EVERYONE CAN WORK:
Tips for employment specialists when Addressing Challenging behavior

MYTHS VS FACTS

Myth
People with disabilities who display challenging behavior cannot work.

Truth
People with disabilities who display challenging behaviors can work when they receive support and learn new skills.

STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER

Set the Task Up for Success
Make sure the person:
- Understands the task they need to complete
- Knows how to get help when needed
- Knows how to take a break if needed

Consider Why the Behavior is Happening
Understand what they are communicating through behavior:
- Is the person getting something after the behavior?
- Is the person getting out of doing something because of the behavior?

Teach a More Work-Appropriate Skill
Once you understand what the person is getting or avoiding with a behavior you can teach the person a new skill that is acceptable in the work setting to get what they want or need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person's Behavior</th>
<th>What They Get or Avoid by Behavior</th>
<th>Teach Work Appropriate Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whines and complains if there is a change in routine</td>
<td>Gets attention and further instructions from co-workers</td>
<td>Teach person to ask co-workers to explain the change</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reinforce New Skills
When teaching the person a new behavior, make sure you acknowledge their efforts. For example, tell them they did a “great job” when you see them do the new skill.
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Myth
People with disabilities who display challenging behaviors should be “behavior free” before they can get a job.

Truth
People with disabilities who display challenging behaviors do not need to wait to begin work. They can use supports and learn new skills on-the-job.

STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER

Make the Job & Environment Fit the Person
- The job should capitalize on the individual’s strengths, interests, and preferences
- The social environment at the job should include people who will welcome and support the individual as a team member

Design the Job to Encourage Success
- Build a consistent routine
- Develop a workstation that limits distractions
- Provide visual supports to help the person become independent

Create Supports to Help the Person Understand Appropriate Work Behavior
Think about making:
- Visual reminders about expected behavior at work
- Social stories about interacting with co-workers
- Videos modeling acceptable work behavior
- Schedules to predict tasks or routines
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**Myth**
It is too difficult to use supports in an applied work setting to help a person reduce their challenging behavior.

**Truth**
Employment support providers can use four specific types of supports in a work setting to increase the employment success of their workers who display challenging behaviors.

STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER

**Teach Work Specific Social Skills**
- How to interact with others at work
- How to accept feedback
- How to ask questions
- How to limit conversation length
- How to help others

**Ensure Effective Ways to Communicate with Others at Work**
- How to make wants and needs known to others
- How to request help when needed
- How to understand instructions given by others
- How to follow spoken, picture, or written directions

**Increase Person’s Independence and Accuracy at Work**
- Use task analyses to break big tasks into smaller steps
- Use visual and technology supports as self-cues

**Teach Workplace Specific Professional Skills**
- Teach the behavioral norms for each work setting
- Teach calming and coping strategies when needed

The contents of this infographic were developed under grant number H421D220004 from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1221e-3 and 3474)