Module 1
Live Session

Additional instructions to facilitate the activity



Activity: From Supported Employment to Customized Employment

Objective

Understand the paradigm shift (CE vs SE) and the aplication of principles and rights of the UNCRPD.

Structure

1. Introduction (10 min)

Introduce the aim of the activity and ask participants to divide into small gropus. Ask them to read the provided cases:

Case A (SE): María is a person with mild intelectual disability who wants to enter into the open labour market. Her objective is to work in a local grocery store in her neighbourhood.

She has a good visual memory and performs well in organisational and repetitive tasks. She likes order, stocking products, and working with clear routines. She feels more confident when she knows exactly what she has to do and how to do it.

The Company already has an existing position as a shelf stocker with additional support at the checkout during busy periods, so María is directly placed in that role.

During the first weeks a profesional supports her to learn the tasks and adapt to the work environment.

Her main duties are stocking products in shelves, checking expiration dates, and occasionally assisting at the checkout during peak times.

In this case, the job position was already defined before María joined, and the main objective is that she can progressively adapt to her tasks with the necessary support.

Caso B (CE)

Lukas is a 28-year-old person with autism who experiences periods of anxiety and social overload, particularly in stressful or unpredictable situations. He has no

extensive work experience but shows a strong interest in bicycles and enjoys tasks that are structured, organised and repetitive.

A bicycle rental and repair company is open to including Lukas in their team.

Instead of assigning him a predefined job, the team explores which tasks could match his interests, strengths and support needs.

It is observed that Lukas works very carefully, has a good sense of order and organisation, follows routines well, and is highly motivated by activities related to bicycles. He performs best in calm environments with clear instructions and concrete tasks, while ongoing spontaneous customer interaction can be overwhelming for him.

Based on this, different tasks are organised within the workshop, such as cleaning returned bicycles, organising tools and materials, sorting spare parts, preparing bicycles for rental, and maintaining order in the workshop area.

In this case, the work is shaped around the person, combining and reorganising existing tasks to create a meaningful and sustainable job opportunity that matches Lukas's profile while responding to the real operational needs of the company.

2. Part 1 – Compare the cases (20 min)

Invite each group to analyse both cases and answer to the following questions:

- What key differences do you notice between María's case (A) and Lukas's case (B)?
- In which case is the person more at the centre of the process? Why?
- How does the workplace context influence what happens in each case?
- What advantages do you see in each approach (SE and CE)?

3. Group Work II – From SE to CE (20 min)

Invite groups to focuse only on Case A (María) and reflect on how it could move closer to the Customized Employment model.

Guiding questions:

- What changes would be needed to move this case towards Customized Employment (CE)?
- What could be adjusted in the workplace to better support inclusion?
- How could the job be adapted to better match María's strengths and needs?
- What role could María play in defining or shaping her tasks?
- What aspects of the workplace (e.g. organisation, tasks, flexibility) could be modified to support her participation?
- What types of flexibility could be introduced into the role?

IMPORTANT

The aim of this activity is not to redesign a full job or propose technical implementation steps, but to think at a conceptual level about transformation.

Ask participants to focus only on:

Approach: How the job is understood (fitting the person vs shaping around the person).

Job design (general idea): Fixed role vs flexible combination of tasks.

Supports (conceptual): Whether support is standardised or adapted to individual needs (no need to specify how).

Agency: The level of participation of the person in shaping their own job.

Role of the organisation: Whether it assigns a role or co-creates it with the person.

Avoid detailing methods, procedures, tools, or step-by-step interventions.

4. Sharing (10 min):

Invite each group to share:

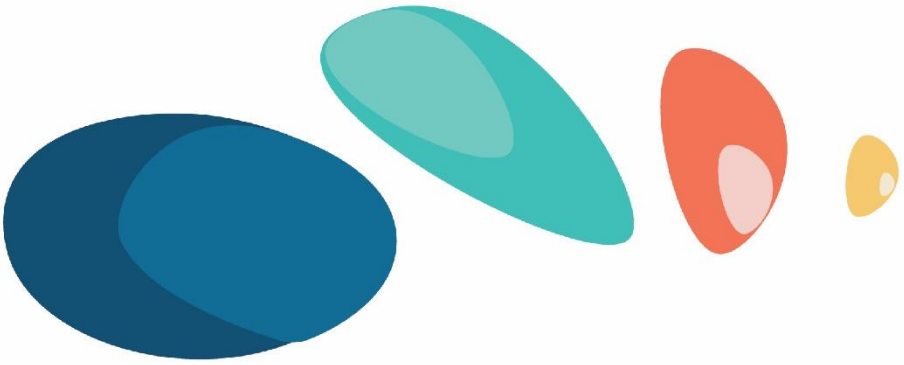
- 1 key difference between Case A and Case B
- 1 concrete change proposed for Case A to move towards Customized Employment

- 1 reflection on how the workplace context influences inclusion (e.g., fixed role vs flexible adaptation)

5. Closing (2 min):

Close the activity by reinforcing the idea that Customized Employment represents a shift in perspective. It is not the person who needs to adapt to a predefined job, but the job that can be shaped around the person. This approach is aligned with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), particularly:

- The right to work on an equal basis with others (Article 27)
- The right to participate in community life (Article 19)
- The principle of equality and non-discrimination (Article 5), moving beyond “fitting people into jobs”
- The importance of autonomy, inclusion, and participation (Article 3)



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