

Role of the Job Coach

A job coach can provide on-the-job support for a student with a disability and their employer. Their primary role is to support the student and employer as the student learns to perform the job tasks and acclimatizes to the workplace culture and expectations. When the student performs the job as expected and the immediate team members are comfortable, the job coach gradually “fades” support. The coach remains available to consult if needed.

Examples of ways a job coach may help:

- Participate with the student in job-task training and organizational orientation.
- Incorporate learning strategies suited to the individual student and tasks to promote job performance. Examples include:
 - Detailed daily schedule
 - Task breakdown and checklists of steps
 - Explanations of workplace expectations
- Help the student to apply self-management strategies on the job, for example:
 - Manage their “to-do” list
 - Recognize the right time to ask questions
- Support the student and team to identify workaround solutions and/or accommodations if needed.
- Model training and feedback techniques that are tailored to the individual’s learning style.

In the instance of organized work trials, the role of the job coach can be determined in advance of the work trial.

Role of the job coach at an interview

The role of the job coach at the interview stage can vary according to your preferences and the job coach’s recommendations for giving the candidate the best opportunity to showcase their strengths. There are two typical options:

- The job coach is present for the full interview. They listen and may provide occasional prompts or cues to the candidate (e.g., ask for a question to be rephrased, provide a prompt to share additional information in response to a question you ask).
- The job coach joins near the end of the interview. In this instance, the job coach can support any discussion about accommodations (if any are needed) and/or next steps in the recruitment process (logistics).

