



BUILDING ABILITY



THROUGH CAREER  
MANAGEMENT

# CAREER PLANNING

for young people  
with disabilities



Case studies for  
careers practice

## Acknowledgments

CEAV Career Counselling Australia's vision is aimed at building the capacity of those most disadvantaged in the community to manage their career development so that they can lead productive and successful lives.

Our mission is to provide careers services and programs to increase participation in the workforce and provide relief from poverty. Our programs focus on overcoming the specific barriers to gaining employment, entering training and further education, returning to study.

This resource has been developed by CEAV Career Counselling Australia (CCCA) to support the work of career practitioners and disability professionals working with young people with disabilities. The Case Study files were developed following the successful delivery of the Building Ability through Career Management – BACM workshops for parents, professionals and young people with disabilities.

CEAV Career Counselling Australia wishes to acknowledge the support of the Victorian government in the development of this resource. We also acknowledge the extensive contribution of Dr Joanne Webber in the formulation of the case studies after engagement with the BACM workshops.

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# Building Ability Through Career Management

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## FORWARD

Employment remains a priority for young Victorians, including young people with disability. Like other young Victorians, young people with disability can and want to work.

However, people with disability continue to face barriers to employment, remain under-represented in the labour market and experience economic exclusion.

The Victorian Government has recognised this situation must change and through Every Opportunity – the Victorian economic participation plan for people with disability 2018-2020, action is being taken in Victoria to drive better employment outcomes for people with disability, including young people with disability. The actions are designed to improve the engagement of people with disability in education and learning pathways; in employment opportunities; and in business and innovation.

Government, community and business all have roles to play in improving economic opportunities and outcomes for people with disability. In 2018, the Office for Youth learned about the groundbreaking work being undertaken by CEAV Career Counselling Australia to support young with disability to access employment, which aligned with the actions in Every opportunity to prepare and support transitions for young people with disability.

Along with colleagues in the Office for Disability and the Disability and NDIS Branch of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office for Youth partnered with CEAV Career Counselling Australia to support its Building Ability through Career Management Program.

Through the program CEAV Career Counselling Australia delivered targeted workshops to young people with disabilities, parents/caregivers of young people with disabilities and professionals who deliver career counselling to young people with disabilities.

CEAV Career Counselling Australia provided individualised career planning to young with disability and developed valuable resources for parents and families, disability professionals, employment consultants and employers to support young people with disability to achieve their career aspirations beyond school.

The Career Planning for young people with disabilities case studies provide rich information and guidance to young people, parents, teachers, disability employment consultants and employers about how to support the different needs of young people with disability to gain employment based on their unique skills, circumstances, interests and goals for the future.

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Office for Youth applauds the impressive young people featured in this resource for sharing their aspirations and journeys with us and wishes them every success in the future.

We acknowledge the efforts of dedicated family members who have been actively involved in assisting young people with disability to explore and pursue diverse and innovative work options.

Finally, we recognise the employment consultants and employers who opened doors and provided employment opportunities to young people with disability, understanding the benefits of diverse and inclusive workplaces for business, the young people themselves and the broader community.

The resources developed by CEAV Career Counselling Australia will play an important role in supporting young people with disability to prepare for employment and in creating more inclusive workplaces for young people with disability.

Office for Youth

Department of Premier and Cabinet

# Building Ability Through Career Management

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## CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

A series of case studies have been developed to demonstrate the experiences of young people with disability and a range of strategies to support these individuals in their personal career planning and management. Most of these cases have been inspired by participants associated with the CEAV Career Counselling Australia (CCCA), Building Ability through Career Management (BACM) program. Other cases have been included based on de-identified experiences of people outside this project in order to illustrate a broader diversity of individuals from a range of cultural groups, disability types and geographic locations. The case studies have been designed based on lived experiences of disability, the personal career exploration journey, education, work history and goals of various people with disability.

These case studies offer a range of perceptions of factors relevant to the career exploration journey for people with a disability; including education pathways, job trials, access to disability services and support networks. The cases represent a diversity of individuals through culture, disability type, career goals, career journey, location, socio-economic status and gender. A person-first, strengths-based approach has been used in the case studies to highlight each person with a disability as an individual with unique skills, interests, values and goals.

In accordance with ethical considerations, some case studies have been deidentified to protect the privacy of participants. A number of participants have provided verbal and written consent for their stories and photos to be shared in this case study booklet. For these participants, their names, schools, workplaces and other identifiable information has been included. For all other case studies, anonymity has been respected, with pseudonyms used for individuals reflected in the case studies. Information such as geographic location, education providers and workplaces have been changed to further protect the anonymity of those in the case studies. Some cases represent the combined experiences of a number of participants to further de-identify those represented in the case studies.

# Building Ability Through Career Management

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## HOW TO USE THIS CASE STUDY BOOKLET

Individual cases can be read and shared to illustrate the range of career journeys undertaken by people with a disability. Cases can also be used for training purposes with discussion questions asked at the end of each case study. The discussion questions have been designed to prompt professionals to identify the key career development goals and the various interventions that can be applied to each situation. Note that because career development is not a single linear journey, a range of other solutions or interventions can also be applied to each case. It is therefore useful to acknowledge a range of alternative options and different career paths that are shared when discussing the cases.

## EXAMPLES OF USE

**Classroom discussion with students:** raising awareness of the aspirations of young people with disabilities to enter the workforce and pursue their career goals

**Professional development:** use in the training and up-skilling of career practitioners to build their knowledge of working with young people with disabilities

**Disability employment staff professional learning:** sharing cases to build capacity in case and practice management techniques

**Teaching tool:** working with community agencies to build knowledge in career planning for young people with disabilities.

**Reference:** The case studies in this resource refer to the CCCA use of our preferred vocational assessment tool, the Employment Readiness Scale Model™. Employment readiness is defined as being able, with little or no outside help, to find, acquire and keep an appropriate job as well as to be able to manage transitions to new jobs as needed.

The Employment Readiness Scale was utilised during the Building Ability Through Career Management (BACM) workshops to support the career planning of young people with disabilities.

More information on the Employment Readiness Scale can be found at [www.employmentreadiness.info](http://www.employmentreadiness.info)

All inquires about how the ERS was used in this project should be made to CEAV Career Counselling Australia (03) 9433 8000

## CASE STUDY:

## Mikey

Mikey is a bright and engaging young man with Williams Syndrome. He experiences mild difficulties with some aspects of learning. He is currently enrolled in a post school program for young people with a disability and is particularly enjoying the woodwork component of this course. He is confident when disclosing his disability as he realises that this helps people understand the type of support he needs at work.

Mikey described himself as someone who loves talking to people and one of his values is that he always wants to be helpful.

Mikey undertook a 2-day Building Ability through Career Management workshop and identified that he was keen to find work.



*“ Work is important to me because I like to help others and feel useful. ”*

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The Employment Readiness Scale (ERS) was used to help identify any areas that Mikey needs to focus on to support this search for employment. The ERS is designed to assess for work ready skills including career decision-making, job search skills and a range of soft skills such as self-efficacy and the skills to maintain a job. At the time that Mikey completed the ERS, he was identified as work ready which means that he can commence looking for work with the confidence that he is employable.

Mikey has been exploring his career path and has identified that he is extremely interested in working in a large hardware retail store. Mikey referred to this type of employment as his 'preferred' choice, as it would allow him to help other and share his knowledge about woodwork.

He is also doing work experience at a large supermarket and enjoying being in a retail environment. He is well supported by his family who have encouraged him to look for work in a field that interests him. He has a pleasant manner and enjoys helping people. This, combined with his interest in wood work will go a long way to helping him present as a good applicant for a job at a large hardware and timber retail business. His next step is to identify a Disability Employment Service that will help him find work with his preferred employer.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Mikey's interests, values and goals?
- How has the ERS been used as part of Mikey's career planning journey?
- What are his employability strengths?
- What actions are required to support Mikey's next steps to find employment?
- What skills can Mikey identify that he has developed?

## CASE STUDY:

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## Jessica

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Jessica is a 22 year old university student in her third year of engineering. She scored in the top 10% of her catholic girls' school and gained an equity scholarship at her university. She has a vision impairment and uses a range of magnification technology to undertake her studies. She is a hard-working student who is maintaining distinction grades and is hoping to enter a graduate program upon completion of her course.

***“ I know my hard work will pay off, even if it takes longer to find work, I will eventually find the right job. ”***

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Jessica knows that the graduate programs are very competitive and is working hard to maintain her grades but is concerned that her lack of industry experience will limit her chance to be offered a position. Jessica meets with her course coordinator and university careers advisor to gain further advice on improving her chances to secure a graduate program. She is then connected with a diversity officer in a large company and is offered a four-week placement with a mentor. In this placement she works in a team and is assigned a role in a team project where her colleagues appreciate her contribution. Her employer is so impressed with her capacity and skills and at the end of the placement offer her a 12 month graduate program upon completion of her course. Jessica is confident disclosing her disability and this ensures that she is able to receive reasonable adjustments in her workplace.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Jessica's aspirations?
- What skills can she offer an employer?
- Who are Jessica's supporters?
- What opportunities were beneficial to Jessica and why?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Jonah



Jonah is 20 years old and completed a VCAL program at a specialist school for children who are deaf. He has been profoundly deaf since birth and proudly acknowledges that sign language is his first language. Both of his parents are deaf and he mixes well with the Deaf community. After completing school, he commenced a Certificate II in IT and then transitioned through into a Diploma in IT at the same inner-city TAFE. He chose this course based on a recommendation from his school's career practitioner but is not sure of his job outcomes.

At TAFE Jonah met with his course coordinator and career counsellor to identify a range of suitable jobs that he can apply for upon graduation. He researched all the opportunities available to him and his course coordinator

“ *Deafness is no barrier to gaining work.* ”

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suggested he make an appointment with a professional careers practitioner. Jonah attended his first careers session and the career practitioner asked him to make a list of the top five jobs that are of greatest interest to him. When making the list Jonah eliminated 10% of the jobs that involve providing telephone assistance as he recognised that these jobs will not be accessible to him due to his hearing impairment. He is very pleased with his final list of possible jobs but still wants to explore these in more detail before graduation. The final semester of his course includes one industry placement. A follow up meeting with his career practitioner helps Jonah refine his list down to three jobs where there is significant industry growth and career progression opportunities. Instead of undertaking one industry placement, Jonah's course coordinator and placement coordinator arrange for three industry immersion opportunities throughout the semester.

Jonah thoroughly enjoys all three industry placements and reports to his career counsellor that he would be happy working for any of these employers. Although he was provided with sign language interpreters for all three placements for staff meetings and group training activities, he particularly appreciated one workplace where his supervisor had a son who is deaf and the supervisor was able to communicate using sign language. This was particularly beneficial in having questions about the role directly answered from his supervisor and for Jonah to demonstrate his interest and skills in the workplace. He has ongoing email contact with this supervisor who has encouraged Jonah to make contact again upon graduation in order to determine if there are any job opportunities at this time. Jonah is now far more confident about his job prospects and has a clear direction for his career path.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Jonah's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What are his strengths and who are his contacts to help gain employment?
- What interventions did his TAFE offer to support his career decision making?
- What would be the next steps for Jonah in his career planning?

## CASE STUDY:

## Leah

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Leah is a bright young woman with an enthusiasm for life. She has Asperger's Syndrome and has developed a range of strategies to support her social inclusion. After completing school, she enrolled in a post school program for young people with a disability and is embracing the opportunity to explore a wide range of careers including cooking and carpentry.

She describes her strength as being a creative person who likes helping people which gives her a great deal of personal satisfaction.



“ *I love working with wood and making things.* ”

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Leah undertook the Employment Readiness Scale to help identify any areas that she needs to focus on to support her job seeking. The ERS is designed to assess for work ready skills including career decision-making, job search skills and a range of soft skills such as self-efficacy and the skills to maintain a job. When Leah completed the ERS, she was identified as work ready and the tool identified that her self efficacy was strong and she was highly motivated to commence the job search process.

Leah undertook a 2-day Building Ability through Career Management workshop and articulated a wide range of interest areas including working with animals, carpentry and cooking. After exploring her interest areas in more detail, she was able to identify her preference for working with wood and also expressed a value for animal care. She then discussed her career goals in related industries and prioritised working with wood as her top career goal. This was also reflected in her ERS results which indicated that Leah was strong in career decision making.

When exploring this career path in more detail, she identified a desire to undertake a pre-apprenticeship Certificate II in furniture making. Leah still has an interest in animals but has decided to express this through volunteer work in an animal shelter.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Leah's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What techniques were used to help Leah identify her career and training pathways?
- How did Leah manage to express her interest in working with animals?
- What other career guidance techniques could have been applied to Leah's situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Jeff



“ as soon as someone took the time to get to know my son, the job search process was far more hopeful. ”

### *A parent's perspective*

Jeff is a single father of a 22 year old young man with Asperger's Syndrome. His son, Aaron, left school 2 years ago after undertaking his VCE over three years. Aaron has been involved in a few work trials and has registered with two different Disability Employment Services since completing VCE but has still not found any paid work. Jeff reports that his son is increasingly disengaged from interaction with family and friends and he is concerned about his son's diminished desire to find work.

Aaron now spends most of his time playing computer games which leaves his father frustrated and concerned that Aaron will continue in this pattern for many years. When asked about the games he plays, Aaron mentions that the games involve simulating characters from the middle ages. He shares his interest in this time period with people that he connects with online through this game and enjoys the virtual interaction with other players that he never meets in person. He states that he particularly enjoys the minimal interaction he has with these people in writing and feels that he doesn't even have a disability when communicating with them.

Aaron does not like face to face communication and refuses to apply for jobs that involve customer service. This limits his job opportunities and his father is feeling exhausted when his son rejects most jobs that his father finds for Aaron to apply for. With the help of a Disability Employment Advisor, Aaron

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undertakes job trials through the local supermarket and hardware store, but he does not remain for the full job trial as he comments that he doesn't like too much physical work and finds shelf packing boring.

Jeff is feeling stressed about Aaron's future and is exhausted from trying to motivate his son to gain employment. He shares his frustration with a friend who also has a son with the same disability. Through advice from his friend, Jeff attends a career exploration workshop for parents of young adults with a disability and subsequently gains further insight into his son's skills and hears about a number of other Disability Employment Services in their local area. He is relieved to know that other parents have had good experiences at Disability Employment Services and promptly changes service providers. The new service works with Jeff and Aaron to develop a career plan and identifies that Aaron is a fast touch typist, enjoys reading and writing and likes to work alone. Once this service eliminated all jobs that Aaron wasn't interested in, there was one job remaining. This job involved working in a relay service for people who are deaf, reading their conversations and revoicing them to someone over the phone or typing a conversation for someone who is deaf. Aaron was successful in his application for this job and has shared with his father and employment consultant how much he loves this job.

Jeff is relieved that Aaron's new employment consultant took the time to get to know his son in order to identify a range of jobs that match his skills and interests rather than just placing Aaron in more job trials with employers that they have good relationships with.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What role does Jeff play in supporting his son's career journey?
- What are Aaron's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What are Jeff and Aaron's main barriers to Aaron gaining employment?
- Who are Jeff and Aaron's supporters?
- What solutions were identified to help Aaron identify a suitable career?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Beverly

### *The role of a grandmother*

Beverly is the primary carer for her 24 year old grandson, Jacob. Jacob lives independently in shared accommodation one street away from his grandmother who checks in on him four times per week. Jacob is a gentle young man who is close to his grandmother, loves animals and enjoys spending time with a few close friends. Jacob has a mild intellectual disability and has a goal to work with animals, but Jacob and his grandmother are not sure how to find suitable work.

Jacob volunteers 1 day per week at a lost dog's home and although he enjoys this role, he has been told that there are no paid jobs for him in this centre. Beverly has taken Jacob to three different Disability Employment Services, but they also find it hard to find jobs involving work with animals. Jacob ends up trialling work in supermarkets and hardware stores, but he does not enjoy this type of work and refuses to apply for jobs in these companies at the end of his job trials.

Beverly and Jacob have a weekly advertising leaflet round in their local neighbourhood. They both enjoy the regular walking and opportunity to chat to the neighbours on their way around the route. This gives Jacob a routine and a small amount of pocket money which he enjoys using to go to the movies with friends. Beverly and Jacob attend a career counselling information evening where they are encouraged to maximise their local networks for job creation opportunities. One week later during the leaflet



“ I love seeing my grandson happy at work. ”

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round Beverly bumps into a friend who mentions that she is recovering from hip surgery and is frustrated that she can't walk her dog. Jacob quickly offers to walk the dog that afternoon and he is given some money for this task.

That evening Beverly and Jacob talk about how enjoyable the dog walking was and that he would love to do this every day. The following week Beverly attends a parent and carers information evening on supporting young people with a disability to enter the workforce. At this session, Beverly hears about job creation and self-employment opportunities for people with a disability. She then shares the dog walking experience with the facilitators who suggest that Beverly and Jacob try to turn this into a job by sourcing other clients in their local area.

Beverly reflects that due to the leaflet round, Jacob is so familiar with the neighbourhood and is independently able to walk dogs in his local area without getting lost and he would love to be a dog walker as a permanent job. Beverly and Jacob end up writing a flyer promoting his newly created dog walking service and print enough copies to place this in every letter box during their next leaflet round. Jacob now has 15 regular clients and Beverly has helped him with a roster for the dog walking service so that he can manage the increasing demand for his work. Beverly has also helped Jacob establish an ABN, set up a separate account where clients transfer funds into and manage his tax returns. They also investigated small business grants but decided that they were managing well together and didn't need any additional support for the establishment of Jacob's dog walking service. Beverly and Jacob have identified small business management support as a goal in his next NDIS plan at his plan review meeting and are hopeful that he will receive some support for this in his next plan.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What role does Beverly play in supporting her grandson's career journey?
- What are Jacob's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What did Beverly and Jacob do to help establish his own business?
- How could these techniques be used to assist other people with disabilities create their own business?
- What other career development strategies could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## David

### *The employment consultant perspective*

David is an employment consultant in regional Victoria. He has worked for the same Disability Employment Service for the past seven years, enjoys his role and is recognised for his success in placing clients in positions where they remain for at least one year. He is encouraged when working with motivated clients but identifies difficulty when working with clients who are less driven to find work.

David has received a new client, Lucas, who was transferred across from another Employment Consultant in the same DES after she had worked unsuccessfully with Lucas for the past 12 months. Lucas has a mental health condition and he has regular meetings with his doctor and takes medication daily. He does not always turn up to appointments but when he does, he dresses well but presents with low motivation. David is concerned that Lucas is not job ready as he often misses morning meetings, appears disinterested in job opportunities and responds with numerous excuses for not working.

David decides to use the Employment Readiness Scale (ERS) with Lucas to help determine his exact work ready barriers. David finds the ERS particularly useful for clients who are long-term unemployed or are reluctant to apply for jobs. The ERS is designed to assess for work ready skills including career decision-making, job search skills and a range of soft skills such as



“ *the most successful job seekers treat the job search process like a full-time job.* ”

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self-efficacy and the skills to maintain a job. Lucas' ERS report identifies that he needs to improve his soft skills in order to be work ready.

David meets with Lucas to talk about his ERS results and they discuss strategies to improve his soft skills and employability skills. They also discuss Lucas' reluctance to apply for jobs and how this is related to a range of skills such as job searching skills and skills required to hold a job such as maintaining appointments, turning up on time and being enthusiastic about a job. After several follow up meetings, it became clear that Lucas was not willing to work on these skills at this point in time. As a result, David provided Lucas with information about two different job ready courses in his local area and Lucas decided to take a break from job seeking and agreed to consider these opportunities but would not commit to registering for anything at this time.

David reflected with a couple of colleagues that although he wants all clients to be well matched into long term jobs and have a good sense of their own career path, that it is not always possible to achieve this outcome. He acknowledged that the most successful job seekers treat the job search process like a full-time job. David was pleased to have the ERS as a tool to help identify and validate work ready barriers and to use this to support conversations and referral options.

David develops a case management approach to working with Lucas. He schedules the ERS vocational assessment retakes at monthly intervals to check on improvements in Lucas' work readiness and to assist Lucas with achievable action plan steps.

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### *Discussion questions*

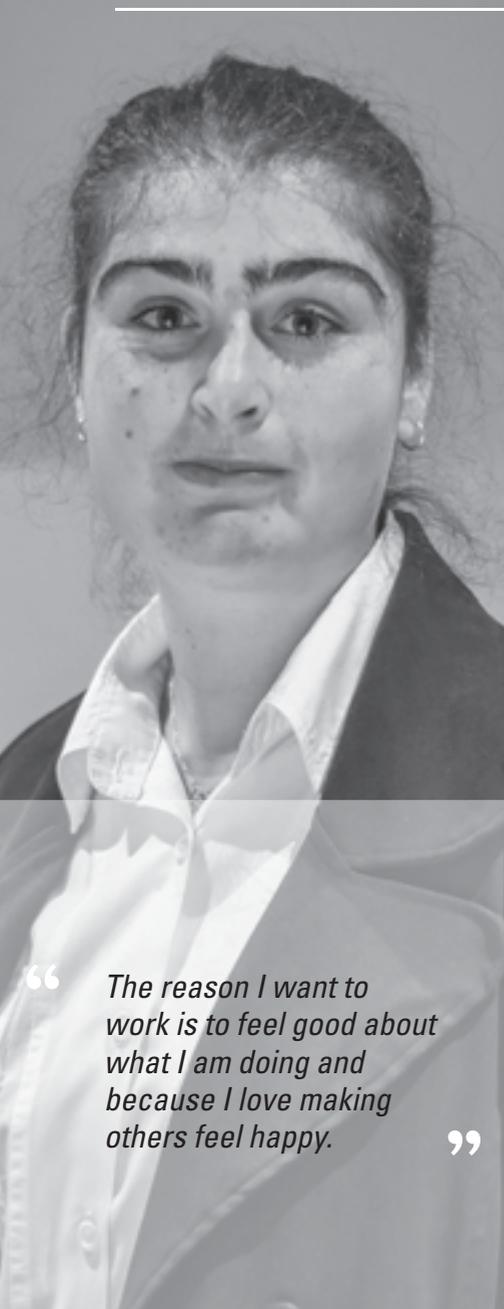
- What role does David play in supporting Lucas' career journey?
- How did the ERS assist in David's conversations with Lucas?
- What are the main barriers to Lucas gaining employment?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Mel

Mel is a bright and bubbly young woman from a Turkish family in Northern Melbourne. She is an energetic person who is very sociable and maintains a positive outlook on life. She acknowledges her strengths as being caring, empathetic and in helping others. Mel is also passionate about food and cooking.

Mel has a strong interest in hospitality and is currently undertaking a Certificate II in Food Processing at Melbourne Polytechnic and already has a Certificate I in Hospitality. Mel continues to develop her cooking and hospitality skills as she understands that these skills are important to finding work in this industry. She has undertaken unpaid work experience as a kitchen hand and dining room attendant which has further reinforced her interest in this sector.

A black and white portrait of a young woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a white collared shirt under a dark jacket. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

“ *The reason I want to work is to feel good about what I am doing and because I love making others feel happy.* ”

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Mel enjoys the social activities at TAFE and engages in activities where she can be herself and feel she belongs.

During the Building Ability through Career Management Program Mel expressed a career goal in the childcare sector but realised that she will need to retrain for this sector so has decided to continue her career path in the hospitality sector at this phase in her life. She recognises that it is important to keep learning and building new skills and has a positive attitude towards ongoing learning. During her final career counselling session in this program she was encouraged to look for hospitality roles in a childcare facility or school canteen in order to merge her interests in hospitality and childcare.

Mel attended the Employer Breakfast networking event as part of the BACM program. She confidently met recruiters from the accommodation and hospitality industry. She was able to speak to her interests and provided employers with a current resume outlining her work experience, qualifications and career goals.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Melisa's aspirations?
- What advice was given to Melisa to balance her interests in hospitality and childcare?
- What actions are required to support Melisa's next steps to find employment?
- What career management tools would be useful when providing career advice to Melisa?

## CASE STUDY:

## Connor

Connor is a 19 year old young man who works in his local supermarket. He identifies with autism and requires assistance with understanding new work tasks and supporting his social interaction. He has lived with his grandparents in Ballarat since the age of 16. He has had his supermarket job since leaving his local mainstream government secondary school at the end of year 10 when he was 16 years old. Although he is good at his supermarket job, which involves packing shelves three nights per week, he says that he is finding this job boring and is keen to quit so that he can find a job involving work with computers.

His grandparents have been happy with his supermarket job as it provides a stable routine, some engagement with others and an income for Connor. They attend a career information evening and share that they are worried that he will find it hard to source other work and think he should stay in his current job. Connor's grandparents were referred to Emily, a career practitioner who talked through the positive aspects of Connor's interest in other jobs. Emily identified that Connor is looking for more stimulating opportunities that are more related to his interests rather than simply staying in the same job for financial security.



“ *I want to keep moving forward with my career by finding jobs that interest me.* ”

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Emily advised Connor to remain in his job while looking for other work as he still has time to job search on his days off and he will present as a better candidate for a new job if he can demonstrate that he is currently employed. Emily also works with Connor's grandparents to remind them that Connor's desire for more stimulating work is a positive example of his readiness to progress in his career journey. Connor and Emily work together to identify other sectors involving IT work in his local area. Being in a regional location, they find it difficult to find job opportunities and decide to meet with local employers to find work that may not be advertised.

Emily identifies a small local security company who are looking for someone to work overnight on Friday and Saturday nights to monitor their security cameras. This job involves sitting in a room viewing multiple video screens and to report any unusual activity from the security footage. The company has found it hard to find someone to work on weekends, so the owner has been doing this work. They recognise Connor's attention to detail, interest in working alone and desire to be involved in using the video surveillance equipment.

Connor is so pleased to have this opportunity and proves himself as a valuable employee. He has also decided to keep his supermarket job so that he can have a total of five days work per week. He loves talking about his interesting security job with his grandparents and now feels that he has a good balance of physical work and computer-based work to keep him busy each week.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What caused Connor to lose interest in his current job?
- What are Connor's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What are his main barriers to gaining new employment?
- What strategies were used to help Connor find work?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?
- How would you support Connor's grandparents when they ask for assistance with Connor's career plans?

## CASE STUDY:

## Bonnie

Bonnie is a 24 year old woman who has just completed a social work degree with a major in counselling. She is keen to find professional work with a preference for working in the juvenile justice sector. Bonnie has been totally blind since birth, is confident in the use of a range of adaptive technology and has good orientation and mobility skills.

Bonnie is well-aware of her entitlements, has good self-advocacy skills and is confident in her use of a range of disability services. During her university degree she sought out career counselling services to help confirm the exact sector for her first job. This was further clarified during a third-year placement in a residential juvenile justice centre in regional Victoria.

Before registering for a Disability Employment Service (DES), Bonnie spoke to friends with a disability to gain their perspective as well as researching the strengths and star rating for each service online. She made a short list of her top three services and began by registering for her preferred service. She also contacted her favourite adaptive technology provider to explore the types of equipment that would enable her to be more independent in the workplace.

Bonnie was very clear at her intake meeting with her DES that she wanted a professional role in the juvenile justice sector. When other jobs were presented to her, she reinforced her career goal and asked to be provided exclusively



*I want to make sure I have the right tools for my chosen career.*

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with jobs that matched her goal. Bonnie also undertook her own job searching including networking with organisations that may have suitable employment opportunities. Together Bonnie and her employment consultant located one job that meet Bonnie's career goals and they were both pleased when Bonnie successfully gained this position.

Bonnie's employment consultant worked with her new employer to set up a workplace assessment and identify adaptive technology to be funded through JobAccess. As Bonnie already had some technology funded under her NDIS plan, she only needed a couple of items. The equipment Bonnie required through JobAccess included a BrailleNote portable palm top computer and the OrCam with this second item enabling Bonnie not only to read printed case notes efficiently during meetings but also to recognise people she is working with. Bonnie argued for the OrCam as critical equipment given its facial recognition technology that will enable her to recognise all colleagues and clients instantly. She reinforced that this technology is especially important for her own protection given that she is totally blind working in the juvenile justice sector. Bonnie was successful in her JobAccess application and was relieved to be set up within the first few weeks of her new job. Through her networks she is now supporting friends with a disability in this process as she knows a number of people who find it hard to gain work and access relevant disability services.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Bonnie's aspirations and career goals?
- How were Bonnie's self-advocacy skills used to support her career journey?
- What adaptive technology solutions were identified and how are they useful in Bonnie's career?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Mitchell



Mitch is a sociable young man from regional Victoria. He has a passion to work in hospitality with an interest in the Hotel industry. He loves interacting with customers, helping people and being part of a team of committed workers.

Mitch has some restrictions to his mobility due to brain surgery and related seizures. Despite this, he has his Responsible Service of Alcohol certificate and has had some volunteer experience working in a local hotel. He has identified that it is difficult finding work in regional Victoria as most jobs are sourced through contacts and are not advertised. He is currently completing a Certificate II in Work Education at his regional TAFE to improve his opportunities to gain employment.

Mitch completed work experience at a large retail hardware store and the highlight for him was being able to assist customers. He enjoyed being part of a friendly environment.

“

*I want to work so that I can help people and be part of a team of committed workers.*

”

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When participating in a two-day Building Ability through Career Management program, Mitch undertook the Employment Readiness Scale (ERS) which identified some opportunities to improve his work readiness. The ERS identified that Mitch would benefit from further work experience in the hospitality sector. He is very keen on finding more opportunities in local pubs and will express this goal to a range of contacts. He also recognises that he needs to update his resume to highlight all of his experience and qualifications.

Mitchell participated in an Employer Breakfast Network event as part of his BACM program and successfully connected with employers from his preferred industry. He demonstrated effective networking skills by promoting his interests and knowledge of the hotel industry.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Mitch's skills, interests, values and goals?
- How has contact with a career counsellor helped Mitch's career journey?
- What other factors does Mitch need to consider as a job seeker in regional Victoria?
- What actions are required to support Mitch's next steps to find employment?

## CASE STUDY:

## Maria

Maria is a 19 year old business studies student at her local TAFE. She just completed her first placement and is now uncertain about her course choice. Maria has a spinal cord injury and uses a wheelchair for mobility. She did not have a good experience on placement and is not sure if she wants to remain in this course.

Maria finds out about a two-day career workshop for people with a disability and decides that this workshop will be a good opportunity to explore other options and decide whether her course is the best fit for her. During the workshop Maria is encouraged to document her skills, interests, values and goals. In this session she reflects that she is a people person and values the importance of health and nutrition. When the workshop facilitators presented the top five career growth industries, she was particularly interested in the health sector, including its projected growth as a result of the introduction of the NDIS. This made her contemplate careers involving her interest in nutrition.



“  
*Disclosure helped  
me achieve my  
disability rights.*  
”

---

Maria was also interested in the workshop session on disclosure as this was one factor that made her placement difficult. Maria was initially advised not to disclose her disability, stressing that all workplaces need to be accessible and she should not need to inform her placement supervisor in advance of her arrival. Maria arrived at her placement workplace in her motorised wheelchair and found that the main entrance point was not accessible and needed to wait for another staff member to locate her supervisor who was surprised about Maria's disability. She then needed to gain a security swipe tag for a separate entrance point for Maria which took some time to arrange. Her supervisor stressed that she should have been informed about Maria's disability so that she could have arranged for an accessible entrance point in advance. The workshop content empowered Maria to realise that she can disclose at any point where it may be helpful, and that disclosure typically results in improved access rather than discrimination.

Maria spent some time after the workshop with one of the facilitators undertaking the Employment Readiness Scale and discovered that she is relatively work ready but should focus on her communication skills in order to be more effective in understanding the perspective of others. She also explored a range of careers in the health sector and discovered a desire to pursue further studies in nutrition and dietetics either at TAFE or university level. After talking with the career counsellor she discovered that many people in this sector are self-employed and for this reason she decided to continue with her current course so that she has a good range of office management skills to run her own health consultancy business and then progress into further studies in her area of interest.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Maria's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What techniques were used to help Maria's career decision making and employability?
- What factors influenced Maria's disclosure of her disability?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

### *An employer's perspective*

Frank is the manager of a large outer suburban supermarket. He has worked for the same company for the past 20 years and despite the long hours, he enjoys his job. He is well respected in his local community and volunteers in two community groups in his spare time.

Frank has a good relationship with a local Disability Employment Service who initially approached him five years ago requesting to provide a work trial to a job seeker with Asperger's Syndrome. This was so successful that it resulted in permanent part time employment and Frank then offered to provide other similar clients with short term job trials. Frank is often frustrated with young university students who only stay in their job for three to six months and appreciates the commitment from staff with a disability who he finds typically stay working in his supermarket for many years. He reports that they are often early to work each day, extremely enthusiastic and rarely take sick leave.



*“ I always give staff with a disability a go as they tend to turn up on time and are such loyal staff. ”*

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When Frank is approached by the same Disability Employment Service employment consultant to provide a job trial to a client with a mental health condition, he welcomes this person into the workplace. Frank does not know much about mental health conditions so asks the DES for more information about the client's condition, including any support that he and the assistant managers can offer. Frank learns that the client's medication results in a preference for evening work which is the client's most alert time of day. Frank changes all shifts to overnight shelf stacking shifts and the client confirmed his preference for this arrangement. Within two weeks Frank was so pleased with his new worker that he offered paid employment which started immediately.

Frank has been so happy with his staff with a disability that he presents his success at an employer breakfast and offers to meet with three prospective employees at a follow up job matching event.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What is Frank's motivation for employing people with a disability?
- What solutions does he apply to work-related barriers?
- What other solutions could Frank implement to support his employment of staff with a disability?

## CASE STUDY:

## Katie

Katie is an articulate and caring young woman. She transitioned from a special school into Nadrasca, a supported employment service, where she has developed a wide range of skills. Katie has identified that she is ready to transition into open employment.

The Building Ability through Career Management program helped Katie identify a range of career pathways. Of greatest interest to Katie is work involving supporting people with a disability. She is keen to become a disability advocate and can visualise herself driving people with a disability to various appointments. She values fostering social participation for people with a disability and has a high level of respect for the dignity and rights of people with a disability.

*“ I like helping people and I want a job where I am working with other people. ”*

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As part of the Building Ability through Career Management program, Katie undertook the Employment Readiness Scale to help identify any areas that she needs to focus on to support her job seeking. The ERS is designed to test for work ready skills including career decision-making, job search skills and a range of soft skills such as self-efficacy and the skills to maintain a job. At the time that Katie completed the ERS, she was identified as work ready. She is particularly strong in career decision making and has identified the training required for her chosen career.

Katie identified strong values around helping and caring for others and this makes her open to opportunities which allow her to work directly in supporting others. She was also considering volunteer work to gain experience in the social services industry.

Katie has completed a Certificate in Work Education and a Certificate I in Warehousing. She has also just been provided with a leadership role on a committee in her current workplace along with gaining opportunities to take visitors on guided tours through Nadrasca. Katie is feeling confident about her next step into open employment and is hopeful that she will find fulfilling work as a disability advocate.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What is Katie's motivation to gain an open employment job?
- What skills has Katie gained in her current workplace?
- How has Katie benefited from a supported employment service before commencing job seeking in open employment?
- What other supports will assist Katie in her job seeking?
- What action steps can you suggest to support Katie's career goals?

## CASE STUDY:

## Davis



Davis is 17 years old and occasionally attends his local government school but expresses that he does not fit in and sometimes finds the work too hard. Davis has a mild intellectual disability and his parents have been pleased with the adjustments that the local mainstream school have made since year 7 but now that Davis is in year 11 they acknowledge that he may benefit from education or work outside his current school environment. His school's Indigenous Support Officer has set up career planning meetings between Davis and the school career practitioner to help guide Davis through the opportunities based on his interests and values. The career practitioner develops a career action plan with Davis who stresses that his goal is to find a job but cannot identify the industry he wants to work in or the type of job he would like to undertake.

When prompted, Davis reflected that he is a visual person with a hands-on approach and learns best by completing tasks repetitively supported by visual prompts. His career practitioner has identified that he requires further development in building his social skills, especially when meeting new people. Davis also identified the need to improve his independent travel skills and wants to be able to use public transport on his own. Information from Davis' family, teachers and his career counselling sessions shows that he would benefit from learning more about what work involves, building his confidence and trialling a few different industries in order to help refine the type of work that interests him.

“ *I really want to work in a nursery because I like working outdoors with nature.* ”

---

Davis' parents are keen to support him and attend a parents workshop where they learn about trends in the labour market, latest research on the skills employers are seeking in entry level workers and the range of services and funding to support the transition into the workforce for people with a disability. Davis' parents establish links with an Indigenous industry mentor to discuss preparing for the workforce. They also find out more information on the National Disability Insurance Scheme and make inquiries with the school about School Leavers Employment Supports (SLES) funding.

Davis' career practitioner arranges several workplace visits and short work experience placements, including one in a local nursery. His parents also use NDIS funding to engage an occupational therapist for work ready assessments. The Indigenous Support Officer and the career practitioner stays in close contact with Davis and his mum and dad, regularly providing updates and keeping them informed of his career plans. The practitioner conducts several workplace visits recording evidence of ongoing skill development. These workplace visits help Davis identify his interest areas and, in a follow up meeting with his career practitioner, Davis shared that he was most interested in work in a plant nursery that specialises in Australian native plants.

His career practitioner was able to connect Davis with a Disability Employment Service who arranged a traineeship for Davis in a regional plant nursery with a large native plant department close to his grandparents in a regional town. Davis and his parents were extremely pleased with this outcome and were grateful to the range of services that provided support to get Davis to this point in his career journey.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Davis' aspirations?
- What are his main barriers to gaining employment?
- What disability service providers are engaged to support in Davis' career journey?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?
- What interests and values does he demonstrate?

## CASE STUDY:

## Fatima



Fatima is an 19 year old young woman from an Islamic family in northern metropolitan Melbourne. She has had a vision impairment since birth. Her family are very supportive but find it difficult to purchase all the adaptive technology that Fatima needs. Fatima has just finished year 12 at her local government school and is looking for a job or traineeship but is not sure what her next step is to help her gain employment.

Fatima loves writing, the performing arts and scored well in theatre studies and drama during Year 12. She doesn't think there are any jobs in this field so thought she might look for an office management traineeship as she is also interested in working in administration. Fatima's parents are more comfortable with her working in an office as they feel that it is a more reliable job with stable hours, and they are afraid of her working at night in the performing arts sector.

Fatima met with a career practitioner to discuss her interests and concerns about finding work. Together they created a list of possible careers and she took this list to an employment consultant at her local Disability Employment Service. The first option was to look for a

“ *I look forward to going to work every day.* ”

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traineeship in office administration however many jobs were hard to get to by public transport or were working in companies that she had no interest in. Fatima's employment consultant then refined the search to office administration jobs in performing arts companies. After some time, they found a traineeship in an inclusive arts company designed to make the arts sector accessible to people with a disability. Fatima was overjoyed when she was successful in her application and is now 2 months into her traineeship.

When she gained this job, her employment consultant helped the employer apply for JobAccess funding and she now has a desktop video magnifier, large computer screen and magnification software to enable her to perform all work tasks independently.

Fatima is relieved that she saw a career practitioner to support her job seeking process. This helped her combine her interests to identify a career with secure employment in an industry she enjoys. Fatima and her parents are extremely happy with this outcome and she can see herself working in this sector for many years to come.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Fatima's skills, interests, values and goals?
- How did connecting with a career practitioner benefit Fatima's career planning journey?
- What solutions were identified that enabled Fatima to find meaningful work?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Zac



Zac is a thoughtful young man with a passion for music. For the past few years he has been working in Nadrasca, a supported employment service for people with a disability. While at Nadrasca, Zac has developed a range of skills in factory work including packing and printing. Zac identified that he is ready to transition into open employment.

Zac has recently completed the Building Ability through Career Management program where he explored a range of careers in the music industry. Zac expressed an interest in singing and during a career counselling session, Zac and the counsellor talked through the challenges many people face when trying to establish a career as a professional vocalist. As a result of this conversation, Zac was guided through a range of related careers that may have employment opportunities that still relate to his passion for singing. Zac identified that if he cannot find work as a singer, that he would be happy working in retail. He was then supported to explore retail jobs in music shops. Zac then mentioned that he would be extremely interested in working in a large entertainment retail store. This would combine his passion for music with his interest in retail.

“ *I don't worry if it doesn't work the first time because I know things will eventually work out for me.* ”

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As part of the Building Ability through Career Management program, Zac undertook the Employment Readiness Scale (ERS) to help identify any areas that he needs to focus on to support his job seeking. The ERS assessed Zac's work ready skills including career decision-making, job search skills and a range of soft skills such as self-efficacy and the skills to maintain a job. At the time that Zac completed the ERS, he was identified as work ready.

Zac continues to pursue music course options. He is also interested in updating his resume and registering for a Disability Employment Service in order to search for retail work associated with the music industry. He is looking forward to further education or open employment and is hopeful that he will gain an opportunity that matches his interests in retail and passion for music.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Zac's skills, interests, values and goals?
- How does Zac balance his passion for music with other job opportunities?
- What are Zac's next steps in his career journey?
- What other steps may be involved in Zac's career planning?

## CASE STUDY:

## Kyle

Kyle finished a Bachelor in International Development 12 months ago and has not been successful in gaining any work since completing his course. He has dyslexia and is struggling to find relevant job opportunities and when he does, he finds it difficult to address the selection criteria. He is also concerned that he does not have significant paid experience or the right skills for many of the jobs in the international non-government organisations he is keen to work in. Kyle is trying to be hopeful about finding work and is ready to undertake further study if this will help his chances.

Kyle registers with a Disability Employment Service and is assigned to work with John, an employment consultant who has strong experience in supporting graduates with a disability to find work. John refers Kyle to a two-day career exploration course for people with a disability where Kyle learns more about interview skills and the importance of promoting all of his skills and experiences when applying for work. After this program John helps Kyle improve his resume by adding the six-month volunteer placement he undertook in Cambodia and a six-week course placement in India to his resume. John also reminds Kyle that volunteer work forms part of the career journey and adds significant strength to his resume. John and Kyle then identify the exact type of jobs he is looking for rather than just applying for every job he sees advertised in international development organisations.

A black and white portrait of a young man with short, dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a dark tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

“ *I’m keen to find meaningful work but am not sure how to achieve my goal.* ”

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John and Kyle identify graduate employment opportunities within two different not for profit organisations and before applying, they call the organisations to find out more about the positions in order to clarify if Kyle is eligible and if the roles are of interest to him. Kyle ends up applying for both positions and is pleased to hear that he is called for an interview for one of the organisations. John undertakes extensive interview coaching as this is Kyle's first interview for this sector. Kyle attends the interview feeling well-prepared and decides not to disclose his dyslexia as he is confident that he can perform the role with limited adjustments and wants to focus on his experience, skills and qualifications during the interview.

Kyle ends up gaining the internship and discloses his dyslexia a few weeks into the role when asked to handwrite minutes for a staff meeting. His employer responds well to the disclosure of Kyle's disability and together they meet with HR and determine that a tablet with a portable keyboard is a more effective way for Kyle to take minutes. After a few weeks of Kyle using the tablet, the organisation realise that this is a more efficient means of minute taking for all staff and decide to purchase similar tablets for each team. All staff now have access to borrow tablets when at internal and external meetings.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Kyle's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What factors make it difficult for Kyle to find work?
- What are Kyle's reasons for nondisclosure of his disability?
- What adjustments were initiated and how do they change the culture of Kyle's workplace?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Lisa

### *A Melbourne Employment Consultant*

Lisa works for a Disability Employment Service (DES) in southern metropolitan Melbourne. She has a case load of 25 clients and has just taken on a new client, Lee, who wants to find a job during her gap year between high school and university. Lee performed well in Year 12 and deferred her place in a commerce degree as she is keen to work for a year and is not quite sure of her career choice.

Lisa undertakes her usual intake meeting with Lee to get to know her skills, interests, values and goals. Within this conversation Lisa learns that Lee is afraid of new situations and takes a while to become familiar with people and new environments. Lee is from a traditional Chinese family who are keen for her to be successful and do not talk much about her diagnosis of Asperger's. Lee mentioned that this is the first time that she is opposing her family's wishes by taking a gap year instead of going straight into university. Lee admitted that she has struggled to find work on her own and has not told her family that she has joined a disability service to support her job seeking.

Lisa reassures Lee that their meetings will remain confidential and her parents do not need to know that Lee found her job with the help of a disability service. Before the next meeting, Lisa asks Lee to complete an online vocational assessment in order to use the results to help identify a list of suitable jobs. Lee is surprised by some of the suggested jobs on the list but waits to talk with Lisa before exploring



*“ It’s so important to learn about the client’s aspirations before commencing career planning. ”*

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any opportunities on her own. At the next meeting Lisa asks Lee to identify the job or career suggestions on the list that sound most interesting to her.

At their third meeting Lee admitted to Lisa that she enjoys talking however is sometimes told that she talks too much and does not always observe when other people are trying to talk. Lisa mentioned that this may have made it difficult for Lee to perform well in interviews and that they would spend the next few sessions focused on interview coaching. Lisa picks up on Lee's interest in talking to discuss communication and counselling-based jobs on Lee's career inventory. Before looking for short term work, Lisa discussed Lee's long-term career plans including her choice to study commerce. Lee stressed that her parents have insisted that she return to university to undertake her commerce degree next year and Lisa respected that this was a non-negotiable path for Lee. They did however discuss using the commerce degree in non-traditional ways such as financial counselling which sounded very interesting to Lee. This gave her hope for her future.

Lisa then focused on some gap year jobs that Lee would find interesting and were listed in Lee's vocational assessment. When matching the list with available jobs, they came across an interesting opportunity in a donor relations team in an asylum seeker non-government organisation. This role involved following a script to receive incoming calls for donations for a fund-raising campaign and to support the financial administration of donations. This job presented as ideal for Lee as it provided a scripted outlet for talking as well as an opportunity to use her skills in maths in a professional setting. She was extremely excited to gain this job and Lisa then provided training for Lee focused on communication skills as well as Asperger's awareness training for Lee's new colleagues.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What role does Lisa play in supporting Lee's career journey?
- What are Lee's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What are Lisa and Lee's main barriers to Lee gaining employment?
- What solutions have been identified?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Daniel

Daniel is a charming young man who is passionate about the hospitality sector. He is particularly skilled at keeping his workspace neat and tidy and following a routine. He currently works 1 day per week as a cleaner in a hotel and is keen to find more work.

Daniel speaks proudly of being able to make messy spaces look immaculate and recognises that attention to detail is a core skill that employers are seeking. He is reliable and proactive at work and always motivated because doing a great job makes him feel fulfilled.



*“ Work is important to me because I feel happy at work, I feel good being part of a team and belonging. ”*

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Although Daniel loves his job, he is interested in exploring other opportunities including roles involving more customer service. He is currently undertaking a Certificate II in Food Processing at Melbourne Polytechnic and is hopeful that this qualification will improve his career opportunities.

Daniel participated in a two-day Building Ability through Career Management program which helped clarify his interest in hospitality. Through this program he also undertook the Employment Readiness Scale which reinforced that Daniel needs to update his resume and increase his networking opportunities. Daniel is always smiling and considerate and ready to help others whenever he can. He was informed that these soft skills are well worth highlighting at job interviews as they are valued qualities in customer service roles.

Daniel also has an interest in Theatre and Drama and has been involved in Theatre production through his TAFE. He has completed work placements with a theatre company, for Front of House services and was an Assistant Stage Manager.

Daniel attended the Employer Breakfast Networking Event as part of his BACM program. He was highly motivated to connect with all the employers and was awarded best “networker” at the event. Daniel engaged in meaningful conversations and gathered relevant information on potential employment opportunities. He distributed his resume and collected employer contact details.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What skills, interests and values has Daniel demonstrated?
- How have career counselling interventions supported Daniel’s job seeking?
- In what ways could Daniel continue to improve his employment opportunities?
- How have his placements supported his career planning and opportunity awareness?
- What other industries could Daniel consider for work?

## CASE STUDY:

## Ryan

Ryan is a confident young man currently enrolled in a Certificate in Work Education at his local TAFE. He loves rules and his teachers often remark that he makes sure his classmates follow instructions and stick to time.

Ryan participated in the Building Ability through Career Management two-day workshop and informed the facilitators that he wants to be a Police Officer. He says that this is the only job he has ever wanted to do and shares with them that as a young child he used to wear a toy police hat all the time. Ryan has an intellectual disability and his teachers have not been able to encourage Ryan to identify any other careers.

The career practitioners facilitating the workshops are informed of Ryan's goal both by Ryan and his teachers. Ryan asks the career practitioners to help him apply for the police

“

*I want a job where I can wear a uniform and be in charge.*

”

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force. The career practitioner builds a profile of Ryan and asks him to share the reasons why he wants to be a police officer. He states that he loves the idea of wearing a uniform, including an official hat, and making sure people follow rules. In their meeting with Ryan, the career practitioners also discover that he likes to be outdoors and can see himself controlling traffic when the traffic lights fail to work.

The career practitioners talk through other jobs involving similar skills such as school crossing attendant and mention that this job also involves managing traffic, wearing a hat and using a whistle. He is also counselled about the aspects of police work that may be difficult for him such as filling in forms and writing reports due to his limited literacy skills. Throughout the workshop Ryan reflects on other jobs and shows a real interest in exploring these jobs further. Ryan completes a career storyboard activity and demonstrates a keen interest in being a road crossing supervisor. Ryan's teachers are pleased that he is now talking to them about broader career pathways and is not just fixated on becoming a police officer.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Ryan's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What factors inhibit the attainment of Ryan's initial career goal?
- What techniques were used to help broaden Ryan's career goals?
- What are the next steps in career action planning for Ryan?

## CASE STUDY:

## Billy



Billy is a considerate young man who loves working with his hands. He currently works at Nadrasca, a supported employment service for people with a disability. He has developed a wide range of skills including how to be a lathe operator.

Through his work experience at Nadrasca he has developed other skills such as packing, and understanding the importance of his work in the supply chain. Billy was also required to do quality checks which he knows will be necessary in his future work.

Billy is ready to transition into open employment and has identified a strong interest in working as a motor mechanic.

“ *I believe people with a disability should be given a go as everyone deserves to have a job.* ”

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As part of the Building Ability through Career Management program, Billy undertook the Employment Readiness Scale (ERS) to help identify any areas that he needs to focus on to support his job seeking. The ERS assessed Billy's work ready skills including career decision-making, job search skills and a range of soft skills such as self-efficacy and the skills to maintain a job. The ERS provided Billy and his career practitioner with a career action plan to discuss his work readiness and the range of technical and soft skills required for jobs he is interested in. Together they identified that Billy is work ready and highly motivated to pursue employment in the automotive industry.

Billy has been keen for some time to work as a mechanic but after undertaking the Building Ability through Career Management program, is now also open to other work related to cars such as cleaning cars at a motor mechanic or working as a car detailer for a car hire company. He recognises that this type of work is a good entry level opportunity to further build his work ready skills before taking the next step to apply for an apprenticeship or training as a motor mechanic.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Billy's skills, interests, values and goals?
- What skills has Billy gained in his current workplace?
- How has the ERS been used in Billy's situation?
- How has Billy been supported to identify a range of career opportunities?
- What other supports will assist Billy in his job seeking?

## CASE STUDY:

## Sue

### *Diversity Manager*

Sue is a diversity manager and works in the corporate office of a major telecommunications company. Her role involves staff training on diversity and the recruitment and ongoing support to the targeted equity groups of indigenous, culturally diverse, people with a disability and women in leadership roles. Sue believes that inclusion and diversity in the workplace leads to innovation.

Sue is invited to present at an employer breakfast focused on disability recruitment. She enjoys these opportunities as she not only shares her passion about diversity in employment but often identifies people with a disability who may be interested in employment opportunities at her organisation.

“ *Inclusion and diversity in the workplace lead to innovation and a terrific workplace culture.* ”

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The Employer Breakfast Networking Event included a follow up job campaign where employers could meet several work ready young people with a disability. At this follow up session, Sue was impressed with three candidates with different skills and qualifications that she referred to the organisation's HR team for current job opportunities. Sue was pleased to recognise that all three individuals had a LinkedIn profile, had good interview skills and were confident in sharing their skills, qualifications and abilities at her one on one meeting. Sue informed these three individuals that she could not guarantee employment but informed them that they all presented extremely well and should be hopeful in the next stage when they meet with the HR manager.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What role does Sue play in supporting access to employment for people with a disability?
- How does she proactively support the career development journey for people with a disability?
- What other tasks can Sue and other diversity managers undertake to improve the recruitment of people with a disability?

## CASE STUDY:

## Hayandle



Hayandle is a friendly, hardworking young man who has a thirst for knowledge. He is from a Korean family and has a positive outlook on life. He loves hands on work and is especially interested in technical roles that involve problem solving.

Hayandle is currently undertaking a Certificate II in Food Processing but has identified that he is not interested in working in this industry. He is unsure whether to complete this course or look for work based on his Certificate IV in IT that he completed one year ago.

During the Building Ability through Career Management program, it became clear that Hayandle appreciates being involved in the construction of all sorts of items from computers to furniture and buildings. He is a great problem

“ *My life motto is to live and work with positivity; take a leap of faith and don't be afraid to fail; take criticisms positively and learn from them.* ”

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solver and is always keen to help others with technical issues. During this program he identified a strong interest in working in construction as his top career goal and is also open to working in a computer company in roles involving repairing faulty computers.

Hayandle completed a work placement in a printing store and was efficient in repairing and maintaining printers, replacing parts. He tested printers ensuring printing quality was of a high standard. This experience reinforced his interest in a hands on role where he can use his analytical skills to problem solve and repair things.

Hayandle is always keen to follow through on his commitments and has agreed to complete his food processing course as he has recognised that no study ever goes to waste. As a result of several conversations with a career practitioner, Hayandle decides to explore a pre-apprenticeship course related to the building and construction industry. This will provide him with some skills and exposure to related work to help confirm if he wants to pursue further studies in this sector. He will also explore some part time work in IT and will commence by approaching some small computer repair companies.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Hayandle's aspirations, interests, values and career goals?
- How has career counselling benefited Hayandle's understanding of his career goals?
- What are Hayandle's next steps in his career journey?

## CASE STUDY:

## Joel

Joel is a young man who has a goal to work as a chef. He was pleased when he heard that he gained a place in a hospitality course at his local TAFE. Joel has autism and loves working to time, following rules and having an orderly working environment. He initially found it difficult to adjust to the dynamic environment of an ala carte restaurant kitchen with its busy chaos and creativity. As an adjustment, his TAFE Disability Liaison Officer worked with his course placement coordinator to find a placement for him in a nursing home kitchen. In this environment, the menu is the same throughout the year, he has a consistent, non-chaotic routine, and is not faced with any of the stressful demands of an ala carte restaurant.



“ *I love my job as a chef,  
it is all I have ever  
wanted to do.* ”

---

Upon graduation Joel gained employment in a hospital kitchen. His employer was offered a JobAccess workplace subsidy because of his disability however they stated that they were so impressed with him that they turned this down stating that they wanted to pay him full wages like all other staff. The only adjustment his workplace ended up providing was a fixed work roster where he works the same shifts every week.

This has been an ideal workplace for Joel where he is able to use his skills and work in a field that interests him. There are minimal disability-related barriers for Joel because of the orderly hospital kitchen environment. Qualified chefs are in demand in hospitals, retirement homes and aged care facilities. Joel has a range of opportunities to further his career as a chef. For now, he is successfully working in a hospital kitchen.

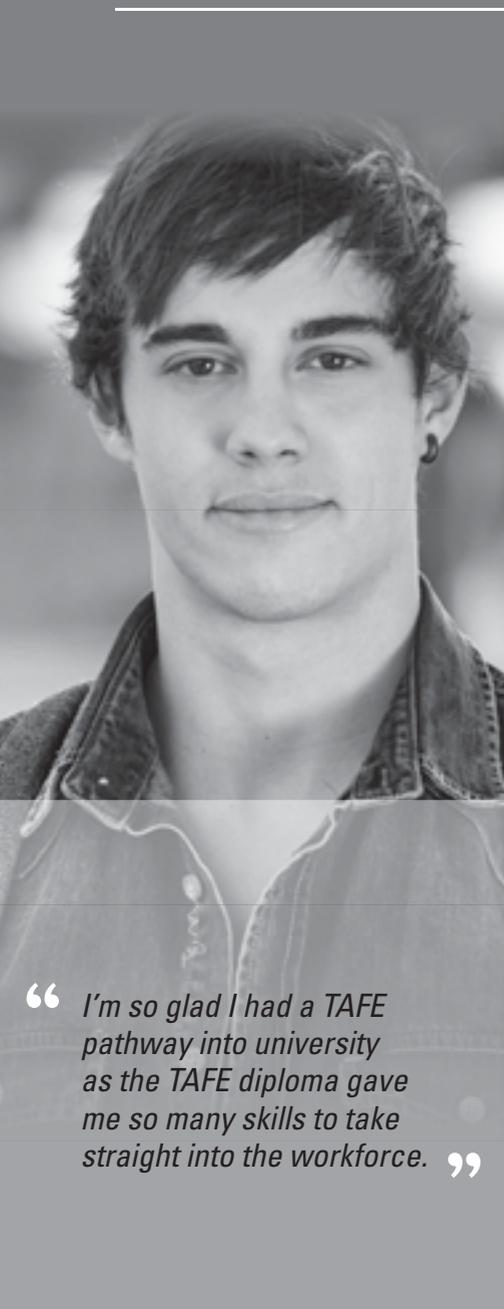
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### *Discussion questions*

- What attributes does Joel demonstrate that suit his role as a chef?
- What solutions helped Joel manage disability related barriers and still find work as a chef?
- What other solutions could have been applied to this situation?

## CASE STUDY:

## Ben



Ben has recently graduated from a TAFE Diploma in Community Services. He performed well in his course and is keen to pursue a career in this sector. Ben has dyslexia and although he had significant barriers at secondary school, especially during exams, he did not experience the same difficulties at TAFE and was pleased to discover that he was one of the top performing students in his course.

Ben hoped to gain entry into a Bachelor of Social Work directly from school but as he wasn't provided with reasonable adjustments during his exams he missed out on a place at university and was relieved that he had a backup plan in place for a similar course at TAFE level. Ben applied for TAFE courses as they also provided a pathway to university. The TAFE course he applied for included an interview and this allowed Ben to prepare for a positive experience.

*“ I’m so glad I had a TAFE pathway into university as the TAFE diploma gave me so many skills to take straight into the workforce. ”*

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Following the completion of his TAFE course Ben undertook some one on one meetings with a career practitioner to decide whether to look for work or transition into university. These meetings confirmed Ben's career goal to work as a social worker which prompted him to apply for his original first preference that he had listed on his tertiary application when in year 12. Ben and his career practitioner also identified jobs that he is now qualified to apply for with his Diploma in Community Services (Youth Work). His career practitioner helped Ben with his resume and interview skills and Ben promptly identified several jobs that he could undertake full time until commencing at university. Ben was also informed about a range of employment services that could assist with job seeking however he decided that the assistance he received from his career practitioner was enough at this stage and was happy to apply for these jobs on his own.

Ben gained a full-time role as a youth worker in a large not for profit organisation and upon gaining a place in his university course, he decided to study part time and continue with full time work. This was an ideal outcome for Ben as his full-time role meant that he was in the professional workforce with a two-year diploma faster than his school friends who were halfway through their university degrees with part time supermarket or restaurant jobs.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What attributes and values does Ben demonstrate in pursuing his career goals?
- What were his barriers to entering university directly from school?
- What pathways were identified to assist Ben to achieve his goal of a social work degree?
- What additional support could have been provided to Ben during his final years in secondary school?

## CASE STUDY:

## Emily



Emily is a cheerful, energetic and helpful young woman who lives in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. She loves working with people and wants a role involving customer service.

Emily undertook a two-day Building Ability through Career Management program where she identified a single goal to develop the skills to be a hairdresser and admitted that she hadn't thought about any other career options other than hairdressing which she has been focused on since her childhood.

Emily's qualifications are focused in the beauty industry with a Certificate III in Hairdressing, a Certificate II in Nail Technology and a Certificate II in Retail Make Up and Skin Care. Despite these qualifications Emily is finding it difficult to source employment and is contemplating work in hospitality. Through a more detailed

**“** *Work is important to me because I want to be part of a team and a community; work makes me feel satisfied, positive, happy and helps me to be a more confident person.* **”**

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investigation of her skills and interests at the two-day career program, Emily identified that her greatest interest is in helping people, including making clients feel relaxed and comfortable. When discussing this with a career practitioner, Emily was informed of a wide range of careers that can fulfil this interest in working with people and providing exceptional customer service.

Emily also identified that she enjoys connecting with her community and participates as a volunteer fundraising for different charities which has resulted in her winning a range of awards. Emily believes in social justice and this strong value drives her passion to support helping others.

Emily is now open to broadening her education and job seeking to identify roles that involve working with people such as hospitality, beauty, retail, the childcare and aged care industries. She is looking forward to a range of job trials to help her career decision making and to identify if she would like to commit to further study in any of these industries.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Emily's skills, interests, values and goals?
- How has contact with a career practitioner helped Emily's career journey?
- What actions are required to support Emily's next steps to find employment?

## CASE STUDY:

## Blake

Blake is in his early 20's and had undertaken studies at Melbourne Polytechnic along with a range of job trials in supermarkets. He identified that he was not happy with the supermarket work as he said that it didn't suit his interests and career goals.

Blake's teachers at Melbourne Polytechnic were extremely supportive in encouraging him to continue trialling a range of opportunities until he found the right job match. One of his teachers asked her local hairdresser to allow Blake to undertake a trial at her salon and after a couple of weeks, Blake felt that he had



“ *I love that I have found a job that suits me.* ”

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found a career that he belonged in. In addition, his employer made him feel so welcome and appreciated which further encouraged Blake to undertake an apprenticeship in hairdressing.

Blake is now in his second year as an apprentice hairdresser at a specialist hair salon. Blake explained to his employer that for a longtime he was feeling very 'stuck' and unsure of what career path he wanted to take. Blake has an extremely supportive employer who values him for his gentle, friendly nature and his practical skills.

After undertaking his work experience, Blake immediately knew what he wanted to do and felt great relief to have clarity about the next steps in his career journey.

On reflection, Blake has identified that his current position is fulfilling his interests of working with people who require specialist hair care. He is pleased that his apprenticeship is developing the skills to build a sustainable ongoing career in the hairdressing industry.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Blake's skills, interests, values and goals?
- How have various job trials helped Blake identify his career goals?
- What role has his current employer played in Blake's success at work?
- What messages come from Blake's story regarding cultural fit in workplaces and why it is important?

## CASE STUDY:

## Nathan

Nathan is a bright young man who lives in regional Victoria. He is currently undertaking a Certificate II in Work Education at Wodonga TAFE and is keen to enter the workforce. He has already engaged in a range of training and employment opportunities to help clarify his career goals.

Nathan has undertaken warehouse work, has a forklift licence and a first aid certificate. In addition, he has worked at a local fast food outlet and enjoys roles in hospitality. His diversity of skills and experience has made it difficult for him to confirm his preferred career goal.

Through participating in a two-day Building Ability through Career Management program held in Wodonga, he identified that he enjoys



“

*I want hands on work  
where I feel useful.*

”

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being outdoors and an interest in landscape gardening and also expressed a desire to work in a large hardware retailer. Nathan has a desire to leave his regional town and is very open for his career journey to include opportunities to work in Melbourne. He understands that being prepared to move to a new location could improve his employment options. Discussions with a career practitioner throughout the two-day program has further reinforced his passion for hands on work and confirmed that it was okay to have a broad range of practical skills and interests.

Nathan is very clear that his passion is working in a job that is hands on and he is confident that he has the skills to commit to this type of work. At a follow up employer breakfast event in Melbourne, Nathan developed a range of networking skills and was exposed to several potential employers. Nathan will now continue with his networking to identify any job opportunities either in a regional centre or Melbourne that align with his career goals.

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### *Discussion questions*

- What are Nathan's skills, interests, values and goals?
- How has Nathan benefited from meetings with a career practitioner?
- What role can networking play in the job search process?
- What are the next career action steps for Nathan?

## Useful Websites

Australian Apprenticeships: <https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/>  
(extensive information on apprenticeships, training and links to Victorian employment sites)

Australian Network on Disability: [www.and.org.au/pages/information-for-students.html](http://www.and.org.au/pages/information-for-students.html)  
(‘Stepping into’ internship program for university students with disability)

Centrelink: <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/themes/people-with-a-disability>

Disclosure: It’s a Personal Decision: [https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/choosingyourpath/studying/effective\\_disclosure](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/choosingyourpath/studying/effective_disclosure)

Disability Employment Services (DES): [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/disability-employment-services](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/disability-employment-services) (specialist assistance to job seekers with disability)

JobAccess: [www.jobaccess.gov.au/](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/) (for people with disability, employers and service providers to access information about services, financial assistance and workplace solutions)

JobOutlook: <https://joboutlook.gov.au/>  
(relevant and current labour market trends and career information)

Job Search: [www.JobSearch.gov.au](http://www.JobSearch.gov.au) (for all job seekers)

Job Services Australia: <https://jobsearch.gov.au/#jobseekers-container>  
(a range of user friendly employment services for job seekers and employers)

Local Area Coordinator (LAC): [www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/locations.html](http://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/locations.html) (NDIS support providing information about local community supports or linkage to other supports such as Centrelink or Disability Employment Services. Useful for people with and without an individual NDIS plan)

MyFuture: <https://myfuture.edu.au/> (a database of over 600 careers)

National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO): <http://www.ndcovictoria.net.au/> (assists people with disability to access higher education, vocational education and training, and employment)

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS): <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/our-sites/VIC.html>  
(support and services deemed to be reasonable and necessary for people with disability to achieve their goals including career planning and employment)

School Leavers Employment Supports (SLES) <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/essentials-providers-working-ndia/school-leavers-employment-supports-sles>  
(NDIS supports for some school leavers that contribute to achieving an employment goal)

Youth Central: <http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/jobs-and-careers> (career resources & templates)

Victorian Skills Gateway: [www.education.vic.gov.au/victoriaskillsgateway/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/victoriaskillsgateway/Pages/home.aspx)  
(vocational training in Victoria including help for people with disability)

Volunteering: [www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/](http://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/)

Youth Employment Scheme (YES): <https://jobs.vic.gov.au/about-jobs-victoria/youth-employment-scheme>  
(for students aged 15-24 wanting to work in a government agency while studying)

## More Information Careers and Employment Services

Career management and work readiness programs can form part of an NDIS plan that includes career planning and employment in the list of goals.

Agencies listed below contributed towards the development of the case studies by participating in the Building Ability through Career Management (BACM) program. They welcome all inquiries from young people with disabilities, their parents, carers and guardians.

Australian Centre for Career Education	<a href="http://www.ceav.vic.edu.au">www.ceav.vic.edu.au</a>
Burke and Beyond Association Incorporated – NDIS provider	<a href="http://www.burkeandbeyond.org.au">www.burkeandbeyond.org.au</a>
CEAV Career Counselling Australia	<a href="http://www.ccca.edu.au">www.ccca.edu.au</a>
Disability Employment Services – Interact Australia (Preston)	<a href="mailto:enquiries@interact.com.au">enquiries@interact.com.au</a>
Disability Employment Services – Mission Australia (Dandenong, Lilydale, Ringwood)	<a href="http://www.missionaustralia.com.au">www.missionaustralia.com.au</a>
Disability Employment Services – St John of God Accord (Frankston) – NDIS provider	<a href="http://accorddisability.org.au">http://accorddisability.org.au</a>
Disability Employment Services – Uniting Employment Services (Footscray)	<a href="http://www.employmentservices.unitingvictas.org">www.employmentservices.unitingvictas.org</a>
Disability Programs – Wodonga TAFE	1300 MY TAFE (1300 698 233)
Mambourin – NDIS provider	<a href="https://www.mambourin.org/">https://www.mambourin.org/</a>
Nadrasca – NDIS provider	<a href="mailto:nadrasca@nadrasca.com.au">nadrasca@nadrasca.com.au</a>
Work Education Department School of Business, Innovation & Entrepreneurship Melbourne Polytechnic	<a href="http://www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au/work-education">www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au/work-education</a>
Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS) – Youth Affairs Council of Victoria	<a href="mailto:ydas@yacvic.org.au">ydas@yacvic.org.au</a>



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