

Part I:

Background Information

Soup Spice Mixer Case Study

BACKGROUND

When Vicki was 26-years-old, she lost her husband and son in a car accident, and was left a quadriplegic with a head injury. She was a homemaker with no family support and few resources available to her. After physical rehabilitation Vicki was referred to her local office of the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. It was reported that she was depressed and not motivated to fully participate in the services they could offer. As a last resort Vicki was referred to a sheltered workshop, which had a contract with a local soup manufacturing company. They wanted Vicki to be able to measure and package soup spices but with her functional limitations she was unable to do so. Dave Law, a rehabilitation engineer with Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, was asked to evaluate the work tasks and determine the feasibility of making accommodations to enable her to complete the work

FUNCTIONAL CAPACITIES/LIMITATIONS

Dave Law met with Vicki and using information from the file as well as personal observation determined the following functional capacities.

Cognition: Vicki has fairly significant memory loss but can follow short, simple instructions. Tasks need to be simple and repetitive.

Sensory: Both visual and hearing capacities remain intact.

Speech: Speech is unaffected.

Upper Extremity Function: Vicki is functioning as a quadriplegic but the level of injury was low enough for her to maintain fairly normal prehension and dexterity. She has good range of motion in her arms and shoulders; however, she does suffer from tremors, spasticity and general weakness.

Lower Extremity Function: Vicki uses a wheelchair and maintains the capacity to sit up for 8 hours.

JOB DESCRIPTION

A soup spice measurer/packager measures a specified amount of spice from various canisters and places them in a small plastic bag, according to the recipe being followed. Once filled, the bag is stapled and placed on a rack, to be added to the soup box with additional ingredients.

Essential Functions of the Job

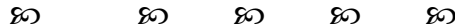
1. Read recipe to determine which spices are needed and how much of each spice is to be placed in the plastic bag.
2. Select canisters with specified spice and fill up if necessary.

Case Study Training Module – Soup Spice Mixer

3. Measure and place spice in bag, using measuring spoons, continuing until all ingredients have been added.
4. Fold bag and staple.
5. Place filled bag on rack, to be sent to next station on assembly line.

EMPLOYER CONSIDERATIONS

Vicki essentially has two employers in this situation. The soup manufacturing company's primary concern is accuracy, since errors in either the type or amount of spice could ruin the entire batch. The sheltered workshop is her more visible employer and has to ensure the agreements of the contract are met, both in terms of volume and quality. It is their responsibility to manage the employees, often in creative, flexible ways, to fulfill the terms of this agreement. Each employee needs to contribute to the maximum of his or her ability while working in a safe but challenging environment.



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