



Project | SEARCH®

Manager Guide

Project SEARCH Overview

Project SEARCH is an internationally recognized program dedicated to building a workforce that includes people with disabilities. Its business partnerships benefit the individual, the community, and the workplace. The program was established in 1996 at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center to address staff turnover in entry-level support positions. The successful model has been replicated in hospitals, banks, universities, and businesses in more than 500 locations in the U.S. and abroad.

Designed as a nine-month unpaid internship program, Project SEARCH places interns in real-world work settings where they learn all aspects of gaining and maintaining employment. A series of three internships lasting 10-12 weeks allows interns to explore careers and develop marketable job skills. They receive support from department mentors, skills trainers, and worksite accommodations and adaptations. The ultimate goal is for each intern is to secure competitive employment within their community. The program provides individualized job development that is based on the intern's experiences, strengths, and skills.

The **goal** of Project SEARCH is to simulate a true work environment as much as possible. This includes going through initial job orientation and training, shadowing other employees (if this is how new employees are generally trained), taking normal breaks, eating lunch with peers, signing in and out, providing and wearing the correct uniform, dealing with a supervisor and being evaluated on performance. The role of the instructor is to provide classroom training on these job skills. The role of the skills trainer is to assist the employee in being successful in these tasks with as much independence as possible.

In general, workers with disabilities do best when instructions are clear and precise. Detailed training along with written instructions and mentoring are important factors in a successful experience. The roles of all members of the team are "cogs in the wheel" of a successful placement.

How will Project SEARCH work with NKU?

Project SEARCH is a partnership between NKU, a high school transition program or adult training program, and other community partners. NKU provides opportunities for training and education. Interns participate in the nine-month employment program in place of a typical school year assignment or adult training program and are referred to as Project SEARCH interns. Interns are responsible for their own transportation to the NKU campus. Public transportation is generally available and the Project SEARCH staff will provide travel training as needed. Lunch is typically the responsibility of the intern. Each intern works with up to three departments during the course of their

time in the program. During the internship, the intern learns job-specific skills while having the opportunity to put employability skills into practice.

Interns are completely immersed at NKU, five days a week. Interns report to their facility, learn employability skills in a designated onsite classroom, and learn job skills while participating in a variety of internships/experiences. Managers and appointed mentors, supported by Project SEARCH staff at the internship sites, work with the interns to teach necessary skills and tasks. Interns get continual feedback from the internship site managers and mentors, co-workers, and Project SEARCH staff. A certificated special education teacher (or instructor for the adult program) and skills trainers work with both the interns and the internship site staff.

The Norse Project SEARCH program is collaboration between:

- NKU
- Campbell County Schools
- BAWAC
- OVR
- Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services

What does Project SEARCH offer NKU?

- Demonstrates to the employees, patients and their families, or customers that NKU embraces diversity and equal opportunities for all.
- Provides role models to patients and customers with disabilities.
- Provides a morale boost to the departments in which the interns train.
- Provides access to resources provided by the community partners, which allows this program to operate at minimal cost to NKU.
- Provides expertise and support in disability employment preparation via Project SEARCH staff who will always be on site when interns are present.

What does NKU offer Project SEARCH Interns?

- An environment that embraces diversity and demonstrates strong commitment to the program.
- A professional work environment that teaches marketable skills as well as skills specific to the industry sector.
- Designated space to use as a training room.
- A Business Liaison to Project SEARCH staff who can connect with department managers and facilitate the development of internship sites.
- Supervisors and mentors in the internship sites/departments

How do interns get selected?

Potential interns must complete an application packet. Selected applicants are interviewed by a panel which includes the NKU Business Liaison and other representatives from the Project SEARCH partners. Once interns are selected, they complete the host business' onboarding process prior to the start of their internship. The first two or three weeks of the program are dedicated to orientation in which interns learn their way around the host business, learn health and safety requirements, and become familiar with NKU protocols.

How do I host an intern in my department?

NKU department internships are an integral part of the Project SEARCH program. These internships promote valuable skill-building for the interns and an opportunity for the managers to assess the intern's skills in terms of future employment. The ultimate goal upon completion of the program is employment either with NKU or elsewhere in the community.

How to get started:

1. Contact your Business Liaison and express your desire to be involved.
2. The Business Liaison and a member of the Project SEARCH team will conduct a meeting describing the program, roles, and responsibilities.
3. A member(s) of the Project SEARCH team will visit the worksite and perform a job analysis and provide an orientation for the department manager and staff.
4. The Business Liaison will inform you if an intern has been matched with your department.

Once an intern has been matched:

1. The Project SEARCH Business Liaison or program instructor contacts the worksite supervisor to set up an interview.
2. The intern and Project SEARCH staff member attend a ½ hour interview.
3. The Supervisor provides feedback to the intern on the interview.
4. The intern follows up with the worksite supervisor and thanks him/her for the interview.
5. The intern will begin training at the worksite on a designated day with the support of department staff and a skills trainer and/or program instructor when necessary.
6. The intern is evaluated weekly by the Project SEARCH staff. The supervisor will participate in the evaluation of the intern's performance and will be briefed on their progress by Project SEARCH staff.
7. A monthly employment planning meeting is held to discuss the progress, areas in need of improvement, and potential employment opportunities for the intern. The intern leads his/her meetings and they are attended by the instructor, department supervisor or mentor, a family member, vocational rehabilitation counselor, and other team members as necessary.

8. Project SEARCH staff will submit all required reports to their respective agencies and to NKU as identified per site.
9. Interns will give two weeks' notice prior to the end of the internship.
10. Department Managers will go over the final evaluation with the interns on the last day of the internship.
11. Interns will write a thank you letter upon completion of the internship.

Key information for participating Departments:

- The department must designate a supervisor/mentor (who can, but does not have to, be the department manager) to serve as a point of contact for the department and supervisor/mentor for the interns.
- The department is responsible for conducting a tour with the Project SEARCH instructor and interns to orient the interns to the department.
- The program is divided into three separate internships of 10-12 weeks in length. Each work site/department may or may not be used for every rotation.
- Once a department analysis is completed and approved, it will be open to interns to apply for the next rotation.
- Interns receive training support and continual feedback from the Project SEARCH staff during their internships.
- If an intern requires disciplinary action or removal from the site, the supervisor/mentor must contact the Project SEARCH instructor and Business Liaison immediately.
- In the event of an emergency, after following emergency procedures for NKU, contact the Project SEARCH instructor or staff.

What is the Project SEARCH Interns' calendar?

The Project SEARCH instructor will provide a detailed calendar at the beginning of the program that identifies the start and end dates of each internship as well as any observed holidays and school vacations.

The *proposed* work rotation schedules are as follows (change each year based on calendar):

Internship Rotation 1 Dates: (September 11 th – November 20 th , 2017)
Internship Rotation 2 Dates: (December 4 th , 2017 – February 23 rd , 2018)
Internship Rotation 3 Dates: (March 12 – May 21 st , 2018)

Project SEARCH Daily Schedule:

Monday-Friday 7:45am - 2:30pm

7:45 - 8:45 Employability Skills Class: Interns gather in the designated training room for instruction based on the approved Project SEARCH curriculum, which includes daily living and employability skills, i.e. problem solving, team work, decision making, budgeting, nutrition, resume writing, and interviewing techniques.

8:00 - 11:00 Internship Sites: Interns participate in non-paid internships throughout the host business.

11:00 - 11:30 Lunch: Interns may purchase a lunch from the cafeteria or pack a lunch. They are encouraged to have lunch wherever it is appropriate, either with their peers or at their internship sites.

11:30 - 2:00 Internship Sites: Interns return to their sponsoring departments to continue learning job-specific skills.

2:00 - 2:30 Classroom Reflection/Planning/Communication Skills: Interns debrief with the Project SEARCH Instructor and skills trainers at the designated training room space, and then take public transportation home.

After the initial Training Phase of a rotation for Interns, the skills training will be reduced to a maintenance phase which includes periodic “check ins” during the day by staff to ensure the Interns are remaining on task and meeting the needs of the department. More complex tasks should be added to the internship as an intern masters the beginning tasks.

Contact List

Business Liaison:

Name: Nancy Bardgett

Work: (859) 572-6149

Cell:

Email: bardgettn1@nku.edu

Project SEARCH Instructor:

Name: Lindsay Becker

Work (Classroom): Landrum Hall #314, 859-572-7923

Cell: 859-630-9280

Email: lindsay.becker@campbell.kyschools.us OR beckerl3@nku.edu

Project SEARCH Skills Trainers:

Name: Jennifer Moody

Work (Classroom): Landrum Hall #314, 859-572-7923

Cell: 859-638-2089

Email: Jennifer.moody@bawac.org

Disability Awareness Tips:

- When talking to a person with a disability, look at and speak directly to that person rather than through a companion or interpreter.
- When referring to a person with a disability, make reference to the person first, then the disability. Use terminology such as “a person with a disability” rather than a disabled person.
- Treat adults as adults. Address people with disabilities by their first names only when extending that same familiarity to all others.
- ASK FIRST - If you offer assistance, (always ask before assisting someone), then wait until the offer is accepted. Then ask the individual with a disability for instructions on how you may assist them.
- RELAX. Don’t be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions such as “see you later” for a blind person or “Did you hear about this?” for a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Listen attentively when speaking with a person with a speech impairment. Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty understanding. It is acceptable to ask the person to repeat him or herself.
- Do not assume that because someone has a cognitive impairment, such as a learning disability, that s/he has below-average intelligence. The individual may have above-average intelligence, but may have difficulty receiving, expressing, or processing information.
- Ask the person if s/he prefers verbal, written, or hands-on instruction, or a combination of methods in training and work-related situations. For example, if providing verbal instructions, it may be helpful to follow-up with an e-mail that clarifies your request.
- Be patient. Allow the individual time to think and answer questions independently.

DISABILITY ETIQUETTE IN THE WORKPLACE

As the baby-boomer population ages and continues employment, the prevalence of disability management in the workplace continues to be a significant issue for employers. Disability management should include etiquette strategies that foster inclusion of people with disabilities in employment settings. Appropriate disability etiquette allows all employees to be more comfortable and productive. For employers wanting to successfully integrate people with disabilities into their organizations, the following etiquette strategies may be useful.

Recruitment Etiquette

People with disabilities continue to be the most unemployed and underemployed population in the United States. They represent an untapped labor pool offering valuable skills, qualifications, and assets for employers. Several recruitment strategies can increase an organization's access to potential applicants.

- Post job openings with local disability organizations and college and university career centers. Advertise vacancies within disability-related publications, websites, and job fairs.
- Include details about the job location in all postings and highlight accessible features of the location, if appropriate.
- Indicate the availability of flexible working conditions, including telecommuting or flexible scheduling.
- Only include qualifications in job postings that are actually required for the available position. Require equal qualifications of all job applicants, regardless of disability.
- Advertise the organization as an equal opportunity employer.
- Establish internship and mentoring programs (such as Project SEARCH) targeted towards youth with disabilities.

Interview Etiquette

Scheduling the Interview

- Let applicants know accommodations can be provided upon request and who to contact for more information.
- Schedule interviews at an accessible location. If the workplace is inaccessible, be prepared to conduct the interview at an alternate accessible location.
- Be familiar with travel directions to the interview location, including the path of travel into the building.
- Notify applicants in advance with the names of all interview participants.
- Be aware that an applicant with a disability may need to arrange for transportation following the interview. Provide the applicant with an estimate of interview duration and expected end time, if requested.

Greeting the Interviewee

- Be aware of the interview location's accessible features including restrooms, drinking fountains, and telephones.
- Use a normal tone of voice when welcoming the interviewee. Only raise your voice upon request.
- Call the person by his first name only when extending similar familiarity to other interviewees.
- Always introduce yourself and other interview participants. Offer to shake hands, if appropriate.
- Speak directly to the interviewee instead of any companion, personal attendant, or interpreter, when greeting the person for the interview.

Interviewing

- Always ask similar questions of all interviewees, regardless of disability. Conduct the interview emphasizing abilities, achievements, and interviewee qualities.
- Treat all interviewees with respect.
- Select an interview location with adequate lighting.
- Speak directly to the interviewee instead of any companion, personal attendant, or interpreter throughout the meeting.

New Employee Etiquette

- Review physical features of the work environment. If any create potential barriers for new employees with disabilities, make adjustments as necessary.
- Identify assistive technologies available to increase workplace accessibility.
- Provide alternate formats (e.g., large print, Braille) of all necessary work-related documents including benefits information, employee manuals and policies, and professional development materials, as needed.
- Prepare co-workers and supervisors for the arrival of a new employee with a disability, when appropriate. This preparation can include training and orientation to disability-specific issues. Such training should not be used to single-out the person with the disability. An overall disability awareness initiative is best.
- Remember to include employees with disabilities in emergency evacuation planning and procedures.

Workplace Etiquette: Mobility, Sensory, Cognitive, and Psychiatric Impairments

The following etiquette tips address a wide range of workplace situations involving employees with motor or mobility impairments, sensory impairments, and cognitive or psychiatric impairments. This publication is not a comprehensive guide to disability etiquette in the workplace. For more information about disability etiquette, see the resources listed at the end of this document.

Individuals with Mobility Impairments

- Do not make assumptions about limitations based on appearance or the use of assistive devices. For example, individuals who use mobility aids such as canes, walkers, or wheelchairs have different limitations and may use a mobility aid regularly or only as required by their limitations on a daily basis. Also, people who appear to be mobile may require accommodations such as accessible parking because they are unable to walk long distances due to a medical impairment (e.g., a person with asthma or a heart condition).
- Do not touch or lean on a wheelchair, move a person's walker or cane without being asked, or pet or distract a service animal without first asking the individual with the disability if it is okay. A wheelchair, mobility aid, or service animal is part of an individual's personal space; an extension of that individual.

- Be aware of the worksite and its accessible and inaccessible elements. Upon hiring a person who has an obvious mobility impairment, offer to provide a tour and evaluate the worksite for accessibility.
- Make workplace accessibility changes according to the specific work-related needs of the employee (e.g., making workspace modifications, keeping paths clear, and positioning items at appropriate reach heights, etc.).
- Keep disability etiquette in mind when planning work-related social events or training opportunities. Host events at accessible locations and design activities that include all employees.
- Ask whether a person needs assistance before you help. Extend the same courtesies to individuals with disabilities as you would others. Do not be afraid to ask how you can help.
- Sit down when speaking for more than a few minutes with a person who uses a wheelchair so you are at eye level.
- Be careful about the language you use. For example, people who use wheelchairs or scooters are not confined or bound to them. The wheelchair enables the person to get where he/she needs to go. It does not confine the person.

Individuals with Vision Impairments

- Be familiar with the route of travel to the interview location. Provide descriptive directions that do not require the person to rely on visual references. When appropriate, note if Braille signage is posted on walls and doors.
- Verbally greet and identify yourself before extending your hand to greet a person who is blind. Use the same courtesy when entering or leaving a room, or saying good bye when ending a conversation. Do not just walk away when talking with a person who is blind or visually impaired.
- Offer your arm instead of taking the arm of a person who is blind or visually impaired when guiding the person. As you walk, tell the person where you are going, make note of steps or slopes, and point-out opening doors or other obstacles.
- Offer new employees a guided tour of the workplace.
- Do not pet or distract a guide dog. When walking along-side someone who is using a guide dog, walk on the side opposite the animal.
- Offer to read written information, when appropriate, during an interview or on the job.
- Inform an employee who is blind or visually impaired of structural changes or hazards he may need to be aware of in the event of new construction or workplace modifications.
- Provide work-related materials, such as employee handbooks or benefits information, in an accessible format (e.g., large print, Braille, or accessible web page accessed with a screen reader).

Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Be aware that individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing communicate in various ways. Pay attention to cues such as whether the person uses sign language, is reading lips, writing, or gesturing. Do not be afraid say that you do not understand if you have trouble understanding the person's speech. It is better to find another way to communicate, such as through writing notes, than to pretend to understand.
- Do not put hands in front of your face, or food or other items in your mouth when communicating with someone who is reading lips. Also, do not turn your head or walk away while talking. When possible, speak in a well-lit room that is free from background noises.
- Maintain eye contact and direct your communication to the person who is deaf when using a sign-language interpreter.
- Speak using a normal tone of voice unless asked to raise your voice, and rephrase rather than repeat the same words if you are not understood.
- Take turns when talking during a meeting so the person who is deaf or hard of hearing can read lips if they are able to.
- Get the attention of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing before you start speaking by waving your hand, tapping her on the shoulder, or through some other appropriate gesture.
- Talk with the individual about his preferred method of communication for job training or complex work-related situations. When appropriate, provide a qualified sign-language interpreter, CART service, or training videos that are captioned.
- Remember to include employees who are deaf or hard of hearing in casual conversation and social events. Provide a sign-language interpreter for employer-sponsored social events, when appropriate.

Individuals with Speech Impairments

- Be patient and listen. Do not complete words or sentences for the individual. Do not be afraid to say you do not understand. Ask him to repeat and then listen carefully. Repeat what you heard to verify. Or, ask him to write it down.
- Be attentive in your mannerisms by maintaining conversational eye contact and focusing on the content of communication rather than the delivery of the communication.
- Relax and communicate as you would normally.
- Provide interview questions in advance, if possible, to allow the individual time to prepare and deliver responses effectively.
- Consider offering a personal interview as an alternative to a phone interview for people who stutter.

Individuals with Respiratory Impairments or Chemical Sensitivities

- Be aware that products that are commonly used in the workplace (e.g., air fresheners, cleaning products, markers) can trigger a reaction for someone who has a respiratory or chemical sensitivity. Use less toxic products when possible.
- Encourage employees to use fragrance-free products, and discontinue wearing fragrances and colognes in the workplace. Do not wear fragrances and colognes when interviewing new employees. Fragrances, colognes, and fragranced personal products can make some people very ill.
- Make a commitment to maintaining good ventilation and indoor air quality. This can benefit all employees.
- Do not make assumptions based upon appearance. For example, a person with asthma may not appear to be limited, but may need accessible parking because she is not able to walk long distances or be in the cold or humidity for long periods of time.

Individuals with Psychiatric Impairments

- Avoid stereotypes and assumptions about the individual and how she may interact with others. In most cases, it will not be obvious that someone has a psychiatric impairment.
- Recognize and respect the differences in people. People with psychiatric impairments may behave differently than other individuals, may have trouble interpreting social cues, or may have different ways of coping with their impairment.
- Respect personal space and do not touch the individual or his personal belongings.
- Provide support and assistance, as appropriate.
- Be patient. Allow the individual time to think and answer questions independently.

Individuals with Cognitive Impairments

- Do not assume that because someone has a cognitive impairment, such as a learning disability, that she has below-average intelligence. The individual may have above-average intelligence, but may have difficulty receiving, expressing, or processing information.
- Ask the person if he prefers verbal, written, or hands-on instruction, or a combination of methods in training and work-related situations. For example, if providing verbal instructions, it may be helpful to follow-up with an e-mail that clarifies your request.
- Treat the individual as an adult. Speak directly to the individual, rather than his/her companion, and use words and phrases according to his or her level of complexity.
- Be patient. Allow the individual time to think and answer questions independently.



Source: Disability Etiquette in the Workplace, Job Accommodation Network,
www.askjan.org