



Technology-Enhanced Vocational Social Skills Training for Students with Disabilities

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Advances in technology have eliminated many traditional forms of employment, creating a labor market with a focus on jobs that require social interaction (Deming, 2015). Employees need to possess strong social skills to be successful in the current job market. Unfortunately, many students with disabilities lack the necessary social skills to successfully interact with employers, co-workers and the general public.

Social skills instruction is a widely used evidence-based transition practice to prepare students for post-school employment, education, and community involvement (Lewis & Sugai, 2012). A student's current level of skills, including social skills needed for employment, are assessed as part of their transition assessment. If the assessment results show that the student is lacking one or more of these skills, then social skills instruction is included in the IEP/transition plan.

An evidence base supporting the use of mobile technology to assist students with disabilities in acquiring academic, communication, and social/emotional skills is rapidly developing (Cumming & Draper Rodriguez, 2017). Incorporating mobile technology into social skills instruction will increase students' involvement in their learning and may also provide motivation for them to participate more fully. There is much evidence to support the use of video modelling and video self-modelling to promote the development of students' prosocial and vocational skills. Social skills instruction typically involves having students practice the skill using role play, so bearing this in mind, this presentation focuses upon implementing video self-modelling to teach vocational social skills.

This presentation will provide teachers with a research to practice approach to technologically enhanced vocational social skills instruction. A brief summary of the evidence to support the practice will be given, then participants will receive a detailed explanation of how to incorporate mobile technology into vocational social skills training.