



TennesseeWorks Educator Series

Strategies for High School & Transition Teachers

Preparing to Fade as a Job Coach

Knowing how to fade prompting on the worksite can be difficult. Learn how to build supports so that your students will be ready to work independently.

A Different Perspective on Fading

Traditionally, fading means systematically withdrawing support. However, as a job coach, remember that “the reduction of your time spent on a job site is not the process of fading, it is the outcome” (DiLeo, 2010). Before leaving the student alone on the work site, help the student build independence. When viewed this way, fading requires “a building up of supports rather than a reduction” (DiLeo, 2010).

Your efforts to build independence should center around two major goals: scaffolding supports in the environment and increasing the skills of the student.

Using Natural Supports

Identify natural supports, including co-workers and supervisors. Find out how *unsupported* employees

- receive training
- resolve problems
- ask questions

Talk to supervisors and co-workers about how they can provide support. Workplace social skills are key to longevity in the workplace, so let your student practice talking with others.

Teaching Job Skills

Learners follow a progression of acquisition, maintenance, and generalization. Acquisition is first learning the skill. Maintenance is becoming fluent and retaining the skill over time. Generalization has been achieved when learners can apply their learning to other tasks, settings, and materials. Even when you start teaching a skill, think about how to encourage generalization.

Scaffolding Supports

In addition to already available natural supports, you can build other supports, such as

- Checklists
- Schedules
- Picture-based task analyses
- Self-monitoring data sheets

As you scaffold these supports, praise students when they rely on environmental supports rather than on the job coach.

“View fading as more of a building up of supports rather than a reduction.”

-Dale DiLeo, Former President of APSE

“The reduction of your time spent on a job site is not the process of fading, it is the outcome.”

-Dale DiLeo



Promoting Generalization: Teaching How to Sweep

1. Practice with a whisk broom, a push broom, and a handheld broom. Sweep the kitchen, the gym, and the patio. Have students practice with you, another supervisor, and a school custodian.

2. Ask the head custodian to praise students for sweeping the gym. If they finish early, let them take a brief break.

Resources

DiLeo, D. (2010, April). Job Site Fading: Why job coaches find it difficult to leave job sites. *Supported Employment for Florida’s Employment Professionals*. 4(5), 3-4

Stokes, T. F. & Baer, D. M. (1977). An implicit technology of generalization. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*. 10(2) doi:10.1901/jaba.1977.10-349

Speeding up acquisition.

Use direct instruction, a research-based method for teaching new skills.

1. Begin by analyzing the task you are teaching by breaking it down to no more than five steps.
2. Model the task, talking through each step.
3. Allow the student to practice individual steps under your guidance.
4. After the student has practiced at least three times, give him/her the chance to complete the task on her own.
5. Praise often! The beginning of acquisition is when your praise rate should be the highest, because the student is learning what it means to do the job well.

Reaching maintenance.

After the student has successfully completed a step correctly several times, start to slowly decrease your praise rate. Praise after an average of two response, then every 3-4 responses. Make sure that your praise remains contingent on correct completion of the task. Telling a student “good job” and then fixing whatever he did will not help him discriminate between an accurate and an unacceptable performance.

Promoting Generalization.

If you want your students to use their new skills in other situations, with a variety of tools, in the presence of a variety of people, here are two tips: 1. *Train sufficient exemplars* – use a variety of tools during acquisition and maintenance phases. 2. *Use natural contingencies* - reward students with consequences that would be used in a real world work place (Stokes & Baer, 1977).

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Founded in 1996, the Britt Henderson Workshop Series is made possible at no cost to participating educators through an endowment from the Robert and Carol Henderson family in memory of their son Britt. This annual series of workshops provides training focused on innovative evidence-based practices to improve the quality of education for students with diverse learning needs.