

MICRO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

STEP 1: PERSON-CENTERED DISCOVERY PROCESS

(As part of Alternative Day Services, Skill Building, or Supported Employment services identify each person's interests and abilities using interest surveys, hands on projects like volunteering and service learning, Make-a-Difference activities, self-determination, leadership development, etc.)

- Identify the person based on interest in starting and running a business (not because they simply need work or want money)
- Identify the business concept based on interests and abilities
- Identify the ME coach
- Complete Feasibility Assessment/Interest Survey and return to ME Specialists
From this point forward, this process is designed to take 3 months or less
- Make sample products or create service description flyer
- Create market survey (approximately five questions)
 - Examples of survey questions:
 - Would you pay for this?
 - How much would you pay?
 - How often would you purchase this?
- Tally results of market survey
- If red flags are noted, then review and rethink the business concept working back through the steps again.
- Upon positive results, move to STEP 2

Support Team Meeting #1
Understanding the ME Process

Feasibility Assessment

at all stages of the process:

1. The **person** (Who's idea was it? Is this business what you really want to do? Do you have the DRIVE to keep on going? . . . to be in charge?)
2. The **business concept** (Is there a market for this product or service?)
3. The **profitability** (Does it make money?)
4. The **support network** (Is the support in place for all aspects of business?)

STEP 2: FEASIBILITY STUDY

- Add Micro Enterprise goal to PCP
- Determine target market
- Make products and sell them
- (or) provide service for a fee
- Calculate hourly wage →
- If under minimum wage re-evaluate
- Upon positive results move to STEP 3

Support Team Meeting #2
Expanding Natural Supports

Feasibility: Is it profitable?

Sales – Expenses = Profit

Profit _____ = **Hourly Wage of**
Total Hours _____ **at least \$10.00**

Expenses: All costs directly related to the sales of the product or service

STEP 3: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Write the business plan
- Submit to Micro Enterprise Specialists for approval
- Work with the Micro Enterprise Specialist to receive your micro loan (if requested)
- Start the business

Support Team Meeting #3
Celebrating Business Startup

The Micro Enterprise Program celebrates individuals' abilities by creating support networks which empower each person to attain their highest level of independence, generate income, and become a part of the communities they live in.

Support Team Meeting Outcomes for Micro Enterprise Development

Long term goals:

- Expand natural supports
- Connect the business to the community
- Move the business toward independence

Support Team Meeting #1: Understanding the ME Process

- Meet with core group of people that are actively involved in the Micro Enterprise
- Ensure that the business concept is person-centered
- Develop understanding of the ME process
- Identify all people that should be part of the support team and expand natural supports
- Identify individual and support network strengths, abilities, interests, and limitations

Support Team Meeting #2: Expanding Natural Supports

- Meet with all direct and natural supports
- Work through the person-centered strategic planning process (or use the PATH person centered planning process)
- Create an action plan to clearly establish roles in the business
- Identify ways of connecting the business to the community

Support Team Meeting #3: Celebrating Business Startup

- Celebrate business startup
- Business independence

Sources for the ME Process:

- Standard small business development practices based on trainings through the Small Business Administration and the **Small Business Development Centers**, including local training by the GVSU MI Small Business & Technology Development Center.
- Supported Self-Employment 101: A Handbook for Getting Started. Developed by **Michigan Department of Community Health** Office of Long Term Care Support and Services with the lead design and editing provided by Michigan State University. Projects for Community Inclusion. August 2007.
- The Self-Employment Option: An Introductory Guide to Microenterprise for Individuals with Disabilities. Developed by C. Griffin, D. Hammis, and T. Geary for **CARF International** Employment and Community Services. 2005.
- Make a Difference: A Guidebook for Person-Centered Direct Support. By John O'Brien and Beth Mount. Inclusion Press. 2005.
- Group Process for expanding the support team based on
 - The principles of strategic planning, systems thinking, and the win-win approach of Miller Heiman consultation and training; developed by Chuck Saur
 - Appreciative Inquiry group process developed by David Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University with local training by John Victory of Agile-enterprise Group, LLC