activity (non-blind SGA) \$1,260 (2020)
  - Blind SGA \$2,110 (2020)
- Grace Period
- Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE)
- Subsidy
- Expedited Reinstatement of Benefits

# What does Working at Full Time Potential Look Like?

---

Who here wants to live on \$783 a month?

---

What dreams do we have for a full life, how much \$\$\$ is needed to achieve that?

---

Long gone are the days of working only 20 hours a week and making under \$300.

---

The Job Development Process should reflect the amount of \$\$\$ the job seeker envisions needing for a full life.

# Poppin Joe's Gourmet Kettle Corn





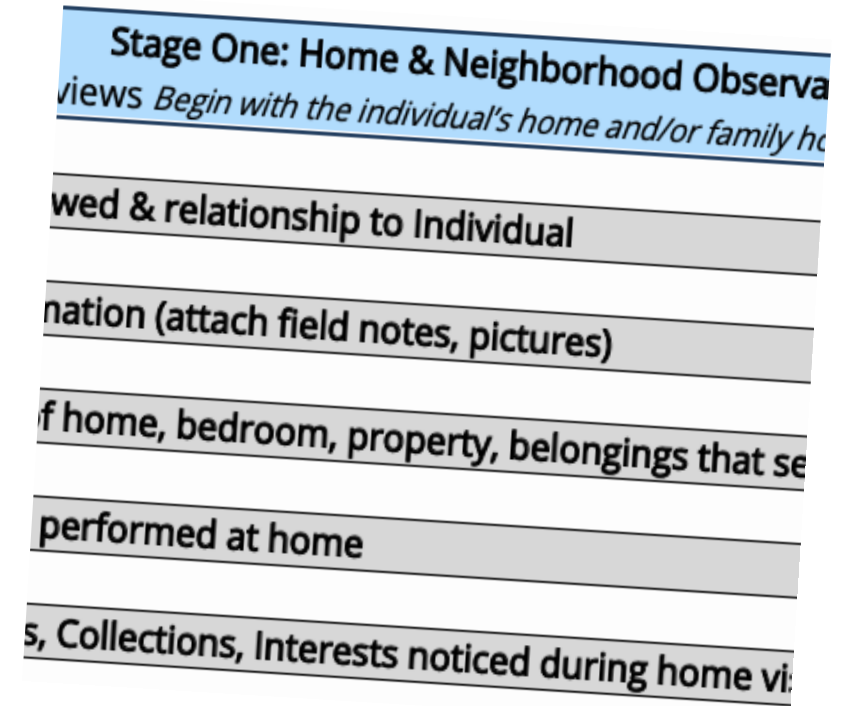


There are unlimited ways to make a living ...



# Stage One: Group Discussion

- What is the goal of the home visit?
- What are we trying to learn?
- How would you rank the following in order of importance for DPG? Why?
  - Interests
  - Skills
  - Tasks
- How do these three interact in DPG?



# Virtual 'Home' Visit

- We will now break-out in rooms of 2 people
- One person will offer to take the other on a 'virtual tour' of their office/living room which ever room offers comfort to the 'guide'. The observer will look for 'signs' that might 'tell' a little about 'who is this person?'
- Change places!
- NOTE: Your homework assignment will be to write a descriptive, non-judgmental page about what was observed and learned about 'who is this person.'



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# Stage Two: Interviewing Others



# Additional Interviews



Schedule interviews with other key people identified during Stage 1



Nature of relationship less important than quality of relationship



Teachers, extended family, neighbors, friends, co-workers, etc.



People who know the job seeker well AND have positive insight to share

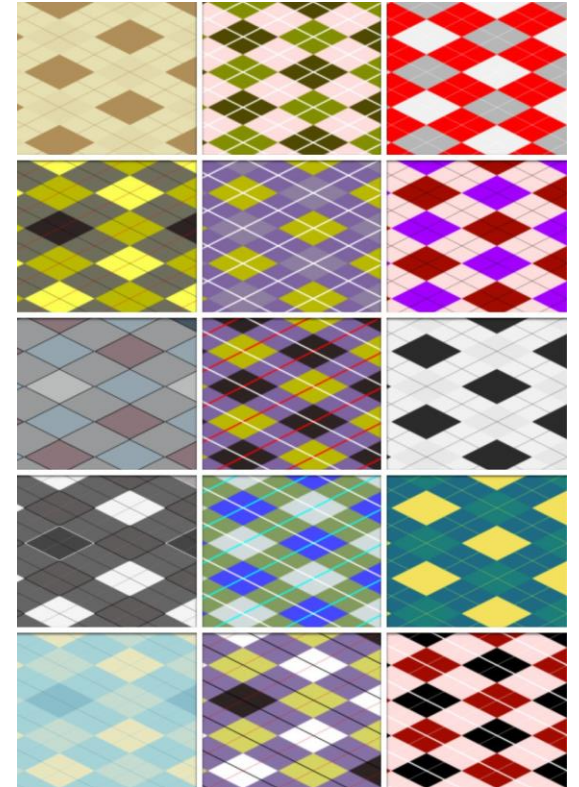
# Additional Interviews

- Gain permission!
- In-person or via phone
- Establish rapport
- Know what you particularly want to find out more about... BUT
- Open-ended questions
- Try to steer in a positive direction



# And Then? What Patterns Are Emerging?

- What do you and the team see that could lead to a possible developing theme in the person's life?
- What skill, tasks, and interests seem to hold the most importance?
- What more do you want to know or to verify?



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As you view the video, notice the types of activities that Jay engages in at home.  
What emerging patterns come to mind?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pe6YG7-Hx0E&feature=youtu.be>

# Welcome Back!!



Review of First Day



De-Brief from 4 Scenarios



Any Questions??

## Stage Three: Discovery Activities



# How to Begin

## Look for Patterns:

- What does the job seeker do??
- Interests
- Hobbies
- Chores
- School work-based learning activities
- Community Involvement – church, clubs, associations
- Family
- Where she is at her best!





# DPG Activities: “The Doing” – It’s Task Based!

Identify at least 4 to 6 places for DPG visits

- 2-3 Activities at home or familiar places that give context to interests and skills
- 2-3 Activities in unfamiliar community places that give context to interests and skills





# DPG – Discovery Activities

Assistance VERSUS Assessment

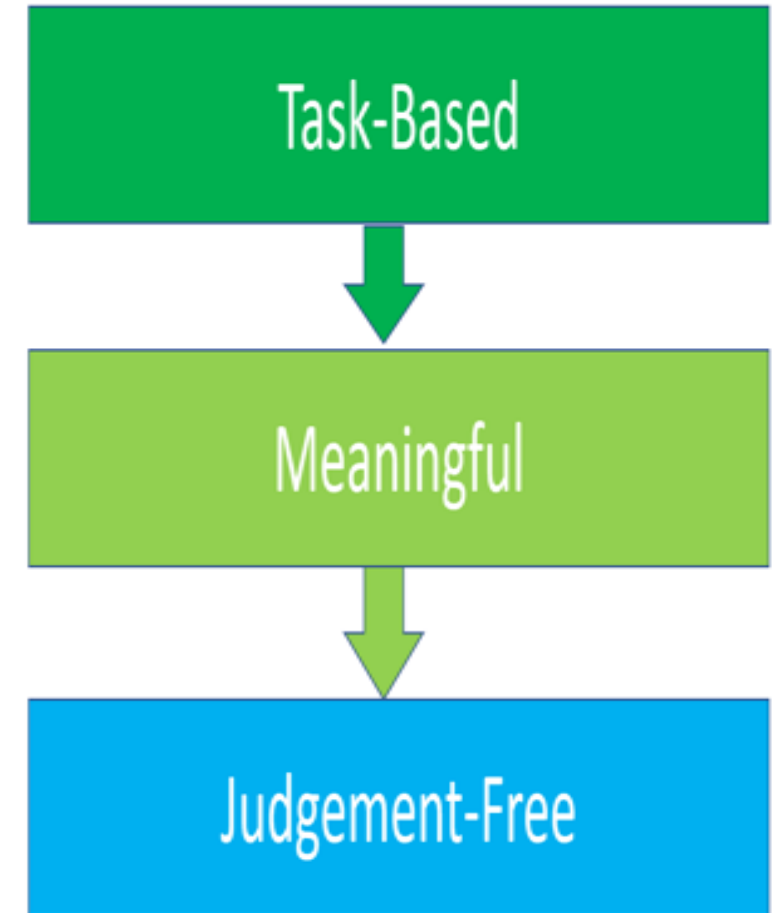
Activity in Real Environments

DO NOT rely on data from Segregated Settings

One Place leads to Another; One Person Leads to Another (Social Capital)

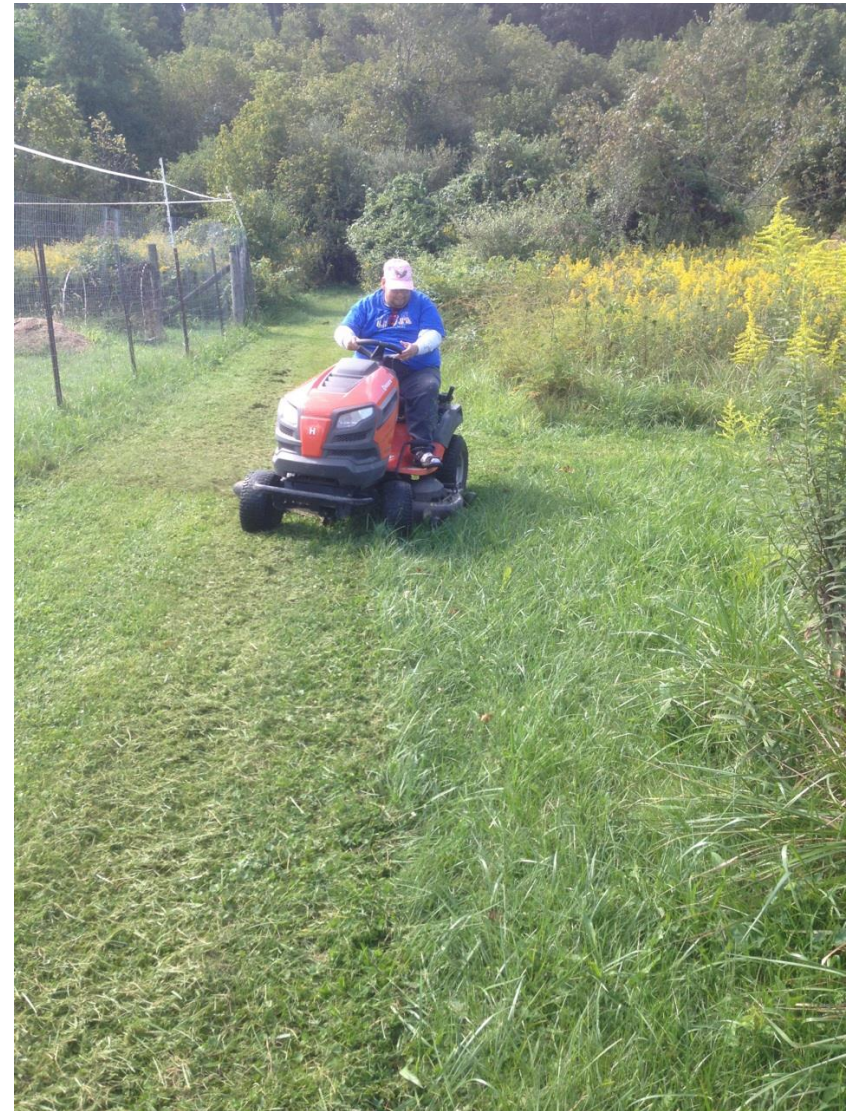
# CE Discovery Activities

- No pre-arranged sites
- Do not evaluate performance against standards
- Create opportunity and support when needed
- Create an opportunity, where none exists
- Helps you and the job seeker to know your community and to build social capital







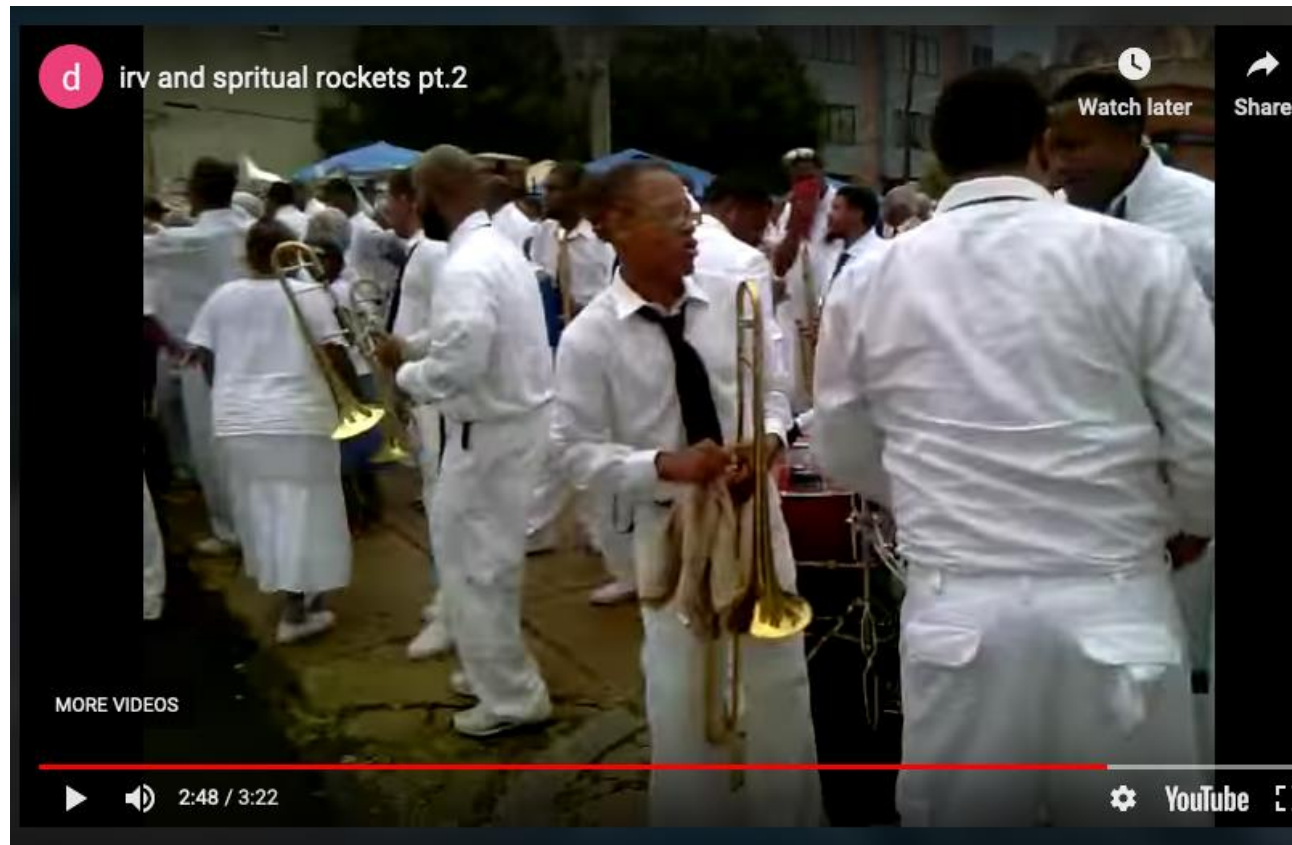












# Discovery Activity Exercises

# Discovery Tasks and Your Observations

- As you complete the activities, record observations in the DPG Staging Record – Take Pictures!
- Describe:
  - What the activity was
  - The location
  - What tasks were performed/observed
  - What supports were required (and who provided and how)



# Analyzing Discovery Activities

## After all activities are complete



- Summarize supports needed during activities
- List environments to be avoided (and why)
- Identify places, activities, & skills that require more exploration
- Determine when/where these will be explored and who is responsible
- Complete follow-up activities & reports

**Most effective  
as a team process**





# Stage Four: Vocational Themes and Informational Interviews





# Themes & informational interviews are the bridge between Discovery and Job Development!



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# Vocational Themes



***Emerging*** Vocational Themes at this point

- Use the job seeker's Team!



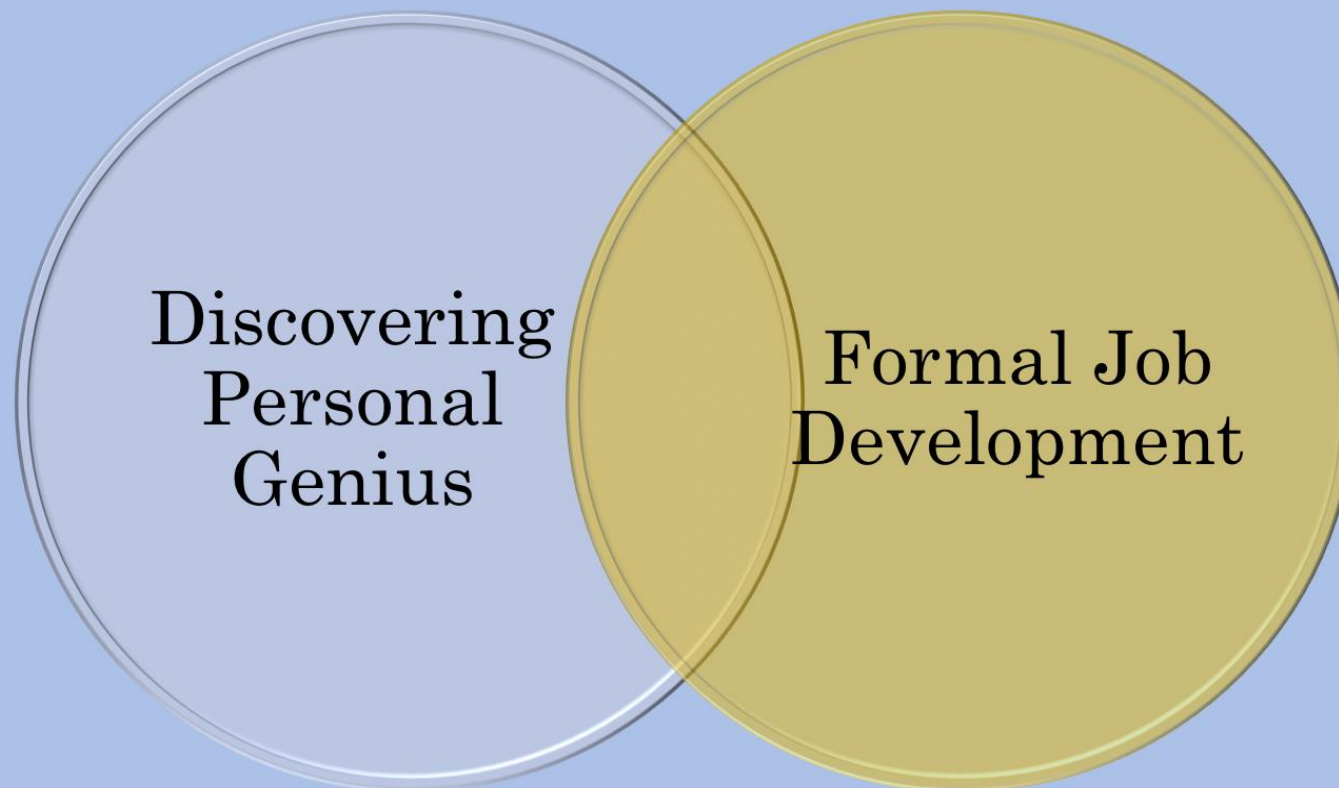
Schedule informational interviews to test and explore further



Themes meld tasks, interests, talents, & skills

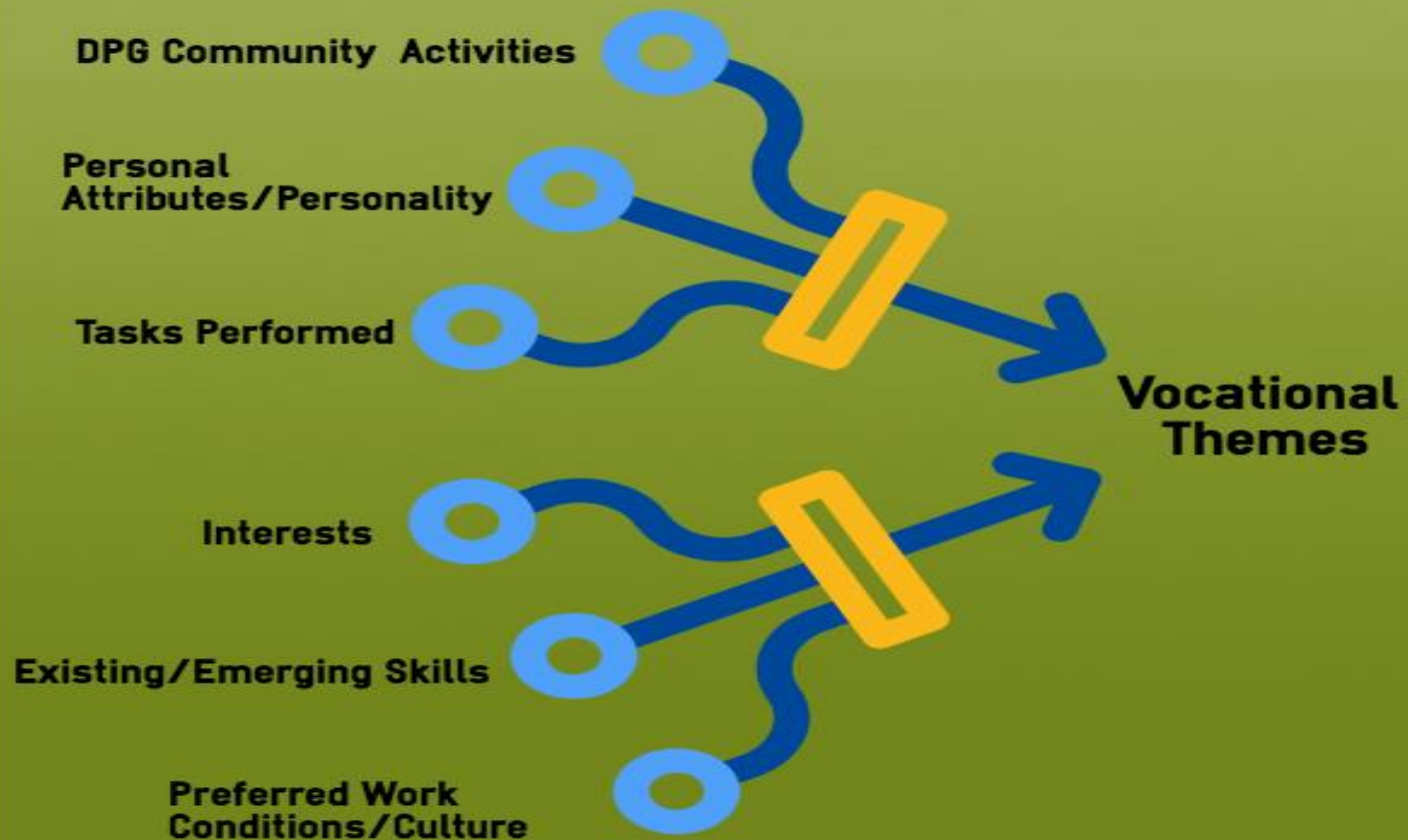
# Themes Translate Discovery for Job Development

Final Vocational Themes Formulation  
Informational Interviews...



Work Trials  
Unsolicited Employment Offers...

## Griffin-Hammis Associates Elemental Chart for Determining Vocational Themes



# Some Themes – but the Team should decide on those specific to your job seeker. Think of other unique words!

- Organization
- Agriculture
- Construction
- Mechanical
- Transportation
- Cleanliness
- Children
- Advocacy
- Outdoors/Nature
- Athletics/Recreation
- Culinary Art
- Entertainment
- Fashion
- Customer
- Service
- History
- Politics
- Logistics
- Religion/Spirituality
- Medicine/Health Care
- Technology/Computers
- Communications



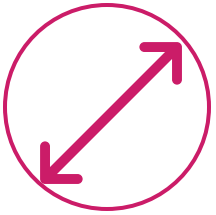
# Divining Vocational Themes



Themes are NOT Job Descriptions or simply interests!



Themes are words or phrases that are Big and Hold Many, Many Jobs



Themes Open up the Possibilities in even the Smallest Communities

# USING EMERGING VOCATIONAL THEMES

For each theme, identify 3 places where individuals with similar themes work



Specific places of business, not general fields

- (Big Sea Design vs. “graphic designers”)
- 

Select 2-3 for information interviews



Use connections & social capital to open doors

# Informational Interviews:



Brief interviews



Opportunity to learn more about business, industry, environment (or business owners and jobs)



Sometimes can provide hands-on experience with new tasks related to areas of interest



Allow connections to emerge

# Keys to Success

- Interview should happen with a manager, owner, or key person
- Avoid HR
- Don't just ask for a Tour or that's all you'll get!
- Get Seat Time, and then a Tour



# Smooth Listening & Being Naive

- Remember, we are not the experts on their business!
- We are merely looking for advice
- Don't use personal stories or talk about yourself or what you do
- Ask open ended questions with an emphasis on the job seeker
- “What advice would you have for someone trying to start out in your field?”



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# Possible Questions to Start

- Tell me why you started your business. What lead you into this line of work?
- What other work might you have done if you didn't go into this line of work or start this business?
- What do you like best about your job/ your work?
- What is the hardest part of your job?
- What is the best part of your day? What are you most proud of with your business?



# Questions, cont.

- Who are your competitors?
- Do you suggest we talk to anyone in particular?
- Warm leads and name dropping are great ways into other businesses and/or to improve the list of 20
- (Handout: Learning by Listening to a Small Business)

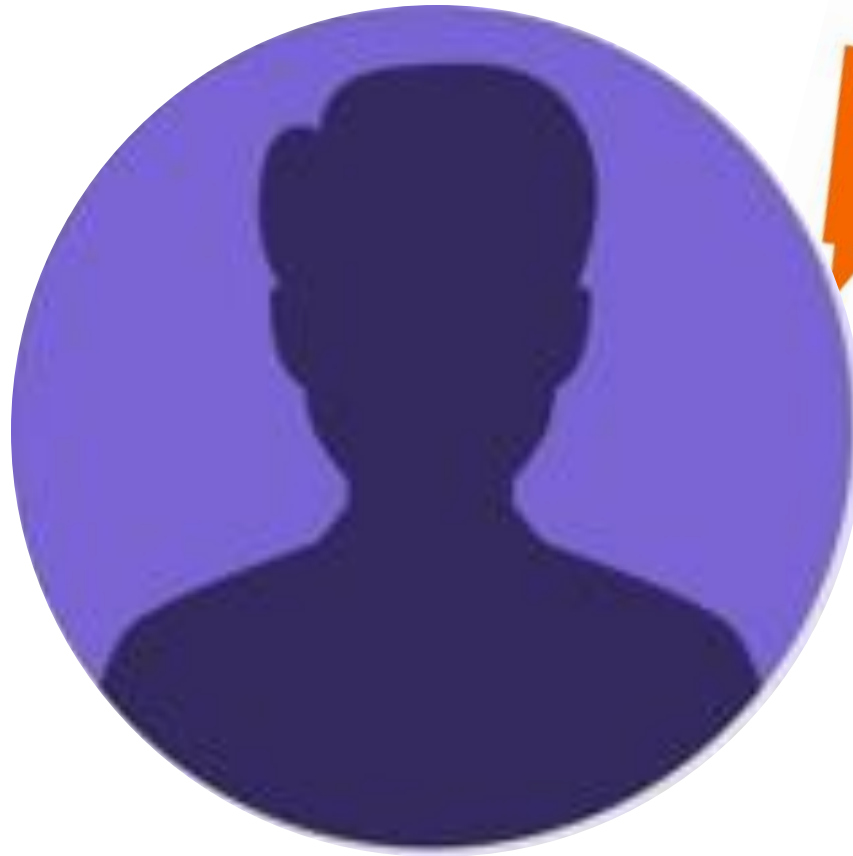


# Informational Interview Homework Assignment

## Due This Evening!

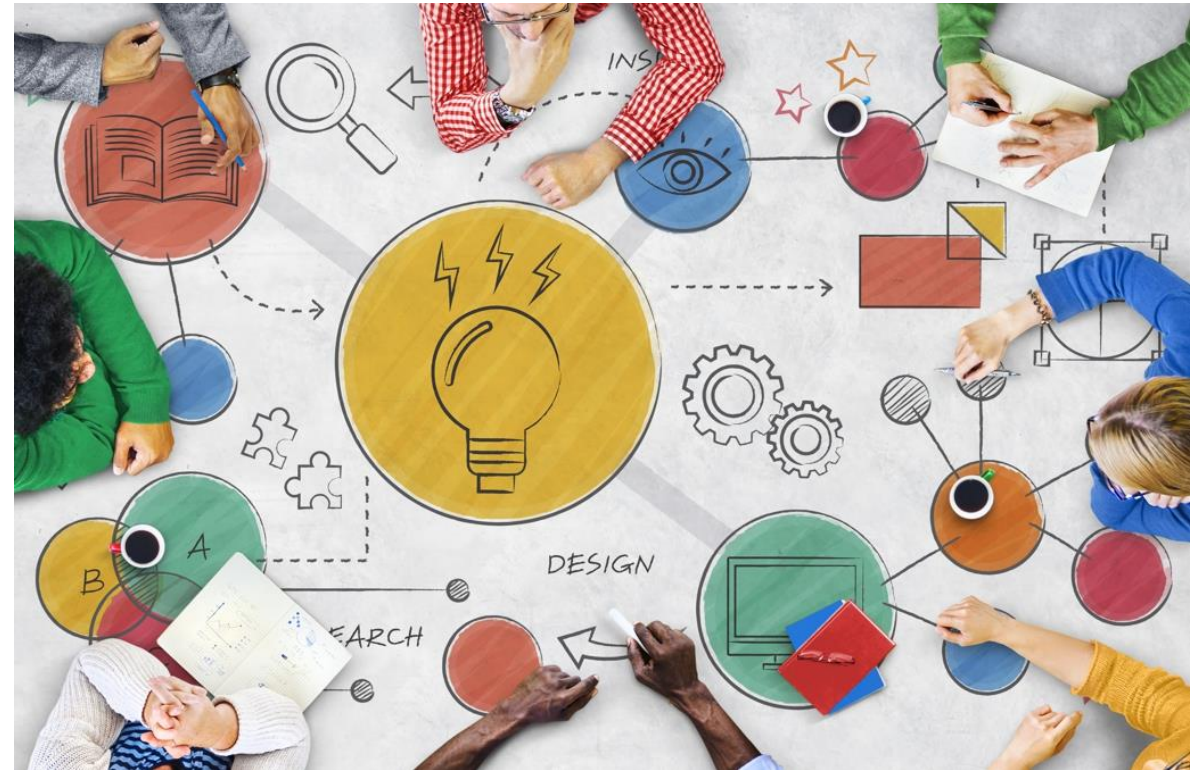
- Choose 1 of the 3 videos below of informational interviews with a business owner or employee of a small business.
- Select one video from this list:
  - Sheep Shearing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtNBqNMo3kU>
  - Tug Life <https://vimeo.com/188462195>
  - Gym Owner <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UC8VwZ-hVxE>
- *Note: Assignment description is in downloads*

# Stage Five: Complete Vocational Profile



# Vocational Profile Section

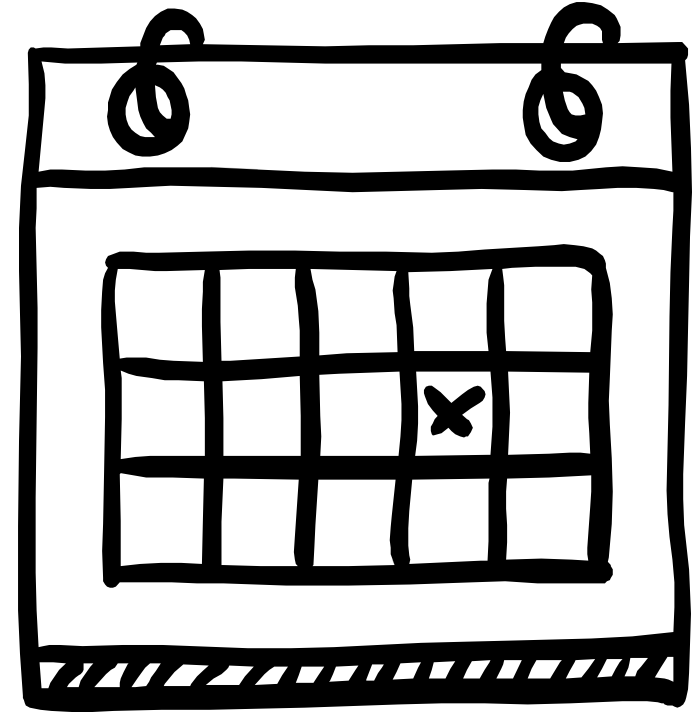
- Summarize findings from Discovery and record in the Staging Record
- Vocational Profile guides the customized job development process
- Must be team process... critical to brainstorm and not overlook any key details





# Vocational Profile Section

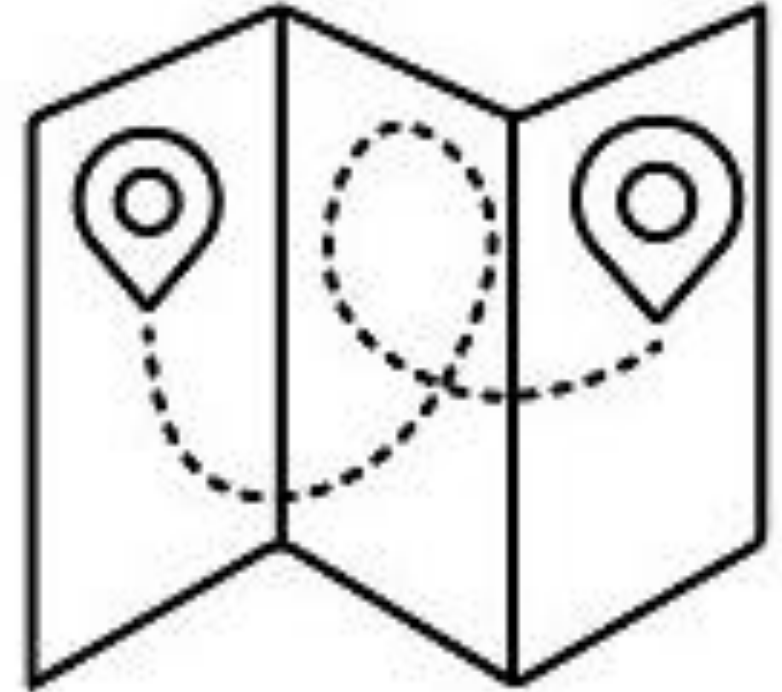
- Ideal Conditions of Employment
- What off-the-job support will be needed and who will provide?
- How will person maintain contact with friends (and who will ensure it)?
- How will they get to/from work?
- Ideal work schedule



# Vocational Profile Section

Describe:

- Interests, talents, skills, tasks as observed
- Best ecological fit
- Best learning mode/methodology
- Places/situations to avoid
- Personal resources
- Most endearing/engaging qualities
- Exploitable skills



# Ideal Conditions vs. Job Descriptions

Ideal Conditions	NOT Job Descriptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work in quiet environment</li><li>• Has specific tasks for each day</li><li>• Tasks require precision</li><li>• Consistent routine</li><li>• People understand idiosyncrasies</li><li>• Work with hands- tasks are manipulative &amp; visually clear</li><li>• Away from general public</li><li>• No music</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Filing</li><li>• Circuit board assembly</li><li>• Medical supply clerk</li><li>• Data entry</li><li>• Order Processor</li></ul>

# Stage Six: Job/Business Development Plan



# Lists of 20



For ***each*** of the 3 vocational themes...



Identify **20** specific businesses where people with similar skills & interests work



Utilize Networks to get connected



Schedule appointments to observe, tour, conduct informational interviews



Consider Businesses and Feasibility in your Lists of 20 for Self-Employment Business Development



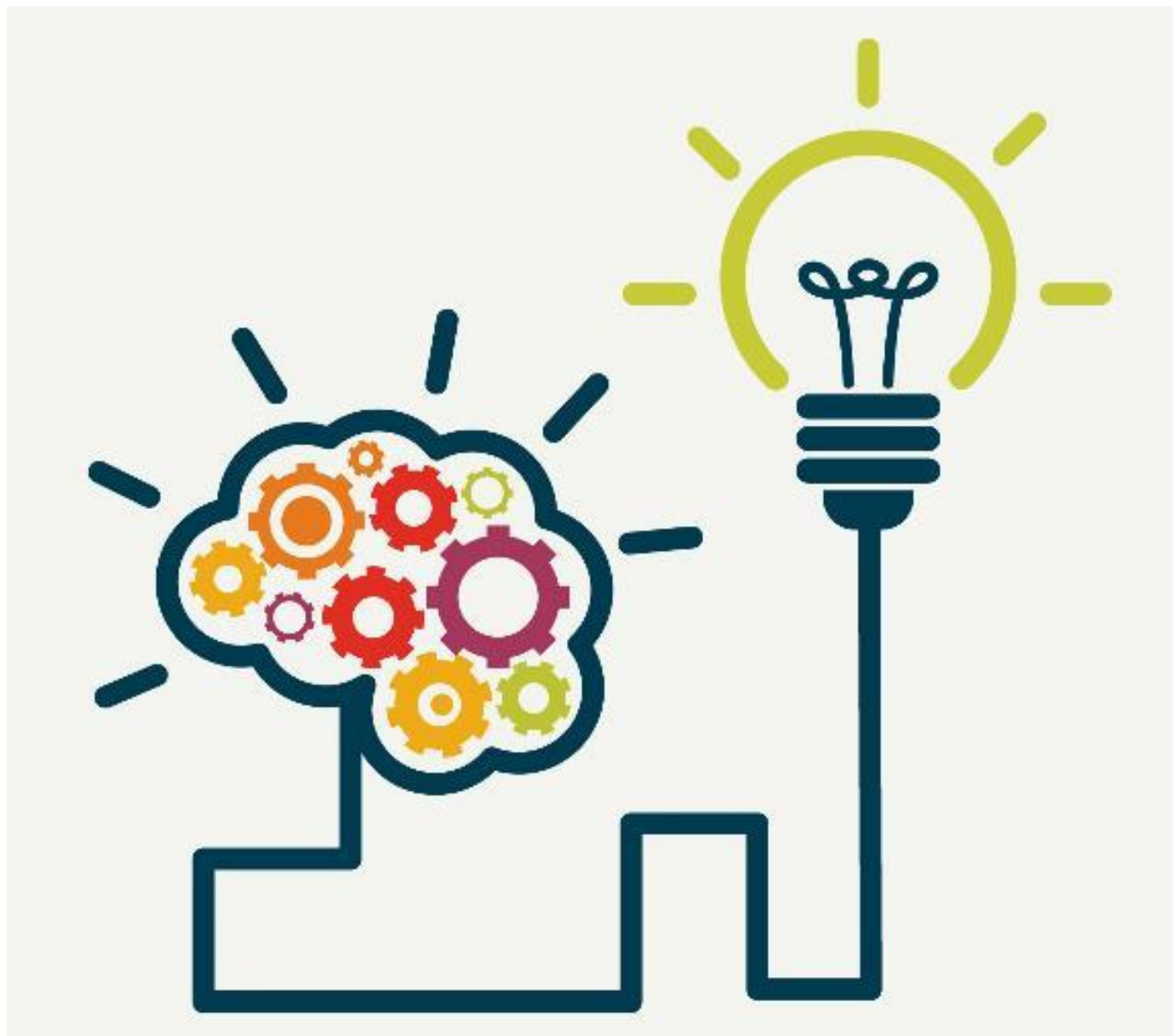
# Group Activity

## Themes:

- Health/Wellness
- Working with her hands
- Civic Engagement
- Legal

# Debrief

Health/Wellness  
Working with her hands  
Civic Engagement  
Legal



# Completed DSR!

- All 6 stages are complete
- Discovery is complete
- Urgency of Job Development
- A hand off or a continuation?



# Discovery



Is about DOING .....



Is about capturing important information about  
CONTRIBUTIONS



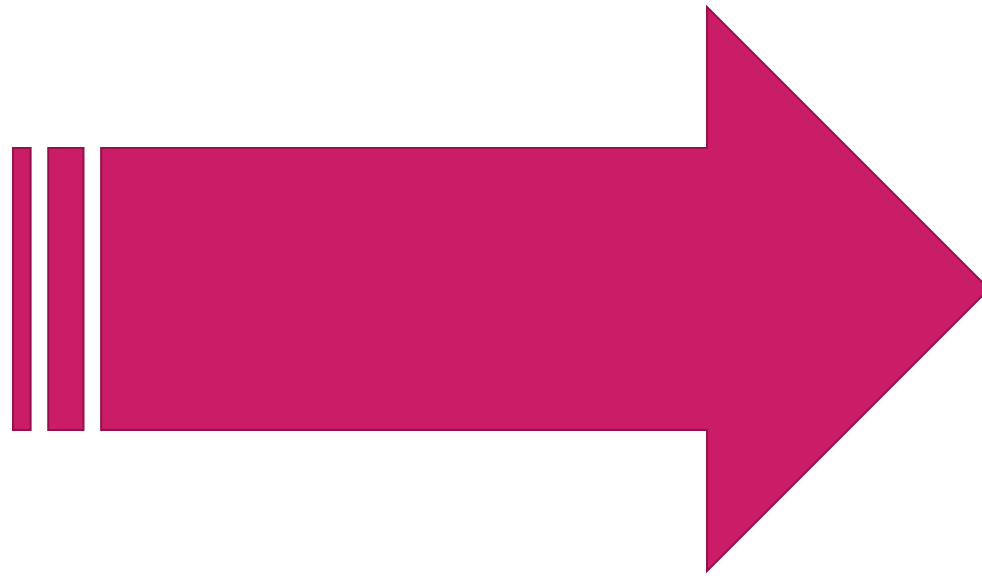
Is about understanding IDEAL CONDITIONS of EMPLOYMENT



Is about the COMMUNITY AND the JOB SEEKER!

# Next up ....

## ... Using Systematic Instruction as a step to Customized Job Development





Thank  
You

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