



SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYING YOUR PERSONAL ASSISTANTS

A Workshop Series for People with Disabilities

PARTICIPANT HANDOUTS

Workshop I:

Living the Life You Want:

***Exploring Your Needs
and Preferences***

Living the Life You Want: Exploring Your Needs & Preferences

Workshop Goal and Objectives

Goal

To increase participants' awareness of their personal assistance needs and preferences in order to help them effectively screen, hire, and supervise their personal assistants.

Objectives

Participants who complete this workshop will be able to:

- ◆ Describe the support they need from personal assistants to live more independent and full lives.
- ◆ Distinguish their support needs from their preferences.
- ◆ Increase their comfort and ability to express their needs and preferences.

Workshop Learning Agreements

Create a safe, supportive space:

1. Listen for understanding.
2. Speak about issues, not individuals.
3. Questions are great! None are stupid.
4. Everyone participate, no one dominate.
5. No side conversations or cell phones, please.
6. Everyone facilitate so we stay on track!

If this is the first of a series of sessions –

Please also bring your binders to each class!

**TERMS USED BY VARIOUS PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN THAT WE WILL USE IN THIS SERIES
 Successfully Employing Your Personal Assistants**

This Curriculum	MI Waiver	MI Quality Community Care Council (MQC3) Home Help	Partners in Personal Assistance (PPA)
Consumer	Participant	Consumer	Consumer Employer/CE
Personal Assistant/PA	Worker	Provider	Personal Assistant
Consumer Directed	Self-Determination	Consumers	Self-Determination
Funding Agency	AAA/Waiver Agents	DHS	Funding Agency/ Third Party Payer ¹
Agency	Vendor Agency Provider Agency	Not Applicable	Partners in Personal Assistance (PPA)

¹ PPA's Consumer Employers' services may be paid by Area Agencies on Aging, DHS, or through private pay, private insurance.

Understanding Person-Centered Language

The goal of person-centered language is to support the whole community in:

- ★ Seeing each person who needs long-term supports and services as a unique individual
- ★ Respecting each person's skills and abilities
- ★ Supporting each person to be successful and maintain independence
- ★ Helping each person meet his or her needs for attachment, inclusion, occupation, and comfort
- ★ Supporting each person as a member of his or her community

Examples of Person-Centered Language

A person with a disability; a person who is blind or who is deaf

NOT: He or she *is* disabled, crippled, handicapped; a blind person; a deaf person
(as if that's all they are!)

A person who uses a wheel chair

NOT: wheel chair bound

A person with cerebral palsy

NOT: a victim of...

We provide supports and services, we assist people

NOT: We provide care; we take care of the resident.

A person with an intellectual disability

NOT: He's retarded or he's slow.

A person with a mental illness or psychiatric disability

NOT: She's crazy or she's nuts....

Most personal assistants
help the people they work
for live the best possible
lives they can.



Why We Use Brainstorming

Brainstorming ...



1. ***Allows participants to say what they think, knowing they won't be criticized and have holes shot in their ideas the moment they offer them.***
2. ***Discourages participants from going with the most obvious or first idea.***
3. ***Illustrates how useful all ideas can be, no matter how much they differ.***
4. **Challenges participants' assumptions and helps everyone think about the issues from new angles.**

Rules of brainstorming:

1. **Give everyone a chance to say one or two things, so *everyone* contributes and *no one* dominates.**
 - Use round robins; that is, go in a circle from one person to the next so everyone has a chance to speak.
 - Allow people to pass, and then give them a second chance.
2. **Don't react to ideas as they're presented. **WAIT!** Comments can discourage other participants.**
3. **If you don't understand what someone has said, ask clarifying questions or for examples.**
4. **Build on other's ideas.**
5. **Record each idea on the flip chart.**
6. **After the brainstorm, begin discussion!**



SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYING YOUR PERSONAL ASSISTANTS

MY PERSONAL PAPERS

By the end of the Workshop Series, we hope that you have drafts or final versions of these papers:

- 1. My Ideal (or Perfect) Day**
- 2. My Assistance Planning List**
- 3. My Preferences List**
- 4. My Ideal Personal Assistant**
- 5. A Snapshot of Me and Rough Schedule**
- 6. Sources to Recruit PAs**
- 7. What an Advertisement for Me Might Look Like**
- 8. My Personal Assistant Job Description**
- 9. My House Rules**
- 10. My Staffing Plan and PA Schedule**
- 11. Questions I'd Ask at My Interviews**
- 12. My Personal Assistants' Work Agreement**



My Ideal (or Perfect) Day

Describe what your ideal day would look like.

Where would you be and go? What would you be doing?

How would the day start? Who would you be with?

How many things would you do in a day?

How and when would the day end?

★ What personal supports would you need to make that day possible?

MY ASSISTANCE PLANNING LIST

	Needs:	How Often? (days a week/ times a day)	How long does it take? (minutes)	Preference of time of day? (am/pm)	Notes: (include preferences and other things)
Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)	Bathing/Showering				
	Dressing – AM				
	Dressing – PM				
	Grooming (shaving, hair care, make-up, oral care)				
	Breakfast Preparation				
	Eating Breakfast				
	Lunch Preparation				
	Eating Lunch				
	Dinner Preparation				
	Eating Dinner				
	Bowel Care				
	Bladder Care				
	Turning in Bed				
	Transferring				
	Exercising				
Other					
TOTAL:					

My Assistance Planning List, *continued*



SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYING YOUR PERSONAL ASSISTANTS

Needs:	How Often? (days a week/ times a day)	How long does it take? (minutes)	Preference of time of day? (am/pm)	Notes: (include preferences and other things)
Pressure Relief/ Positioning				
Medications				
Range of Motion				
Skin Care/Inspection				
Suctioning/Respiratory. Care				
Wound Care				
Diabetes Care				
Other				

My Assistance Planning List, *continued*

	Needs:	How Often? (days a week/ times a day)	How long does it take? (minutes)	Preference of time of day? (am/pm)	Notes: (include preferences and other things)
Other Supports & Services	Mail				
	Grocery Shopping				
	Computer Assistance				
	Making Bed				
	Driving (Van?)				
	Errands				
	Laundry/Ironing				
	Housekeeping				
	Answer Phone				
	Child Care				
	Pet Care				
	Reading				
	Other				

Fictional Consumer Stories – Sherry

Sherry is a 38-year-old divorced African-American woman with cerebral palsy who lives alone in the Detroit area. She's been a member of a Center for Independent Living program for about one and a half years, and has been hiring her personal attendants for about six months. Sherry uses crutches and sometimes a non-motorized wheelchair. She likes to get out of the house and be active. She sees a social worker two times a month to help with her feelings of depression.

Though Sherry likes being able to do her own hiring, she's become very frustrated because she can't seem to find "the right one." More than anything, she needs someone who can fix her hair and make-up the way she likes, help her get to all of her appointments on time, and be able to "be there for her" when she's not having a "good day."

Fictional Consumer Stories – Irene

Irene is 78, a widow with grown children, some living nearby in Tawas, others scattered across the country. She still lives in her own home despite her children's concerns. She has diabetes, some heart trouble and arthritis, and needs to use a walker since a hip replacement six years ago.

Irene has been active in her German Lutheran church throughout her life and loves playing cards with her friends, as well as reading. She needs help with getting to physical therapy, to the library and card games, with bathing, diabetes testing, and pet care. She loves her cats and dog, and hasn't liked the "chatterboxes" she's had as caregivers.

Fictional Consumer Stories – Enrique

Enrique is a 45-year-old man who has a spinal cord injury as a result of an auto accident he had when he was 32. He's had agency assistance ever since. He is quadriplegic. He is divorced and has a 15-year-old daughter who visits occasionally. His ex-wife is also in his life and helps out when she can.

Enrique is active in the disability community, and likes to be involved in advocacy work and liberal political causes. He works, writes, and chats with others on his computer constantly. He's having trouble finding workers who want to work with someone who is so active and has such complex needs, and who will do things as *he* wants them done.

My Preferences List

	Quality	Very Important to Me	Somewhat Important to Me	I'm Flexible/ It Doesn't Matter
ABOUT MY IDEAL PERSONAL ASSISTANT	If They are Male or Female			
	I Prefer a <input type="checkbox"/> Male or <input type="checkbox"/> Female			
	How Old They Are			
	I Prefer <input type="checkbox"/> Younger <input type="checkbox"/> Older			
	Non-smoker			
	Non-drinker			
	If They are a Night or Morning Person			
	I prefer a <input type="checkbox"/> Morning <input type="checkbox"/> Night Person			
	Physically Strong			
	Religious/Spiritual			
	Type of Religion or Spirituality I Prefer:			
	Type of Personality			
	I prefer <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Talkative <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet <input type="checkbox"/> Other:			
	Punctual (on time)			
	Sense of Humor			
	Able to Drive			
	Will learn and follow my cultural needs & concerns			
	Describe:			
	Others:			

My Preferences List, *continued*

	Talents and Skills	Very Important to Me	Somewhat Important to Me	I'm Flexible/ It Doesn't Matter
TALENTS AND SKILLS OF MY IDEAL PERSONAL ASSISTANT	Read			
	Write/Type			
	Good Cook (my style of food)			
	Computer Literate			
	Good with Money Mgt.			
	Signs (ASL)			
	Cleaning My Way			
	Plant Care			
	Sewing			
	Others:			
				

My Preferences List, *cont...*

	Preference Now or in the Future:	All the time	Often	Some -times	Never
OTHER PERSONAL AREAS TO CONSIDER	I like to go out and socialize				
	I drink alcohol and I may ask my PA to purchase it for me				
	I do illegal drugs				
	I smoke				
	I have a job				
	I volunteer				
	I participate in activities outside				
	I love to party and entertain				
	I go to school				
	I want my PA to eat meals with me				
	I want my PA to enjoy my pets				
	I want my PA to share my interests with me (e.g. TV, music, shopping, theater)				
	I want my PA to go to church with me				
	I want my PA to know how to keep kosher				
	Other				

Completing the “My Assistance Planning List” and “My Preferences List” forms is good—but it won’t get me much better service.



