

Transition Assessments, Part II: Tools for Students with Significant Disabilities in School and Rehabilitation Services

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What is Discovery?

Using "Discovery" as an alternative to traditional evaluations to guide full inclusion and employment,

The role of discovery

Discovery provides, in a non-traditional, common-sense form, the information needed to determine *the strengths, needs, and interests** of any person with complex life issues.

This is accomplished by simply addressing the question, "Who is this person?"

* From DOL/ODEP definition



Who is this person?

A rich description of the person

Discovery provides the foundation information for individuals that is then used to

- *Customize* a position with an employer,
- *Develop* a matched work experience,
- *Identify* targeted further training or learning,
- *Guide* full inclusion and further academic training.

Discovery and Traditional Procedures

- Discovery seeks to identify **already-existing information** rather than developing information solely for the purposes of evaluation or diagnosis.
- Identifying a direction for employment is based on a **translation of typical activities of the person's life** rather than on a comparison of the individual with others or with standards.

Discovery and Traditional Procedures

- The discovery process focuses more on **ecological validity** than **predictive validity**. It is more important that the direction to employment makes sense in relation to a person's life than to attempt to predict success based on test performance.
- The information of discovery is used only as a **guide for matching and customization** and may not be used to systematically exclude a person from employment.

Discovery and Traditional Procedures

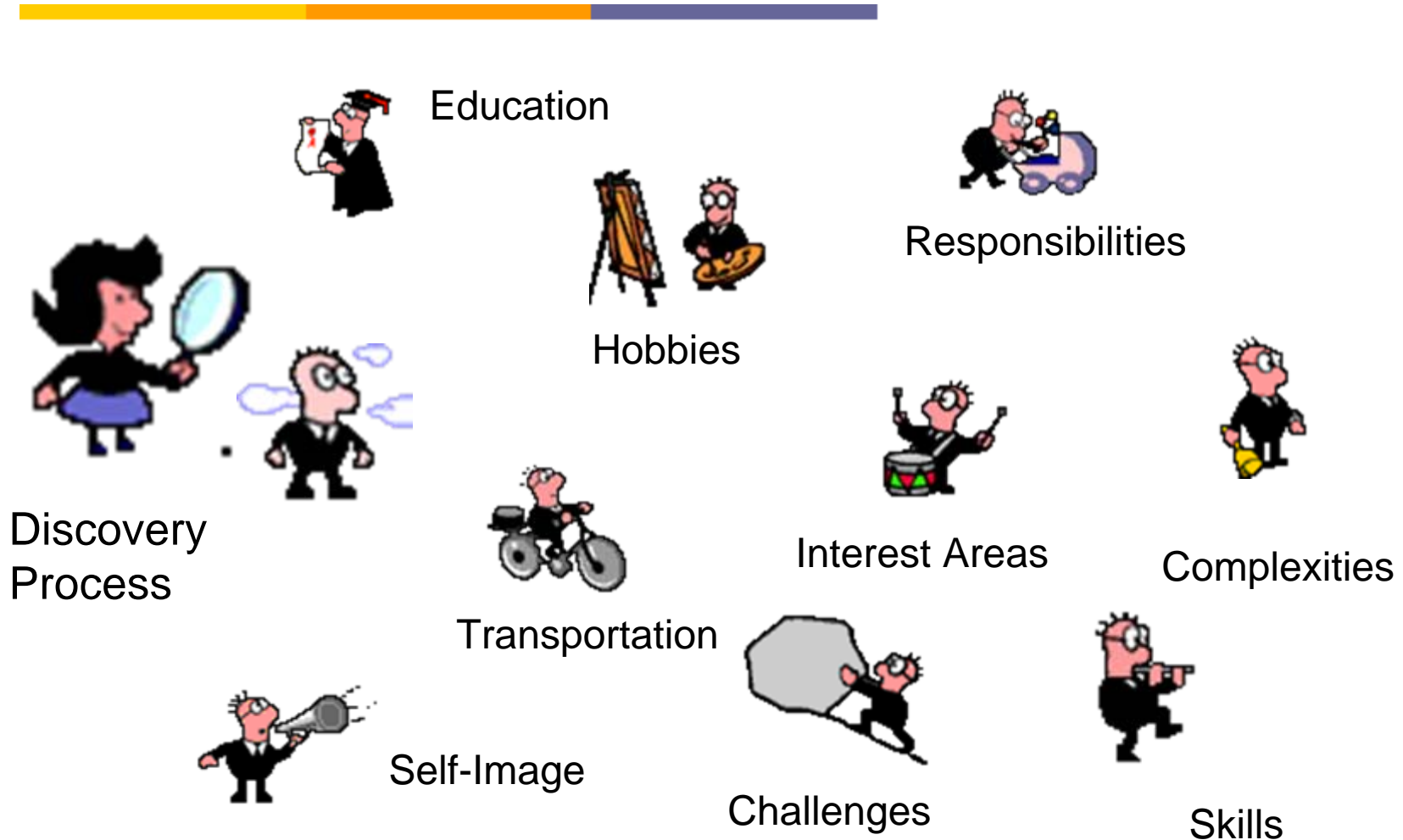
- By implementing discovery, we try to **identify the real complexities** faced by the individual and attempt to negotiate and match employment that fits, rather than putting the burden of resolving complexities solely on the individual.
- The profile strategy seeks to **empower and involve applicants, their families and friends** rather than to exclude them. Natural, common sense approaches to employment are given priority over strategies which rely solely on professional judgment and service.

Need for Discovery

Complexity is like a fog, obscuring the best of who people are.

- Discovery shows us the impact of life complexity on work.
- When we discover rather than presume and diagnose, a useful description of a person starts to emerge.
- Discovery shows possibilities and leads to things a person is motivated to do rather than to fears, negativity and deficits.

Discovery allows us to determine who the applicant is, their complexities, and potential contributions to employers.



Discovery = Translation

The finesse of discovery is to identify typical aspects of life and to translate those activities into *Conditions* for success, *Interests* toward employment and potential *Contributions* to be offered to employers.

Discovery is essentially an activity of *translation*.

Approaches to Discovery

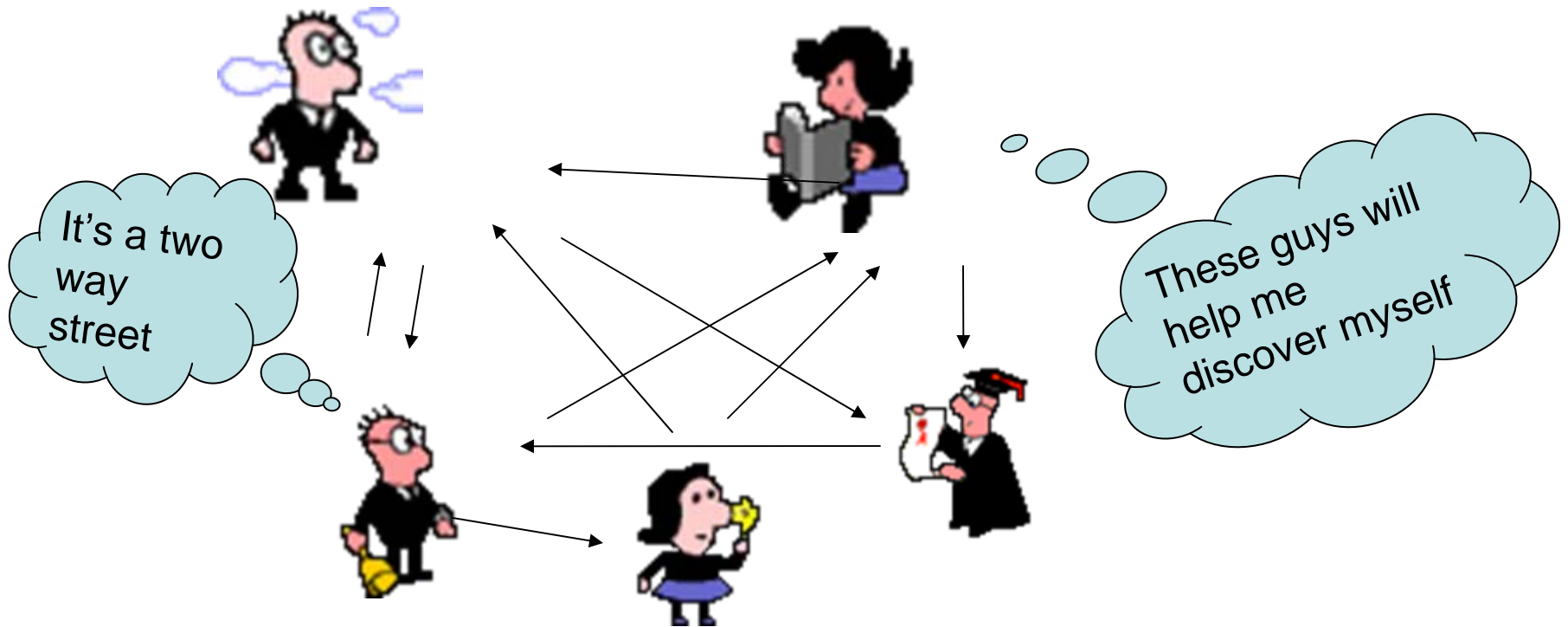
Discovery can either be:

1. Facilitated by someone else, typically an employment professional



Approaches to Discovery

2. Part of a group experience



Approaches to Discovery

3. Accomplished through "self-discovery"

Individuals can "paint" their own picture of who they are.



Approaches to Discovery

4. Supported through "Coached" Discovery

Involves assisting an individual through both self and group discovery

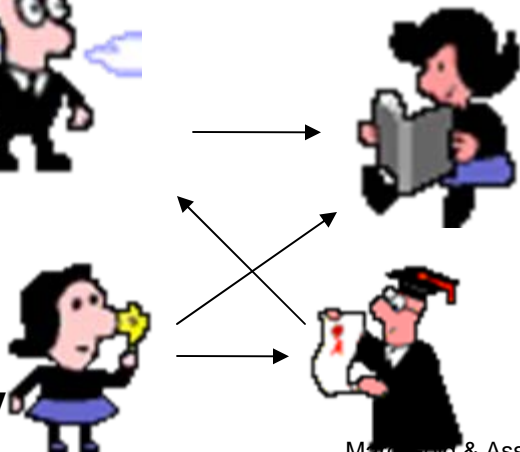


"Coach"



Self-discovery

Group discovery



Facilitated Discovery facts

- Average hours required for Discovery = 20 hours (range 16-24 hrs)
- Average time frame for Discovery = 4 weeks (range 3 - 6 wks)
- We recommend a team effort of 2 - 3 members while learning discovery

The "Who" of Discovery

- The person of concern
- Their family and loved ones
- Close and trusted friends
- Neighbors with good relationships
- Professionals who care
 - Counselors
 - Teachers
 - Case managers
 - Service providers

The "Where" of Discovery

- Home/Living
Context: Discovery starts where relationships start - where we live
- Neighborhood
- Local Community
- Ethnic group/peer group
- School
- One-stop center
- Church
- Places where the person is "most who they are"

The "What" of Discovery:

Identifying the best aspects of the person

- Routines
- Relationships
- Responsibilities
- Challenges
- Associations
- Friendships
- Shops and Services
- Tasks
- Solutions
- Connections
- Education
- Location
- Life performance
- Community inventory



Using Discovery in the Field

Rehabilitation And Education