

Background

Brother Andre's Café employs individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The café strives to address the **current inequities** in the workforce:

- According to The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024), **22.5% of people with disabilities** were employed in 2023
- Common barriers to finding meaningful employment for people with disabilities are linked to stigma, discrimination, and inaccessible environments (Lindsay et al., 2019)

A needs assessment **identified a gap in the training and onboarding process** and deemed it necessary to create a system to support the café's expansion to a second location.

Objective 1

Develop an onboarding and training process for volunteers/staff

Objective 2

Develop an onboarding and training process for employees

Methods

Module topics were determined through **observations** and support staff/volunteer input.

The **ConnectTeam** online platform houses the modules and materials, allowing for digitalization of all resources for ease of access.

Physical on-site **resource buckets** were developed to supplement these modules.

Employees, Volunteers/Staff were trained on how to use materials to **support continued employment.**

Phase 1: Initial Qualtrics survey distribution and administration, Observations

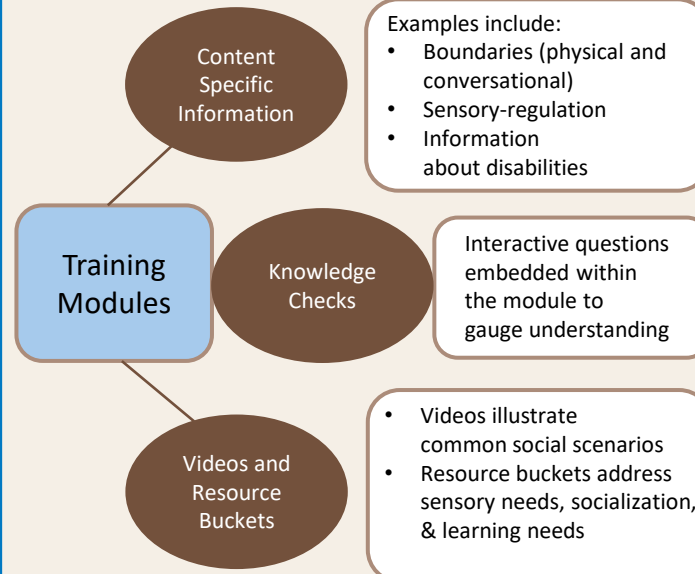
Phase 2: Creation of training materials: modules, scripts and skits, and resource buckets

Phase 3: Training and dissemination of materials; Final data collection

Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and their support staff should be given multi-modal training to succeed in the workplace.

Materials Created

14 multi-modal modules were created for both employees with IDD and the volunteers/staff who support them.



- Examples include:
- Boundaries (physical and conversational)
 - Sensory-regulation
 - Information about disabilities

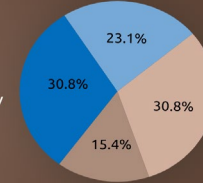
Interactive questions embedded within the module to gauge understanding

- Videos illustrate common social scenarios
- Resource buckets address sensory needs, socialization, & learning needs

Results

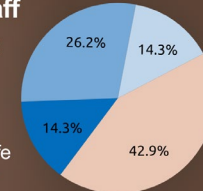
Employee Pre-Survey:

"I need help with my job tasks"



Volunteer/Staff Pre-Survey:

"I refer to the educational resources at the café when I need help"



Post-Data Quotes

"To have expansion, you need a **uniform training approach**; without it, I don't think we could expand. We wanted to create a replicable model for others to implement. Especially as we open our second location, it is hugely **integral to our growth!**"

"Different employees, whether neurodivergent or not, learn in different ways...this **multi-modal information** can be **disseminated quickly, effectively**, and we will prioritize utilizing it so we can use the training and growth we are hoping for."

Discussion

Key Implications

Employees need resources to apply skills learned at café into future careers

Barriers/Limitations

Validity of employee survey responses; Prioritization of café operations

Future Directions

Café is opening a 2nd location; Project will be sustained by onsite OT

Acknowledgements

Gratitude is extended to the employees, volunteers, and support staff at Brother Andre's Café, as well as the broader Divine Mercy Parish community, for their support throughout the execution of this project. A special thanks goes to our site mentor, Bridgette Pepmeyer OTR/L and our faculty mentor, Ann Marsico, CsCD, MOT, OTR/L, for their continued guidance.

References

