

Perspectives of quality in Supported Employment (SE)

“Quality criteria”

Long version



For further information on the project

“QUIP - Quality in Practice”

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I. Outcomes of SE

1. The job seeker finds and keeps a **paid job on the ordinary labour market**.

- a. There is a **valid contract** of employment agreed by the employer and the employee.
- b. The employee's **wage is adequate**. That means the same level as colleagues doing the same job and normal company perks.
- c. The employee has a **stable job**. That means he/she has a permanent contract or a short-term job that could be extended into a long-term job.

2. The employee has a **job that matches his/her preferences, skills and abilities**. This means that it is based on his/her interests, gives opportunity for individual development and provides positive challenges.

- a. The workplace has a **positive atmosphere**. That means an atmosphere of trust, fun, security, work satisfaction and comfort.
- b. The **employer is satisfied**. That means that the employer sees the person as a valuable employee and is clearly interested in the employee's development.
- c. The **employee feels in control**. That means he/she is working independently, asks for help if needed and takes responsibility for him/herself.
- d. The employee has a **valued job with clear tasks**. That means that the employee is clear about what is required and receives regular feedback from co-workers and supervisors.

3. The employee is a **valued colleague** and a **full member of the team**.

- a. **Natural support** is in place. This means that the employee is supported by his/her co-workers and the employer.
- b. The employee is treated as a colleague and is **incorporated into the work team**.
- c. The employee has a **good relationship with co-workers**.
- d. The employee has the **opportunity to get involved in out-of-work activities**.



4. The employee has **opportunities for career development.**

This means the employee is able to develop his/her job with the current employer or has the opportunity to develop his/her career with a different employer.

5. There are a number of alternative choices a person can make, even if for the time being he/she is not able or does not want to find a job on the ordinary labour market. The clarification of the vocational situation of the job seeker can be a possible, but not in itself intended outcome of SE. The goal of SE is to find and keep a job on the ordinary labour market and the SE agency should not be misused as a clearing agency.

II. SE Process

I. Characteristics of the SE process

1. The **job seeker/employee is involved from the beginning to the end of the SE process.** Systematic cooperation with him/her is vital for the success of the SE process. He/She is responsible for his/her career, **so decisions are only made by him/her** with the support of the job coach.

2. The **family, friends and professionals of the job seeker are involved in all phases of the SE process if the person wants this.** This means they are well informed and their ideas and support are welcomed.

3. **SE is focused on partnerships.** The main partners are job seekers who need support to get and keep a job, employers and co-workers. Partners are valued and treated with respect. That means partners are taken seriously, being listened to and accepted as they are.

4. The basis for a successful SE process is **good information, communication and collaboration for/with all partners.** Information should be easy to understand for all partners.

5. The SE process needs to be **clear and reliable for all partners.** All partners know in all phases of the process what will happen next and what is expected from them.

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6. **Confidentiality** is ensured throughout the SE process. Information about the job seeker and the company is treated confidentially. All data and computers are protected against access from unauthorized persons.

7. The SE agency has a **flexible and person-centred approach**. That means tailor-made support to the job seeker and the employer and that the SE agency **quickly responds to partners' needs**.

8. The SE agency ensures **continuity of support**. The responsible staff members are introduced to the job seekers and employers. If possible and desired by the job seeker the contact person stays the same during the entire SE process.



2. Making contact and exchanging information

1. The job seeker and the employer are **welcomed in an open and inviting atmosphere** at the SE agency.

2. They receive **appropriate information** about the SE agency and the ordinary labour market.

3. The **job seeker is willing to become involved in the SE process**. That means he/she agrees to find work on the ordinary labour market.

4. The **SE services** offered to the job seeker **are well described and clearly defined in a service agreement**. The service agreement involves all important aspects and responsibilities of each partner throughout the SE process

5. The SE process is **designed individually for each job seeker**. If possible the job seeker should have the choice of different support persons and kinds of support.



3. Vocational profiling and planning

1. The basis of the SE process is **collecting relevant information** on the job seeker and his/her vocational situation **with the job seeker** and other persons. The goal is to identify the motivation, interests, attitudes, abilities and support needs of the job seeker and realistic aims for further career development.
2. The process should also include job tasters and **work experience options**.
3. **Profiling and planning** are **based on the job seeker's interests and abilities**.
4. An **individual, flexible plan** is developed with each job seeker.

4. Job search

1. The **job seeker is supported to find the best possible job**, which matches his/her interests and abilities.
2. The **job seeker is informed about different kinds of work** and has seen different workplaces.
3. The job seeker is offered **appropriate support and training to find a job**, e.g. support for job selection, job applications, job interviews and job negotiations.
4. The job coach **analyses and assesses the possible work sites** with regard to the tasks, the work culture and the support needs to match the requirements of the job seeker and the employer.
5. The **employer is supported to find an employee that matches his/her requirements**. The employer gets clear information about the available support to hire a job seeker with disabilities.

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5. Training on the job and further education

1. The employee is offered practical **training on the job** by a job coach and/or co-workers, including a supported work practice if needed.
2. In addition, the employee has **opportunities for training and further education off the job** like skills training, training of social skills and self-advocacy.
3. The employee's **training and education needs are identified and regularly reviewed.**

6. Support and cooperation at the workplace

1. The **employee, the co-workers and the employer receive appropriate and flexible support at the workplace.**
 - a. The employee receives **personal support** to learn and perform the job tasks, to integrate successfully into the company culture and the work team.
 - b. **Co-workers and the employer are actively involved** in this process and receive the necessary support and information to successfully include the new colleague.
 - c. There is a **focus on risk sharing** between the employer, the employee and the job coach. That means that responsibilities in case of problems or failure should be divided amongst the partners.
2. If needed, **job modification and supportive technology** are used to accommodate the work site.
3. The **job coach seeks and gives regular feedback to all involved partners** and is available when needed.

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4. Employee and employer receive **useful information and help with the paperwork** in connection with the employee's job. This includes information on accommodating to the disability, legal information in connection with the employment and information about other support resources in the community.

5. The job coach can provide **mediation between the employee, the co-workers and the employer**. The job coach reacts quickly in case of difficulties and supports all involved parties to avoid and to solve problems as early as possible.

6. The job coach seeks to have a **good personal relationship with the employer and the employee** and stay in regular contact.

7. The **support is provided only as long as necessary**. The job coach fades with time.

- a. The **reduction of support is systematically planned**.
- b. The **employee and the co-workers are actively involved to organise the natural support** in the company and, if possible, a time limit for the support is identified.
- c. On the other hand the employer and the employee can contact the SE agency whenever needed and **ongoing support is possible** for as long as necessary.

8. The SE agency establishes a **follow-up system for the employer and the employee**. The job coach keeps contact with the employee and the employer over a longer period of time. The desired rate of follow-up is determined together with these partners.

9. **Career development is supported**. The employee is assisted to move to a better position in the company or to change a current job if wanted or needed.

- a. **Risk assessments are up-to-date** with all known and predicted changes to the current job.
- b. The **vocational profile** and ideal job match are **up-to-date**.
- c. The employee's **changing preferences are noted at regular reviews**.



III. SE Structure

I. Job coaches' characteristics & qualifications

1. The job coach has **professional knowledge**. That means he/she is familiar with relevant issues, has initial education in the field of SE, has practical and economic knowledge and is aware of the position of SE within the whole system of services.
2. The job coach has **professional experience**. That means work experience and/or experience in related unpaid activities, e.g. voluntary or family work.
3. The job coach has a **combination of key skills**. That means, e.g. communication and co-operation skills, patience, kindness, flexibility, creativity, working discipline, empathy, willingness to help, conscientiousness, problem-solving skills, trust-worthiness, ability for self-reflection and self-confidence.

2. SE agency's organisational framework

1. The SE agency has a **mission statement** focussing on the goal of inclusion of all people with disabilities.
2. The SE agency has a **clear and effective organisational framework**, which enables unproblematic and effective organisational operation.
 - a. There are **working standards**, clear guidelines, defined processes and methods as well as an official job-description for the staff.
 - b. There are **clear competencies and responsibilities** within the organisation.
 - c. The **administrative work** within the organisation is **efficient**. That means documentation systems and administration are useful and easy to use.



3. The SE agency has **good working conditions for job coaches**. That means adequate salary for staff, steady labour contracts, working autonomy in the professional and financial sense, as well as an adequate infrastructure (e.g. computers, cars). These good working conditions are a prerequisite for a **low turnover** of staff.

4. The SE agency has **effective internal communication and information exchange** that enables teamwork. That means there is regular exchange of information between staff, regular professional consultation and the opportunity to share work experiences within the organisation.

5. The SE agency ensures **opportunities for professional development and training of job coaches**. That means the job coach has the possibility for professional growth, the opportunity to participate in systematic and planned further professional training and in supervision.

6. There are **clear guidelines for defining target groups** for the work of the respective SE agency. (It is important that SE is available for those people who need extensive support to get and keep jobs on the ordinary labour market. This issue is also relevant for the “SE process”.)

7. There is **good accessibility for job seekers**. That means there are no obstacles to the SE service in a physical and psychological sense.

8. The **quality** and the effectiveness of the professional work of the SE agency are **monitored regularly and developed if necessary**.

- a. **Data and feedback** are **regularly collected** from all stakeholders, and their satisfaction is measured.
- b. There is a **regular strategic review** of the SE agency’s work.
- c. There is a **complaints procedure** with a guaranteed action plan.
- d. That also means **increasing the services** of the SE agency and extending the service for new client groups

9. If applicable: There is **effective co-operation with the parent organisation** to maintain the principles and practice of SE.

3. Networking

1. The SE agency and the job coaches **actively build relationships with employers**. That means, they find new employers and involve them in the programme, they keep contact to interested, aware and involved employers, amongst them significant and well-known companies.

2. The SE agency and the job coaches engage in **networking with other SE agencies and other services**. That means developing co-operation with other agencies and services at the organisational level as well as regarding the support of the individual job seeker, and participating in arenas/platforms of such networks.

3. The SE agency engages in **public relations work and external communication**. That means e.g. preparing society for the integration of people with a disability as well as being a good example for others and working against prejudices. It also means increasing the reputation of the SE agency and its services within society and among employers.

4. The SE agency **co-operates with policy-makers/funding agencies**. That means, e.g. that the SE agency can contribute to the national political and legal framework of SE.

5. The SE agency is encouraged to engage in **local, regional, national and international networking**. That means the agency actively builds relationships with relevant organisations, e.g. advocacy groups, family organisations or national organisations of SE.

