

TRANSITION ASSESSMENT AS A PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

What is portfolio assessment?

If transition assessment is conducted appropriately, the accumulation of data is a portfolio of assessment. The assessment of the areas of decision-making and IEP planning for transition is on-going and a multi-year process. The portfolio will consist of formal and informal assessment protocols, surveys, interviews, data from task analysis, and other data collection tools. Electronic portfolios make the addition of video resumes, video work samples, and other concrete visuals that demonstrate skills and behaviors learned and applied in authentic environments. The portfolio should not be a collection of documents stored in a folder or online. The purpose of the assessment is decision-making. There should be a tool to help organize and summarize the findings.

What is in a portfolio?

A portfolio may contain a variety of sections, each that contain information that demonstrates knowledge and skills over time. The transition assessment folder may contain samples of interest inventories, the student's resume, school transcript, postsecondary goal statements, data collection tools for WBL/CBVI, pictures of experiences, activities, and/or projects, and actual samples of work or summaries of the training or work experiences.

Involve the student in the planning for the portfolio. As in a resume, construct the portfolio to represent the information that facilitates reaching the student's postsecondary goals. For example, if I want to apply for a job teaching special education, I will work on my resume to highlight special education experience. If I want to move into the private sector of business, I will work on my resume to highlight my education experiences that show leadership, project teams, and organization skills. The same is true of the portfolio. The information in the Transition Assessment Portfolio may start as a collection of a variety of data used to determine the career choices and postsecondary education/training needs for the future. Eventually though it should be more specific. For example, once the student has indicated he wants to be a welder or wants to work in hotel hospitality, or wants to go to college to learn to be a nurses assistant, then the assessment instruments should be aligned with his preferences and interests, but drill down. He wants to be a welder. Can he pass the safety test? If not, why not? This helps the Transition Specialist and classroom teacher develop specific annual goals that support his postsecondary employment and training goals to be a welder. What about functional communication or professional communication for the student who wants to work in the hotel industry? There comes a point when we must stop trying to help the student decide what they want to be by giving "interest inventories and assessments". When they have told us, move on and help facilitate the student's goals and choices.

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Adpated from: Demchak, M. & Greenfield, R. (2003). *Transition portfolios for students with disabilities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Postsecondary Goals	Information Samples
Education/Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student's IEP • Report Cards • Academic Achievement Record (Transcript) • Statewide Assessment Results • Work Samples of Writing • Pre-requisite assessment for entry to postsecondary education (SAT/ACT/TSI/ACCUPLACER/COMPASS) • Summary of Performance (SOP)- Exiters • Student developed tools from the Student-IEP Meeting
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational Assessment protocols • Task Analysis, time sampling, productivity charts, • Resume • Letters of Recommendations • Work Samples (products or video) • Teacher/Job Coach Observations • Journal of Self-Evaluations; student-led progress monitoring
Independent Living Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP Accommodation/Modification Page • Level of Support Information • Receptive/Expressive Communication Information • Medical Information: independence and support needs • Task Analysis • Teacher/Job Coach Observations • Self-evaluation Checklists • Learning Styles Questionnaire • Level of Support Chart

Providing Feedback to Students

To review assessment results with the student and provide constructive feedback, consider the following strategies: *(Adapted from: Brookhart, S. (December 2007/January 2008). Feedback that fits. Exceptional Children, 65(4), 54-59.)*

1. Focus the feedback on the student's work and the process he/she used to accomplish the work. Broad praise, such as a "Good Job" does not help the student know specifically what they did that made the work "good" or aligned the work with facilitating the postsecondary goal.
2. Relate the feedback to the measurable, postsecondary transition goals. This will help to reaffirm the student's postsecondary goals and provide incidental teaching on self-determination skills, goal setting and goal attainment.
3. Describe the work and accomplishment rather than judge. Students are more likely to hear and use descriptive feedback. General, generic feedback and feedback that is judgmental is typically not productive.
4. Be positive and specific when describing what works and does not work. Feedback should not be so detailed that you lose the student but it should be specific enough that the student knows what he/she must do next.