

Occupational Wellness

Occupational Wellness is deciding what job you believe you would have the skills to do or which job do you think would give you a sense of pride and build your self esteem. It can also be defined as finding a career where you can give of your time and gifts and enjoy the effort you put into it. This does not have to be a paid job but could also be volunteer activities. Volunteering plays a very important part in giving back to others. Everyone's career path is their **own**.

Planning to Work?

Knowing your strengths may help you find work. The key is to find something you really like doing.

Decide what your **strengths** are and **your best skills**.
For example:

1. Are you caring and concerned about other people?
2. Are you polite on the phone and can take detailed messages?
3. Do you like working with your hands?
4. Are you great with children or animals?
5. Do you have a good memory?
6. Are you neat and organized?

Before apply for any job, it's important to think about your needs and the needs of the people you want to work for. It is important to answer a few questions you might want to think about before you make a decision.

1. Do you have the skills to do the job you want to apply for?

2. Is there a job available that offers on-the-job training?
3. Is there a class to learn the skills that can lead to a job later?
4. How many hours a week do you want to work?
5. Is a volunteer job a better choice?

This Tip sheet was adapted from the Eli Lilly and Company Team Solutions -Workbook 1

Choices in Employment

As you start your job hunt, there are several places you can look for possible leads. Your local newspaper on Sunday lists any opportunities for employment from part time to full time. For those with access to computer there are websites devoted to job opportunities such as:

<http://pennsylvaniajobs.com/>

<http://www.careerbuilder.com/Jobs/Pa/>

<http://www.pennlive.com/jobs/>

Or going directly to the website of the company you are interested in working for, can help you see current openings.

You can also call Vocational Rehabilitation and ask for a list of companies that may be hiring someone with your skills.

In your area there might also be supported employment programs such as a Clubhouse. This program helps individuals to learn to do more things on their own. The Clubhouse helps individuals learn skills for work, daily living and how to get along with others. They typically have work stations which might include food service, clerical work, newsletters and other publications and maintenance work. The goal is to gain skills that can then help the individual find a job outside the Clubhouse. It is

a great place to start if you have only a few skills or need to strengthen your current skills.

More and more behavioral health agencies and advocacy organizations are hiring individuals in multiple positions. An individual can also work as a Peer Support Specialist. Peer Support Specialists are hired in many behavioral health agencies and work directly with other individuals who are recovering from a mental health illness. They provide support, motivation and inspiration. If you are a “people person”, this is a great opportunity.

There is an important law that individuals with a mental illness should know about. It’s called the Americans with Disabilities Act or ADA. This act protects you from being fired because of your illness. It can help you get recruited and hired for a job as long as you have the required skills to do the job and have the education or experience needed.

Finding a job that will give you personal satisfaction is very important. Decide if you have the skills to do a job right now or if some training will help you find a new career.