

Five Steps in the Transition Assessment Process

Transition assessments are the building blocks of high-quality transition plans. The process includes gathering information about a student's needs to plan, evaluate, and make decisions. It is a multi-year process that requires both time and planning to allow for assessment through self-awareness, career awareness, exploration, preparation, and training to confirm interests. The five steps below will guide educators in uncovering the instruction and supports needed for a successful transition from high school to postsecondary environments.

Step 1: Gather Existing Data

Begin the transition assessment process by gathering existing data on the student. Collect data on the student's strengths, preferences, interests, and needs (SPIN). Identify how the student's SPIN relates to academic and functional performance, careers, and the demands of work. Conduct record reviews, examine observation data, and review previous assessment results. Involve a variety of collaborators in gathering data.

Collaborators include:

- Students
- Families
- Educators
- School counselors
- Related service providers
- Service agency providers
- Employers

Step 2: Identify Assessment Needs and Assess

Next, identify assessment methods and tools. These must assist the student's team in answering the following questions:

- What is the student's current level of academic and functional performance?
- What are the student's goals after high school? This includes goals for employment, education/training, and living arrangements.
- What support does the student need to achieve these goals?

Choose formal and informal tools and assessments that will provide information about a student's SPIN related to employment and future education/training. Collect this information throughout the year.

Step 3: Analyze Data

Review and analyze the data collected with the student and the IEP team. Assist the student in developing a vision for what life after high school will look like. Identify the skills, activities, and experiences the student will need to achieve this vision. This information will also help inform instructional decisions. Document the information in the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance. Then, develop measurable postsecondary goals related to employment, education/training, and independent living.

Step 4: Determine and Coordinate Transition Services

Use the student's SPIN to identify services and supports the student needs to meet the postsecondary goals. Transition services and activities should be coordinated by the student's team. They should develop a student's knowledge, skills, or progress toward their postsecondary goals. Home, school, and community providers should collaborate to plan and share activities.

Provide activities in the following areas:

- Instruction
- Related services
- Community experiences
- Development of employment and post-school adult living objectives
- Acquisition of daily living skills
- Functional vocational evaluation

Step 5: Instruct and Evaluate

Provide instruction and the opportunity for students to complete the coordinated activities. Students will learn and practice the skills they will need to reach post-school goals. Evaluate frequently as it is natural for a student's transition plan to evolve over time.

Conclusion

The transition assessment process requires time, planning, and collaboration. By utilizing the five steps outlined, educators can identify student strengths, needs, and goals. Then, teams can determine which coordinated activities will help students reach those goals. Using assessment data as the building blocks, teams can build a strong foundation for successful transition.

For detailed information about this process, view CTI's [Transition Assessment Process: A Guide for Developing Postsecondary Goals and Transition Service](#).