



Direct Support Professionals Core Competencies Orientation

Participants Manual

January 27, 2014

What Does It Mean To Be Competent

- Being **competent means having knowledge and skills as well as being ethical.** How do we as a field determine if a DSP is competent in their position? Who defines competency? Stakeholders across the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) system have developed a set of core competencies for DSP's which were reviewed by DSPs before implementation. **These competencies transform the role of a DSP from a caregiver to a support professional.**

Empowerment Strategies

Transforming from a Caregiver to a Support Professional

A support professional empowers individuals to:

1. Live a life that is valued by the person as defined by their Personal Outcome Measures (POMs) and not the personal values of the staff.
2. Have more opportunities for desired community involvement
3. Think and problem solve, helping them to figure out what they want to do
4. Learn new skills that increases their independence and decreases dependency on staff
5. Have increased self-esteem through positive interactions focusing on their abilities and not their disabilities



Competence + Interactions = Empowerment

- Competence, (knowledge, skills and ethics), should be demonstrated in **every interaction** between the DSPs and individuals. The DSPs should be **empowering** the individual at all times.

National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals Code of Ethics

- Based upon the NADSP Code of Ethics and assuming that there are no immediate health and safety issues for this individual, do you think the staff acted in an ethical manner? Why or why not?
- If the person had a health related condition that required limited sugar in his diet, would that matter? Why or why not?
- If his family wanted him to eat healthier and the person didn't want to, how should staff act?
- If you wanted to eat a brownie and a friend of yours interrupted you and reminded you that you wanted to eat healthy, how would you feel? Could the staff person have handled the situation in a better way?
- Why is it important to adopt the values/ethics of the profession as opposed to using your own personal values in decision making?

Goal 1: Putting People First

- Using the DSPs Empowerment Checklist, do you think the staff person was acting competently, **empowering** the individual? Why or why not based on each of the 5 checklist items (review each item one at a time)?
- In regard to #3, what do you think the staff person could have done differently?

Goal 2: Building and Maintaining Positive Relationships

- Using the Empowerment Strategies Checklist, do you think the staff person was helping to build and/or maintain positive relationships, **empowering** the individuals? Why or why not based on each of the 5 checklist items (review each item one at a time)?
- What positive relationships was the DSP trying to build at the store?
- Why are building positive relationships as important as teaching skills while shopping and completing the chore or task?
- What opportunities could there be in this scene to enhance problem solving and thinking skills while building and maintaining relationships?

Goal 3: Demonstrating Professionalism

- How do you think they handled the disagreement?
- What might have been the impact of the disagreement on the staff and the individuals if it wasn't resolved?
- What if they couldn't or wouldn't resolve the conflict with each other, what else could they have done?

Goal 4: Supporting Good Health

- Using the Empowerment Strategies Checklist, do you think the staff person was acting competently, **empowering** the individuals? Why or why not based on each of the 5 checklist items (review each item one at a time)?
- What other opportunities arise each day where DSPs can support good health?
- What is the role of DSPs in identifying potential signs and symptoms of illness, especially when supporting people with more limited communication capabilities?

Goal 5: Supporting Safety

- Using the Empowerment Strategies Checklist, do you think the staff person was acting competently, **empowering** the individuals? Why or why not based on each of the 5 checklist items (review each item one at a time)?
- What kinds of supports did the staff provide each of the individuals?

Goal 6: Having a Home

- Using the Empowerment Strategies Checklist, do you think the staff person was acting competently, **empowering** the individual? Why or why not based on each of the 5 checklist items (review each item one at a time)?
- How could this DSP create more opportunities for community involvement?

Goal 7: Being Active and Productive in Society

- In the dog-walking scene, using the Empowerment Strategies Checklist, do you think the staff person was acting competently, **empowering** the individual? Why or why not based on each of the 5 checklist items (review each item one at a time)?
- • Why is it so important that the DSP prompted the individual to push the buzzer to the apartment rather than doing this for him?
- In the restaurant scene, using the Empowerment Strategies Checklist, do you think the staff person was acting competently, **empowering** the individual? Why or why not based on each of the 5 checklist items (review each item one at a time)?
- As a DSP, what do you think your role is in supporting an individual to find either a volunteer or competitive job?

Closing Exercise

- What did you learn today that will empower you in your role as a DSP?
- List one way you can utilize the 5 components outlined in the Empowerment Checklist to be a more effective DSP with the people you support.