Centre for Inclusive Employment

Working well with families: reflection checklist

Use this checklist to reflect on how you are working with the person and their family at different stages of the employment journey. Come back to it as circumstances, relationships and employment support change.

Stage 1: Starting well

- [ ] **Have I started early enough?**

  Am I connecting with students, families and schools well before a student's final school year so no one feels rushed to figure out life after school?

- [ ] **Have I explained how our service works in plain English?**

  Have I clearly explained what we do day-to-day, how we are funded and where we fit in the system without using confusing terms?

- [ ] **Have I talked through questions about the Disability Support Pension?**

  Have I invited conversations about how work might affect the DSP and pointed the family to clear, accurate information?

- [ ] **Have I shared visual guides so they know what comes next?**

  Have I given them tools like the Employment Roadmap so everyone knows typical timeframes, what to expect at each stage and what questions to ask?

- [ ] **Have I been clear about what we can and cannot do?**

  Have we discussed what support our service offers, how often we can provide weekly support, what sits outside our role and how the family would like to be involved?

- [ ] **Have I set up clear, easy communication expectations?**

  Have we agreed on how often we will update each other, who the main contact person is and the best way to keep in touch?

- [ ] **Have I listened with empathy when we have different views?**

  When we disagree about employment action, am I taking time to understand their worries and past experiences rather than just trying to convince them? Have I offered to connect them with additional support or peer groups if helpful?

Stage 2: Building a rich picture of the person

- [ ] **Have I explained why taking time to discover strengths matters?**

  Have I reassured the family that spending time learning about the person up front helps us avoid bad job matches later?

- [ ] **Have I invited the family to share what they know best?**

  Am I looking beyond formal reports and assessments to learn about the person's daily routines, interests, communication style and what helps them thrive?

- [ ] **Have I kept the person's voice at the centre?**

  Am I seeking and valuing the family's deep knowledge while making sure the person's own choices, goals and rights drive every conversation?

- [ ] **Have I focused on what helps them succeed rather than 'job readiness'?**

  Am I starting with what the person enjoys and does well, rather than deciding what they can or cannot do based on support needs?

- [ ] **Have I shared real stories to spark ideas?**

  Have I shared examples of people with disability working in real jobs to help broaden what everyone feels is possible?

Stage 3: Exploring and shaping work options

- [ ] **Have I invited the family to brainstorm local leads?**

  Have I asked the family and person about community connections or local businesses they already know, while taking responsibility for reaching out to employers myself?

- [ ] **Have I looked beyond standard job vacancies?**

  Am I looking for ways to identify specific tasks and potential employers that align with the person's strengths and needs?

- [ ] **Have I involved everyone before locking in decisions?**

  Are the person and their family involved in discussing proposed tasks, hours, transport and workplace support before anything is finalised?

- [ ] **Have I kept in touch during quiet periods?**

  Am I keeping the family updated when job leads take time, reassuring them that setbacks and searching are a normal part of the process?

- [ ] **Have I explained changes in direction?**

  Am I reflecting with the person and family on what each job development effort taught us, rather than changing direction without talking to them first?

Stage 4: Supporting ongoing success

- [ ] **Have I created a simple guide for co-workers?**

  Have we put together clear communication tips, like how the person learns best, so co-workers know how to support them from day 1?

- [ ] **Have I mapped out home routines with the family?**

  Have we talked through everyday support outside work, like getting ready on time, travel or bad weather, so extra pressure doesn't fall on the family unexpectedly?

- [ ] **Have I respected the boundary between home and work?**

  Are we keeping the family updated while giving the person the space to build confidence and independence at work?

- [ ] **Have I checked in regularly to notice subtle changes?**

  Am I asking the family whether they've noticed any changes at home so we can proactively address workplace issues early?

- [ ] **Have I reviewed support as things change?**

  Are we checking together whether support should be changed or reduced to help the person build independence and form natural friendships at work?

- [ ] **Have I checked if the person is ready for new challenges?**

  Am I asking the person and family if they still enjoy their work and want to try new tasks, extra hours or take the next step in their career?

Acknowledgement

This resource was created by Imagine More, an Australian Capital Territory organisation that works alongside people with disability, families and communities to strengthen inclusion, belonging and opportunities for people to live meaningful lives.

Imagine More (ACT) is a member of the National Alliance of Capacity Building Organisations (NACBO), alongside Community Resource Unit Ltd (QLD), Family Advocacy (NSW), Belonging Matters (VIC), JFA Purple Orange (SA) and Valued Lives (WA).

NACBO brings a unique and critical lens to the national conversation on inclusive employment. Together, the alliance draws on more than eight decades of collective experience supporting families of people with developmental disability, with over 10 years of collaboration as a national alliance. NACBO's work is grounded in long-standing relationships with individuals, families and communities, and focuses on building capacity, shifting mindsets, changing attitudes and supporting inclusive, person-led practices.

** This resource is part of a co-branded Centre for Inclusive Employment and NACBO suite of inclusive employment resources, including a workshop presentation (Family Advocacy), guide, checklist and employment roadmap (Imagine More), family template handout (Community Resource Unit) and written case studies (Belonging Matters).*

Centre for Inclusive Employment

For more information about this resource, please contact

Imagine More
Website: https://imaginemore.org.au/
Email: info@imaginemore.org.au
Phone: 0491 645 816

Imagine **More**