JAN

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Captioning

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>> Hello everyone and welcome to the Job Accommodation Network's Monthly Webcast Series today's webcast is called "Effective Use of a Support Person - Job Coach in the Workplace". I'm Anne Hirsh JAN's Associate Director and our featured speaker is Janet Fiore who is the President and CEO of the Sierra Group Academy. Before we start today's program I need to go over a few housekeeping items.

First if any of you experience technical difficulties during the webcast please use the pod located at the bottom of your screen to send a chat message or send an email to question -- q‑u‑e‑s‑t‑i‑o‑n -- @askJAN.org again that's singular question@askJAN.org.

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We really appreciate your feedback so please stay logged onto fill out that evaluation form.

And now let me introduce our speaker.

Next slide.

Again, we have with us today we're honored to have Janet Fiore she is quite a busy lady so we really appreciate your time taking out of your busy schedule to be with us. Janet is a national authority on disability, diversity and compliance policy. A diversity and accommodation award winner. A social entrepreneur and female executive whose own disabilities fuel her passion for workplace equality.

And you can see from this slide she's quite a busy lady she provides on-call accommodation consultation to facilitate the ADA Interactive Process. She provides expert testimony, she advises business, Government and individuals with disabilities on employment-related issues. Through the Sierra Group Academy she trains and places 300 plus adults with disabilities annually. Through the DisabilityRecruiter certification and accessible features and protocols, she trains and certifies over 6500 business professionals annually. She leads the RecruitDisability Job Board with 7500 plus disabled candidate searches daily.

She is frequently in media sources including Forbes, SHRM, online, Philadelphia Business Journal and also an advocate on the Hill has made over 300 visits to Members of Congress and administrative leaders.

She's testified before Congress. She was awarded the Fisher Phillips 2008 leadership and diversity award and appointed by Pennsylvania Governor Wolf to represent disability business as an advisor to the PA small business opportunities Council. She's an advisor to Disability:IN Pennsylvania if that's not enough she's on the Board of the national rehabilitation job placement division Janet thank you again so much for joining us and with that I'll turn it over to you so next slide.

>> JANET FIORE: Thank you, Anne. And thank you to everyone for taking time out of your day to come here about how to effectively use a job coach at the workplace.

And I really appreciated the welcome that you gave me. And as I shared with you before today's call, we're really in my sweet spot today by job coaching once the job happens is the marriage of all the work we do at Sierra Group Academy getting people ready to go to work with the consulting bring to work corporate training that we do.

So I can be -- I can talk with the help of Anne about some scenarios where job coaches were effective in helping make people with disabilities and business have the perfect marriage of career, accommodation and success for everybody.

From juggling competing priorities to offering tender loving care, job coaches play an absolutely -- helping with people with disabilities millions -- helping them day in and day out across America.

I'm excited one of our learning objectives today is how does this job coach, an individual, navigate between human factors, technology and teamwork to get the outcomes that are needed. Next slide, please.

Let's start out by talking about who uses a job coach. Why would you use a job coach. And then how does it happen?

Well, as you see in the picture, there's a coach who is standing arms crossed watching the action on the field.

Who uses a coach today coaches. I have a coach. When I start complaining too much about the conflicting priorities and tasks in my own job, my dearest of friends will say to me, have you called your coach lately, Janet?

Coaches are people that help everyone from entry level employee new to the job to a career professional navigate and succeed despite any obstacle that they might have.

Now, when it comes to workers with disabilities, people that use coaches are people that might have a disability-related need that entitles them to some extra support to learn the tasks of the job, the skills to fit in at work or to alter their own behaviors so that they do.

Why do you use a job coach? Well, that's pretty straightforward.

You use the job coach to develop and maintain the skills of the job.

Now, I would be remiss if I didn't back up and say job coaches are often also job developers. So they are helping a person find the job, apply for the job. And then get hired.

But today we're focusing on the actual coaching that happens to develop the worker into that perfect employee that several hundred of you from the world of work are on the line trying to learn about.

How does the coach make it from sitting in their office to onsite helping a worker with a disability master skills or behaviors? Well, there are quite a few ways this can happen. The job coach can be hired directly.

In my work, we get hired to do job coaching at Sierra Group many times paid for by the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency as part of the full wrap-around supported employment service that a worker with a disability is entitled to receive.

Other times people have been at work for a long, long time. And in one of our examples today, we'll cover it. When an accident or a disabling injury alters their ability to do the job in your workplace where they have been successful for years. In that instance, Human Resources or HR and legal combined, reach out to a company like Sierra Group and they ask us to bring a coach in to not just figure out the accommodation, but to be interactive during the Interactive Process of the ADA, coaching, assisting, and communication as we go.

Next slide, please.

You all can tell, I'm excited about the topic of job coaching. Because I really do think that the -- about job coaching because I think the coach plays a vital role I call it the dual role of the job coach because that's what the literature tends to say. But it kind of goes beyond a dual role and it's really a three-way role that we're going to get to in a minute. But the basic -- and the content of the slide in front of you is that the coach has a dual role. The employer needs to onboard and retain an employee seamlessly. And the employer has the right to expect that the employee is going to learn the duties of the job and moreover, to meet quality and productivity standards regardless of a disability.

An employee with a disability might need some additional help during the onboarding process. Maybe that help is needed because the person with the disability has been out of work for a really, really long time.

Maybe it's because their disability causes them to learn at a pace that's a little bit less than average. But with additional help, coaching, they are going to be able to retain the job and learn everything that they need to do.

Extra assistance to master the skills, to alter any behaviors or comfort zones that can use a third party.

And my favorite reason to have a coach in place, the accommodations that often mitigate the ability versus disability to allow all the tasks of the job to be done. Well, the coach can help seamlessly get everybody on board in that regard, too.

Next slide we're going to talk about the basic success factors of a job coach.

Let me tell you the real success factor. The job coach has to be able to communicate, meet outcomes, and overcome perceptions.

That's a lot for one person to do, isn't it, Anne?

>> ANNE HIRSH: Oh, that sure is, yeah.

>> JANET FIORE: Am I hitting it so far on what it is that a coach is and how V.R. Vocational rehab, might offer to send a coach in? But the employer needs to welcome that coach and permit them in the work site? Do you think we're setting the stage pretty well or do I need to clarify any of that.

>> ANNE HIRSH: No, I think you're setting the stage very well, Janet.

>> JANET FIORE: Okay. Good; good. I love talking to multiple components of an audience all at once. But I like to try to, you know, make sure that I'm being bilingual or trilingual. And I'm going to say here that the communication, while I talked on the last slide about the dual role of the coach, communication is three-way. It's got to be open and including the employer. The employee with the disability. And the coach. But it also has to include the Federal Court payer of job coaching services. -- the frequent payer of job coaching services and again that's the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. In Pennsylvania we call it OVR. Every state has one. And if a third party Government agency is paying for the coach, well, then the communication doesn't just have to include them. The rules and factors that they permit in job coaching needs to work with them, as well.

The coach, this -- businesses, here is the good news, the coach understands how to communicate with you and they should and do understand how to honor you as the person in charge of the job and the supervisor of the worker with a disability.

Now, the outcomes have to be good and the coach has to make sure they understand the duties of the job and are helping enable the worker with a disability to be progressing toward meeting all of the expectations on the path with or without the coach.

Now, at this point I'm going to talk about one of the success factors we in the world of job coaching talk about all the time. And that's called, it's time to fade out. Or fading.

We show up at your office with your new employee as the -- I like to call it -- (audio lost) purchase.

>> JANET FIORE: You've hired the employee with or without a disability and along comes a coach who is thrown in as the -- (audio cutting in and out).

The co-worker is going to say why does so-and-so next to me have someone extra helping them? That's a perception that the business needs to address and put to rest without making the employee with a disability benefiting from a coach feel awkward or different. And so the coach themself doesn't start to be treated like a member of the team that's going to be there forever.

These perceptions can be tricky. And the only way I really know to go through how to best communicate in all of this is to talk about some scenarios.

Before we do, when it comes to communication, I want to reiterate the No. 1 first factor for good success in communication, coaches, be sure that you know the employee's schedule. Businesses, if a job coach is cleared to come onsite, please communicate the schedule and the schedule changes with the coach as well as your employee so that we're all on the same page.

Clearances to be onsite, those need to be worked out in advance. And the coach will adhere to whatever standard the company has by way of document security, background checks, et cetera.

How to communicate is done best when there's an upfront meeting with the coach, the onsite supervisor, and the person with a disability. And they decide, are we going to talk every Monday morning? Are we going to talk at the end of each day, will we talk via email? Set a schedule to communicate and keep with it. Not knowing who knows what tends to be the biggest obstacle in pretty much any relationship in our life. But the job coach has so many parties hearing from them that they can only be a good linchpin to success if clarity of who is talking to who is established at the beginning.

All right. Let's move on to our first scenario.

Next slide, please.

This scenario involves an entry level retail job. Now, remember at the beginning, I might have gloved over this but who needs a coach can be anyone from a worker who has never had a job doing something entry level, perhaps as this scenario, to a high-level professional with a Master's Degree who acquired a disability and is now in need of a coach. Scenario No. 1 involves entry level retail. There's a job saved emergency request that goes out because a young man on the autism spectrum was working successfully for several months, stocking shelves at a small neighborhood pharmacy.

It was his role to work in the greeting card and novelty paper department of this pharmacy. Before COVID hit and the world changed, there was always plenty of work for him to do simply in stocking the shelves. Well as if the coach doesn't have enough to do, stay-at-home workers, essential workers and everybody multi-tasking and changing how they use their staff was something that came along and affected the role of the worker, a young man with autism, and that of course affected the role of the coverage.

The employer, the owner of the small pharmacy, was so pleased with the work ethic and skills of this young man that when he had to downsize, he said, I want to keep this individual. But he's going to need to learn how to use the cash register. And then also learn to be flexible enough to come away from his job stocking and come to the front when we call for him on the loudspeaker to come assist with the cash register.

The scenario is now laid. And let's go to the next slide and take a look at a few of the obstacles that came up in this.

The person with the disability on the autism spectrum is someone who is trained to do a task. This task was, take all of the new inventory, put it where it needs to go, remove any mismatched inventory like a card without an envelope or an envelope without a card. Finish the task. And then go to your boss, if you need more work before your shift ends.

Along comes the need to be flexible. And stop what you're doing to go to the register. Stay at the register as long as needed. Knowing that you may go home that night without finishing the task.

This was cognitively difficult for this person whose original training and perception was, I finish what I start before I move on to something else. The other skill that the job coach needed to help with was the actual development of a hard skill. How to operate the register.

How to count out change and how to properly interact with the customer.

This required skill development at the same time we're doing behavioral modification and flexibility training. As if that isn't enough, we're doing this in the midst of Governor-ordered stay at home, unless it's an essential worker job.

Now, the pharmacy owner, the pharmacy is open. They are essential.

The young man with autism is an essential worker. Very proud to be going to work during a time for an employer that's vital. Very proud to be asked to develop a skill. But significantly in need of some coaching from his trusted job coach on how to operate the register.

The company that employs the coach does not want the coach to go into the public unless 100% necessary.

The employer says, I don't want another body in my small business if we can help it because we're trying to limit contact.

The coach talked with the pharmacy owner, with the individual who is the employee. And with the individual's natural supports at home, his parents, and we all came up with a really creative solution.

The job coach has an iPhone. The young man who is the worker has an iPhone. And the employer says this instance for job coaching I am more than happy to flex my rule about using your phone when you're at work. We're actually going to buy a stand so that the iPhone can be put on a remote stand and the job coach and the employee with the trainer at work can all see what's going on while the young man is trained on cash register usage.

Next slide.

And what obstacles or opportunities come to mind for you or any questions of anyone on the line? This is a scenario where a lot of creativity and a lot of breaking of the traditional rules had to happen in order to get skilled development without walking in and teaching it side by side.

Can we chat about that.

>> ANNE HIRSH: Sure, Janet. I mean, the scenario you provided is certainly that we are hearing here at JAN where the job coach needs to shift to trying to do something in a remote way, often using that SmartPhone. In a way that maybe neither party has ever done before.

One way to get through that obstacle is to set up some practice sessions so they are doing it before they are actually at the work site so that they are both comfortable with that mode of communication. I really like the idea of getting that portable stand. That really you know allows them to still have hands free to do the other tasks.

You know, to the comment that you made about the individual not being comfortable with the change in duties, that's often where we hear of the need for the job coach. Somebody has been working for a while. And one thing we hear of people doing is to create recordings like little recordings of reminder notices. So that the employee can hear in a voice that really gives them comfort that it's okay to leave without having that -- having completed that task. That's how the job is now. So that they can hear that repeatedly when they need to.

>> JANET FIORE: Smart. Very smart.

Let's go to the next slide. Thank you for that input.

And let's talk a little bit more about how this worked out. And I love the tip of making that recording in the known voice. You know, like set the alarm. And the alarm says, time to listen to your recording. And the recording says, take three deep breaths and remember, you do what your boss asks you to do. Don't put pressure on yourself to finish when you're asked to multi-task.

The way this situation worked out, preCOVID, we would have just rushed right in. The coach would have rushed right in to the work site. Taught the person face-to-face how to use that register. And then continued the offsite before work and after work television communication saying, how was your day? Did you get frustrated? Did you use your tools and techniques? What did you do that you were proud of at work today? What obstacles came up? Do you want us to intervene and do anything about it?

Those before work calls and the after work calls are such vital pieces of interaction between the employee with the disability and the job coach. I, again, hats off to people that are coaches for a living. You're up early and you're working late. Because you've got to be there to motivate and give confidence to the employee before they get to work. And then to help them with tender loving care after a tough day at the office so they know they are supported. Sometimes support really does mean just being reminded to calm them down and alter your own behavior. But all of the calming help in the world will not help you navigate a cash register and learn how to count out change. Working remotely between both and involving the onsite employer/supervisor is absolutely critical to making this work. The employee, because they were committed by the business to engage in live FaceTime interaction at the work site was the difference between failing to be able to stay employed as an essential worker during the critical time and not being able to because it was perfectly reasonable that the business did not want to permit additional interaction between a coach and their employee.

Tough, tricky circumstances we're navigating now.

In a job that used to be coached almost with no technology, like everything else in life, it's becoming a little bit remote communication dependent.

Next slide. Audience, do you guys have any questions?

>> ANNE HIRSH: We do have a few questions that are coming in Janet. Let's start with this one, if an employer who is asking is virtual job coaching as effective as in-person job coaching, I imagine there's not a lot of research on that quite yet but they are saying that during this pandemic they have put some job coaching accommodations on hold and switching some employees to virtual job coaching. Some employees are open to the virtual coaching and others are not. So they are putting some on hold.

Can you speak to effectiveness that you've noticed so far? And if you have somebody who is resistant to the virtual coaching? Some strategies you may suggest?

>> JANET FIORE: Absolutely. That's an excellent question. Our next example will speak to that a little bit. But I do want to say that the need to negotiate a person's comfort with technology is brand-new to all of us. I'm excited that we have done remote and online learning with our corporate customers for enough years that my coaching team was already personally comfortable communicating, teaching and supporting people in that regard. We have a hybrid method of training going on in the classroom next to me right now where a technology averse learner did not want to sit at home and learn to use the computer. She preferred to come in.

We started assigning her days that she could come into the classroom. And today when I saw her in the classroom, she said to me, I'm getting tired of coming in every day. I notice others only come in once every two weeks. Can we revisit me going home and using the technology like everyone else is using?

It's kind of a comfort zone trial and error situation. As far as effectiveness, I'm happy to report that our results for remote coaching are equally as effective to hands-on.

But that is because we're not relying on one modality.

It can't be just a phone or just an email or just a live computer-based interactive need. It still needs to involve telephone calls, communication, three-way interaction. Maybe a Zoom meeting where you can look in the eyes of the coach and the person who is resistant. And hear their fears as much person to person as possible.

Let's move ahead to the next slide really quick. And see if that gives a little more answer to your question.

And if not, you can always reach out to me after the fact for further discussion.

Our next scenario is where skill mastery is going to require additional practice and some assistive technology use for a middle aged woman who is going to work in a Call Center for the very first time. She happens to have paraplegia and some memory issues. She brings to the job excellent communication skills, decent computer use skills and really pretty nominal mastery of her assistive technology that includes voice recognition input to speed up her notetaking and her written documentation.

She's been resistant to using this.

She starts out on the job. She's got some discomfort going on because her ergonomic setup between her wheelchair and her desk are not quite where they should be. And she feels like her arms and her mouse use are impaired. She's having some backaches at the end of her shift. These are her concerns. And the employer is kind of whispering in our other ear, we're granting her extra time to get through her calls but we're not seeing her productivity increase. Because after the call, her notes are going in really slowly.

This is a tricky one. And honestly, the ability to coach her remotely was better and more effective on remote technology than it ever was at the workplace itself. Let me explain how.

The coach gets the employer's permission to log in supervisor style and watch the call as it's in progress.

Some trial calls are scheduled between a co-worker, the employee and the coach so that the coach can literally hear the responses, watch the technology use, and then coach the employee on how to work quickly. Because we have a camera watching her while we're also watching the screen. We are able to say, I see that you're leaning forward on your elbow typing with one finger. Rather than using your ergonomic armrest to access the whole computer. We then take a photo and send a drawing of how to better adjust her ergonomic armrest, how to better adjust the placement of her keyboard at her desk. And then there's more comfortable and more effective. This also required some human factors coaching between the coach and the supervisor who teamed up and ran it an hour a day for the employee to practice using her speech input software to take the notes in their proprietary database.

She saved up some of her notes until the end of the call and then had the access to her coach and her supervisor watching to see that she was picking out the right factors to document and utilizing technology to get them in there in a far quicker data entry means, you know, Dragon or other speech recognition products let you type at about 100 words per minute. That's what got her back on pace because her post call documentation with one finger, particularly when she was sitting in an uncomfortable position, was really slowing her down.

Anne, how does that answer the earlier question? And what, if anything, would you like to add to that job coaching miracle that was performed to keep a person with a disability meeting production in a busy Call Center?

>> ANNE HIRSH: I think it does address the question in a bit more detail and I'm not sure I would call it a miracle. It was a well thoughtout process to make the situation better and it sounds like it was very successful.

>> JANET FIORE: Well, thank you. And I only call it a miracle because the ability to navigate what people want to do, what they can do, what the job requires, is -- it's not a miracle, I have a bit of a sense of humor, as you know, Anne. It's actually the job of a coach and I'm going to go back to the folks on the line from business and say this coach needs to hear from you where you think the resistance to the scenario lies. As well as where the problem lies.

Because in trying to work out a compromise that meets everybody's likes as well as productivity, we have to tell each other, I keep telling the person to go ahead and use their adaptive technology and they keep telling me I feel like it slows me down more. If the coach doesn't hear that, we don't really know what they are doing when we're not on the line watching. So three-way communication. And sometimes the person with a disability tells us, I'm frustrated because I don't think my employer understands me.

And sometimes the employer tells the coach, I don't feel like they are doing everything we're trying to help them do.

We as the coach treat that very sensitive and confidentially. And we try to promote everybody talking about their feelings and observations. We're not going to tattletale and try to make somebody the good guy or the bad guy but we can only do that if we're hearing anything.

Let's go ahead and take another question if we have one.

>> ANNE HIRSH: We have several questions we have a couple coming in related to communication.

>> JANET FIORE: Okay.

>> ANNE HIRSH: This one, most of us are doing our duties via telehealth they are asking how do you propose better communication with potential clients who have no visual handicap but have a mental illness and the phone is something of annoyance to most. We have been talking about talking on the phone or even Zoom or FaceTime. Have you come up with other modes of communication?

>> JANET FIORE: Well, when we can go back to face-to-face a lot of that can certainly be resolved. As far as overcoming talking on the phone all day long, email and nobody -- nobody at the other end of this discussion give me any nods or frowns or smiles or distracted looks, I personally feel the pain of people particularly with anxiety disorder trying to get through life without the ability to get a little human interaction.

Different parts of the country are allowing coaching to occur face-to-face again. A hybrid model where the individual could potentially meet afterhours or at the job coach's place of business to have some face-to-face interaction with proper CDC guidelines, state and you know everybody else's COVID safety guidelines in order, we are starting to find that an occasional face-to-face interaction can really do wonders to calm the anxieties and give the human connection.

Zoom calls one-to-one, or breaking into a small Zoom room during a bigger training scenario is another trick that we've been putting into play in telehealth Call Centers that we support.

In the midst of the online training where our individual with a mental health anxiety disorder is learning among an entire training class, we have the ability to text the employer trainer and request that our customer being coached can leave the online training, go into a Zoom room with the coach, and we invite the trainer to pop in where we can have a one-to-one or a two-to-one private discussion in a Zoom setting. Looking at each others' faces. And kind of help them with any behaviors or anxiety issues that are coming up and maybe causing them to lose focus.

It's not better than technology. But Zoom room feels a lot more personal than group interaction on a GoToMeeting. That's the best I've come up with. Anne, do you have any suggestions there?

>> ANNE HIRSH: It's not going to be the best for everyone. But for some individuals, just texting instead of actually talking. You know there are a lot of people where that is their most comfortable way of communicating. It may mean the coach and that employer person, the contact, has to get more used to that method. But that may be something that would help some people.

>> JANET FIORE: Yeah. And that's a really good point. And it goes back to the success factor of a coach in communication. I think regardless of disability or job type or anxiety or physical issue, we all have our preferred means of communicating. I love texting more than email. I also like the phone. And I crave human interaction. But we'll set that aside for now.

If somebody wants to schedule time to meet with me, and we're trying to coordinate schedules, I love a telephone call. Let's look at our calendars together and talk through a couple of scenarios. Not have me email you three dates while I go get busy for the day and I don't check until tomorrow and then two of your dates are gone.

I always ask people, please give me a call to communicate our calendars. Yet I find -- and I'm going to say something offtopic here. I find there are folks in the world, maybe I'm going to pick on Millennials for a moment, who really don't like to pick up the telephone.

And I'm trying to communicate with somebody's Millennial assistant. And I'm saying, here are four dates that I'm holding for you. But please do me the courtesy of a phone call when they can confirm so that I immediately clear my calendar for other priorities.

Three days later I see the confirmation in my email. People, we all have to be more respectful of one another's proclivities and preferences as we communicate in a world that's gone bonkers due to COVID.

Other questions or should we go to Scenario No. 3?

>> ANNE HIRSH: Maybe let's try one more question. I think it might be a shorter answer.

Can you speak to are there training materials available for an employer on how to set up a successful job coach situation in the workplace?

>> JANET FIORE: That's something that Sierra Group provides to our customers. When the employer hires us to go out and do a coaching for the accommodations process.

For anyone working with the state vocational rehab agency who is designated in each and every state. If you're having trouble finding yours you can reach out and we can help you, Anne can or I can but the actual agency would be happy to give you guidance and guidelines to working with a coach. Another really smart tip is when a job coach is wanting to come on to the work premises remotely or in-person, take 15 minutes and ask your questions and ask them describe how it's going to go situationally. So the answer is there's nothing universal. But a 15-minute deliberate communication period on just that topic, that would probably help the entire scenario.

Next slide, please.

All right. Here is our third scenario.

A Master's level woman who works in research and design at a product manufacturing facility gets into a very unfortunate and traumatic accident.

Prior to her job she worked -- or prior to her accident, she had worked at her job in research and development for about ten years. Loved the work and always exceeded expectations.

After six months of physical recovery where she had an injury to one of her eyes and she's learned to read a little bit differently and to deal with some visual accommodations, a lot of therapy and a lot of self-development to control her own anxiety from the incident, this woman is excited to return to work.

The employer is so happy to have her back. Of course they are providing accommodations for her vision. And they are also giving her extra time, they have -- regarding her anxiety issues they have provided a quiet room which she can go into to do her breathing and her self-calming modalities. And they are really happy to have her back, respect her privacy and reintegrate her fully on to the team.

Now, unfortunately the anxiety, the post-traumatic stress, are triggered during her day-to-day job in ways she couldn't have predicted, in ways that her employer certainly couldn't have thought about.

This woman finds that in the midst of her busy Design Team meeting where -- where everybody is talking over one another and everybody is sharing information and ideas are being tossed out and assignments are being delegated, quickly rapid fire interactively in a brainstorm style, she's finding herself completely overwhelmed. Her anxiety goes up. And she kind of zones out of the discussion.

She's not saying, hey, guys, I'm zoning out. Because she's feeling anxious at the moment.

Everybody hears her voice on the call or they see her face-to-face in the meeting. And they are presuming predisability responses to organization, taking her role and scheduling and doing the job.

The more she forgets things and others are picking up the ball, the more frustrated and anxious she becomes.

Co-workers start taking over more responsibilities, not giving them to her. Thinking that she's just not interested or she's no longer reliable. Nobody wants to give her pressure because they know she was -- has gone through a lot of a traumatic situation.

The business doesn't want to not help her. But there's all of this growing anxiety. Finally, HR has to be involved because she goes on a writeup for not meeting her production.

Enter the job coach. Anne, what do you think is going to happen in this scenario.

>> ANNE HIRSH: There's going to be some tough conversations, that's for sure.

(Chuckles).

>> JANET FIORE: Absolutely. The obstacle, the hard obstacles you guys can see on the slide, the co-worker and the supervisor lack the understanding that the reason she's not following through is because she zoned out and didn't really hear herself get assigned the task. They think that she's disinterested or maybe too emotional to handle it.

The reality is she's not taking down all the assignments as they are being assigned. She's not currently able to hear what's verbal and get it to her calendar the way she used to.

She's feeling too anxious to say this. Maybe a little bit embarrassed.

I actually have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. And when my anxiety gets triggered, the hardest thing I do is say, I need a minute. I need to regroup for a moment.

Can we take a quick pause? And can we maybe parse out what we're talking about into one step at a time? Maybe we can take some notes and document what we're talking about.

Because she tuned out, nobody thinks -- nobody knows -- I mean, we all grow guilty of zoning out in the middle of a meeting. Here is the easy solution, first off, the person had to be willing to talk to her boss and talk to her co-workers and say, I find my mind locks up in our rapid fire brainstorming conversation.

Would you guys mind if I use a tool my job coach mentioned, it's called a Livescribe pen. It's going to let me write out notes and record everything that we're talking about. At the end of the meeting I will share the transcript as well as the recording with all of you guys and I'll be happy to be the one that takes a half an hour to type up the to-do list that came out of our brainstorming meeting. I'll type it out, I'll email it to everybody with who said they were going to do what by what date and now we actually have a record of our meetings that we can all track back to.

There's a little bit of hesitation. You're recording the meeting, I don't want to be recorded. You know, what if that takes you extra time to listen to the recording.

Once we got back the human -- got past the human obstacle of whether or not it would work, let me tell you, nobody wants to do a meeting without that sort of recording. And task list that this worker now generates not just for herself but for the entire team.

Her anxiety is not only lower and less likely to be triggered, the entire team is grateful that this tool is there to help each and all of them.

This is where a coach and an accommodation work out better than the preinjury, predisability team misfunctioning.

Any questions on that scenario?

>> ANNE HIRSH: I just have a quick comment on the use of the Smartpen is something that we talk about frequently at JAN and do hear of people having great success. And we have a solutions video what we call on our website. If you go to the training section and you can find a solution video that talks about all about how to use a Smartpen and what they are all about.

>> JANET FIORE: Excellent. That is a phenomenal tool. And I really hope that everyone on the call will take a minute and do that. Because if you understand the power of this specialized pen and the notepad to not just write down your notes but send them to your email, let you click on the exact section of the notes that you want to refresh to and hear only that part of the conversation, months in advance, I can't tell you how many times that productivity enhancing tool has saved time and enhanced performance on my own team as well as in the job coaching scenario.

Any questions about any of our three scenarios so far? We have about six minutes left. And I would love to take more questions.

>> ANNE HIRSH: We did just have one come in about the recording. Someone is indicating they have concerns about recording without consent of others in the room.

>> JANET FIORE: Well, we certainly don't record without consent. Everyone on the team from the supervisor to those that are on the call are notified and asked, are you comfortable with the fact we're using this device to record the meeting.

Not only the minutes and the notes will be shared but the transcript as well as the actual verbal recording will be made available to everyone after the meeting.

If somebody objects, then that has to be handled in a separate fashion and that's where the business supervisor would kind of defer to the value of the recording, the need for the accommodation and confidentiality.

Those recordings are treated like any work product, email or note that an employee would take. And they are treated with the utmost in confidentiality. And never meant to leave the workplace.

Any other questions?

>> ANNE HIRSH: Oh we sure do have more.

Can you -- in your experience, have you seen or had a request for an employee asking for a support person to help them understand social cues and to communicate with co-workers and managers?

>> JANET FIORE: Yes, absolutely. Social cues can be difficult to an individual who is blind or an individual on the autism spectrum.

I had a scenario a few years back where a young man who is blind was working in a professional job at a science and pharmaceutical company out in the Philadelphia suburbs.

He had not ever learned dining etiquette.

He lived with his family. And the social cues that were needed for him to wipe his mouth and pick food off of his shirt were something that he couldn't see somebody kind of pointing to like, you know, the smudge on your face or the lipstick on your teeth, ladies, you know where my finger is pointing right now. Your friend opens their lips and points to their teeth and you know you have lipstick there. An individual who is blind can't see that cue. A person on the autism spectrum is not going to notice a lower your voice type of cue or a let's move on to the next topic cue.

This is where direct blunt conversation done with tender loving heart and compassion is the one and only answer.

To the individual who had food on his face, I sat him down and said, hey, listen, you're going to learn over lunch to every couple of bites wipe your mouth and check your shirt so that you're not sitting in a business meeting distracting everyone with food on your face. Okay?

He said, oh, my God, Janet, thank you for being blunt with me. I didn't know. That was embarrassing. No one told me.

People need to be told what they don't know. Do it with privacy. Do it via a coach who has a rapport. But by all means, nobody wants to be the one with toilet paper hanging out the bottom of their skirt walking down the hall. You've got to tell people when they don't know they are missing the social cue.

Other questions.

>> ANNE HIRSH: We had one more about the recording and I think I can answer it pretty quickly. Could that notetaking pen be used over Zoom? And the answer to that is certainly, absolutely it could. But one more quick one for you Janet we only have a minute or two left and I need to do some closing.

>> JANET FIORE: Okay.

>> ANNE HIRSH: Can you speak to is there anything that's considered a reasonable period of time for a job coach to be needed? They are referring to an ADA accommodation, not through VR have you ever come across anything that -- or maybe even just what the average length of time you've been noticing.

>> JANET FIORE: For a job coach? That's a good question. And it goes to the slide I've advanced to, which is it depends on the scenario. I would say three months is a typical industry-wide standard for a job coach to be engaged. That doesn't mean 100% onsite with the person. That means they begin the interaction and then they start fading from the time of making sure the job is going well.

We kind of go with a every two week communication between the employer and the coach and anyone in HR and obviously the person doing the job on how well are the skills intact. And do you still need help with the coach? If so, what area? You kind of start out attacking all of the areas. And then slowly move away.

It's also a great idea to bring the coach back a year later if a new duty comes up or if another disabling condition needs to be overcome.

Creativity.

>> ANNE HIRSH: Thank you, Janet.

>> JANET FIORE: A sense of humor, those are what I say are incredibly important.

>> ANNE HIRSH: Thank you, Janet. And unfortunately that's all the time we have. I'd like to thank everybody for attending. And Janet, a special thanks to you for joining us today we did not get to all of the questions so please don't hesitate to reach out to either me or Janet or the JAN office directly. Look for our new Webcast Series in our -- coming out in September, we'll make an announcement about next year's series. I also want to thank Alternative Communication Services for providing the net captioning.

If you need additional information about anything we talked about, please let us know.

And if you want to discuss an accommodation, please feel free to contact us.

We hope the program was useful. As mentioned earlier, an evaluation form will automatically pop up on your screen in another window as soon as we're finished. We really appreciate your feedback. So we hope you'll take a minute to complete the form.

Again, thanks for attending.

>> JANET FIORE: Thank you, Anne. Bye bye everybody thank you coaches and employers.