Keeping Up with Employment: Perspective of Recent Post-secondary Graduates with Disabilities

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Background

• Key concern of students with disabilities: to find employment after graduation (Martiniello et al., 2011)

• Pilot study to identify factors and strategies leading to employment after graduation

Method

• 16 postsecondary graduates (3 males, 13 females) with disabilities who currently have a job

• Most recent level of studies:
  • 7 Bachelor’s degree
  • 6 Graduate degree
  • 3 Other
Method

• Brief telephone interview
  • How did you find out about your job?
  • How long did it take to find your job?
  • What helped you get your job? (strategies)
  • What advice would you give to recent graduates with disabilities looking for a job?
Results

Type of employment

- Part time (< 32 hours/week)
- Full time (> 32 hours/week)
Results

How they found out about their job

- Contact
- Volunteering
- Job site / centre
- Other
Results

How long it took to find their job

- Already in job as trainee, etc.
- < 2 months
- 2-6 months
- 6-12 months
Results

What helped them get their job

- Contact
- Volunteering
- Skill set
- Working there
- Other
Conclusions

• Most graduates worked full time

• Learned about their job through personal contacts or job site / centre

• All found their job in less than 12 months; most in less than 2 months
Conclusions

• Advice for recent graduates with disabilities looking for a job include:
  • Work on CV
  • Network to get contacts
  • Volunteer (employers will see what you can do)
Conclusions

• Advice (continued):
  • Apply to many places, even if out of comfort zone
  • Be resilient
  • Apply to multiple fields / occupations to increase your chances
Thank You!

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