

# The Self-Determined Career Development Model

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## ***What is the Self-Determined Career Development Model?***

The *Self-Determined Career Development Model (SDCDM)* was developed to support adult job and career outcomes, particularly for adults receiving vocational rehabilitation (VR) services (Wehmeyer, Lattimore, Jorgensen, Palmer, Thompson, & Schumaker, 2003). It was created to enhance the capacity of community service providers to enable persons with disabilities to obtain the careers and jobs they want. The SDCDM is based on an instructional model, The *Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI)* ([www.beachcenter.org](http://www.beachcenter.org)), is designed to teach students to become more self-determined. The SDLMI is a teaching model that allows teachers and students to develop and use self-directed goal setting and problem solving skills to set educational goals. The model's three-phase process allows teachers to support students to learn self-direction skills and goal attainment.

The SDCDM, like the SDLMI, is a self-directed, three-phase instructional process that enables a facilitator (who is similar to the teacher) to support individuals in identifying and choosing goals they wish to achieve. The models are identical in organization and function. They both support individuals' capacities to self-regulate problem solving and achieve goals. The primary difference between the two is that the SDLMI focuses specifically on transition goals and the SDCDM focuses on job and career related goals for adults.

## ***The Three Phases of the SDCDM***

Youth are supported through each of the three instructional phases by answering four means-end questions that are steps inherent in a problem solving process. The four questions are different in each phase but represent identical steps in the problem-solving process. The questions remain consistent in intent and across instructional

situations so that the individual learns the means-end approach. In essence, as individuals are answering the questions in each phase, they must: (a) identify the problem, (b) identify potential solutions to the problem, (c) identify barriers to solving the problem, and (d) identify the consequences of each solution. As youth move through each of the phases, they are encouraged to review their own needs through the question and answering process. Facilitators are encouraged to help youth think about the questions, clarify what each question means, and determine what needs to happen in order to reach their goals.

In **Phase 1**, youth answer questions to solve the problem “What are my career or job goals?” The four problem solving questions are:

- (1) What career and job do I want?
- (2) What do I know about it now?
- (3) What must change for me to get the job and career I want?
- (4) What can I do to make this happen?

The solution to the problem in this phase (What is my goal?), leads to the next phase.

In **Phase 2**, the problem to solve is “What is my plan?” The four problem-solving questions are:

- (5) What actions can I take to reach my career or employment goal?
- (6) What could keep me from taking this action?
- (7) What can I do to remove these barriers?
- (8) When will I take action?

The outcome from youth answering the questions in this phase is that they develop an action plan to address the goal set in Phase 1. Youth then design a self-monitoring strategy to track their progress toward that goal. These outcomes lead to the third phase.

In **Phase 3** the problem to solve is “What have I achieved?”

The four problem-solving questions are:

- (9) What actions have I taken?
- (10) What barriers have been removed?
- (11) What has changed to enable me to get the job and career I want?
- (12) Have I achieved what I wanted to achieve?

Youth use the information they gather from the questions to self-monitor their progress, self-assess their progress toward the goal and, if needed, revise the action plan or goal accordingly.

□ **Facilitator Objectives** are provided to assist facilitators in enabling youth to work through the questions by scaffolding instruction, direct teaching, or collaborating with individuals. They are intermediate steps that help generate information on individual preferences, interests and skills. Facilitators should consider these objectives as strategies when discussing with youth their interests, goals, identifying a plan for goal attainment, setting up plans, identifying barriers, and achieving their goals.

□ The **Employment Supports** are supplemental skill development materials and cover a variety of topics including interests, skills, self-awareness, choice making, problem solving, and self evaluation. The supports are designed to be self-directed instructional packages for youth and provide another means of teaching youth to “teach themselves.” Choosing specific employment supports depends upon individual need and on what phase of the model an individual is working. Depending on the individual, youth may learn to use the employment supports with minimal direct teaching of the skills by facilitators. Some youth, however, may require facilitators to continue providing direct instruction throughout the model.

## ***Phase 1: Self-Determined Career Development Model***

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### **Problem to Solve: What are my career and job goals?**

#### **Question 1: What career and job do I want?**

Objectives:

1. Enable person to identify career/job preferences/interests/beliefs/values.
2. Enable person to identify strengths and needs related to jobs/careers.
3. Enable and support person to prioritize career and jobs options and select preferred option(s).

#### **Question 2: What do I know about it now?**

Objectives:

1. Enable person to identify his or her current status in relation to prioritized job and career option(s).
2. Enable person to identify knowledge/skills/needs of job/career option.
3. Assist person to gather information about opportunities and barriers in their environments pertaining to prioritized job and career option(s).

#### **Question 3: What must change for me to get the job and career I want?**

Objectives:

1. Support person to prioritize needs related to job/career preference(s).
2. Enable person to choose primary need and decide if action needs to be focused toward capacity building, modifying the environment or both

#### **Question 4: What can I do to make this happen?**

Objectives:

1. Teach person to state a long term career goal, a short term employment goal, and objectives to reach short term employment goals.

#### **Phase 1 Employment Supports**

- Communication Instruction,
- Awareness Training,
- Self-Assessment of job or career preferences and abilities,
- Career and job exploration,
- Job Shadowing and Sampling,
- Organizational Skills Training,
- Problem Solving Instruction,
- Choice-Making Instruction,
- Decision-Making Instruction, and
- Goal-Setting Instruction.

## Phase 2: Self-Determined Career Development Model

### *Problem to Solve: What is my plan?*

#### **Question 5: What actions can I take to reach my career or employment goal?**

Objectives:

1. Enable person to identify alternatives to achieve career/employment goal.
2. Assist person to gather information on consequences of alternatives.
3. Enable person to select best action alternatives.

#### **Question 6: What could keep me from taking action?**

Objectives:

1. Support person to identify barriers to implementing action alternatives.
2. Support person to identify actions to remove barriers.

#### **Question 7: What can I do to remove these barriers?**

Objectives:

1. Assist person in identifying appropriate employment supports to implement selected action alternative
2. Teach person knowledge/skills needed to implement selected supports.

#### **Question 8: When will I take action?**

Objectives:

1. Enable person to determine schedule for action plan to remove barriers and implement supports.
2. Support and enable person to implement the action plan.
3. Enable person to self-monitor their progress.

#### **Phase 2 Employment Supports**

- Exploration of community resource and support,
- Problem solving instruction,
- Self-scheduling training,
- Self-instruction training,
- Picture-cue training,
- Decision-Making Instruction,
- Self-Advocacy Instruction,
- Assertiveness training, and
- Self-Monitoring Instruction.

## Phase 3: Self-Determined Career Development Model

### ***Problem to Solve: What have I achieved?***

#### **Question 9: What actions have I taken?**

Objectives:

1. Enable person to self-evaluate and articulate progress toward goal.

#### **Question 10: What barriers have been removed?**

Objectives:

1. Assist person to compare progress with their desired outcomes.

#### **Question 11: What has changed to enable me to get the job and career I want?**

Objectives:

1. Support person to re-evaluate goal if progress is insufficient
2. Assist person to decide if goal remains the same or changes
3. Collaborate with person to identify if the action plan is adequate or inadequate given revised or retained goal
4. Assist person to change action plan if necessary.

#### **Question 12: Have I achieved what I want to achieve?**

Objectives:

1. Enable person to decide if progress is adequate, inadequate, or if goal has been achieved.
2. If this goal has been achieved, enable person to decide if a different goal is needed to achieve their employment or career goals.

### **Phase 3 Employment Supports**

- Self-Evaluation Instruction

## ***Organizing a Group***

You will want to convene a planning meeting with staff such as, the educational advocate, peer counselling specialist, vocational counsellor, parents, and any other individuals you feel support youth in making employment decisions. Designing the SDCCDM meetings should be a collaborative effort with school personnel such as the transition specialist and CIL staff in order to create a joint vision for supporting the youth.

The SDCCDM emphasizes career and employment goals, so you should consider enlisting youth who are interested and serious about exploring work related goals. In one study conducted with youth with emotional and behavioral disabilities, youth were recruited by the school principal. He recruited individuals he thought were ready to select and employ job-related goals. Consider basing your decision on youth who are interested in learning how to set goals, willing to work on job-related goals, and prepared to commit time to working through the model.

Options for recruiting youth for the SDCCDM might include hanging up or passing out flyers at school, making announcements or putting up posters at school, posting information in local recreation or community centers, and asking teachers about likely candidates. For example, school personnel can hang up or pass out flyers in class and other areas where youth congregate, announcements can be made at the school or phone calls could be made directly to youth.

The agenda for this first meeting should include a discussion of the function of the SDCCDM and the process that the youth will follow through each of the phases. Facilitators should explain to youth that the model will help them: (1) become better problem solvers, (2) learn to set goals and make decisions based on employment interests and (3) learn new things (Palmer & Wehmeyer, 2002). Youth should be encouraged to think about what they want for themselves as an employee or volunteer worker and some of the goals they hope to accomplish. These goals can be both long-term and short-term goals. For example, a long-term goal could be a youth indicating

that she wants to own her own dance studio. A short-term goal, on the other hand, could be supporting an individual in learning how to interview for a job. Whatever the goal may be, listen carefully to the youth so that you get a good idea of how you will utilize the employment supports.

Ideally, you should have a facilitator working one-to-one with youth. In addition, facilitators are responsible for instructing activities, structuring the meetings, and maintaining the organization of weekly meetings. Consider having district personnel (e.g., teachers or paraprofessionals) or individuals who may already know the youth as facilitators as well. It is also possible to have a mentor (a successful peer or adult with similar career interests, disabilities, or recreational interests) act as a facilitator.

Consider when and how often you will meet. In one project, the youth met individually with their facilitator for 11 weeks, three times a week in 30-minute sessions. Other groups have met once a week anywhere from 6-8 weeks in duration, so there is flexibility when implementing the model. In regard to deciding how often and long the group will meet, you might run into a few limitations since many of the youth attend school during the day. You should think about what might affect the meeting times, for example, participation in after school activities, hours of local transportation, and distance to the location of the meeting. Also, if the meetings are scheduled for the evening hours, consider the safety issues such as travelling alone at night.

The location where the meetings are held should be a comfortable, accessible, and safe setting so that the youth are encouraged to participate in the meetings. The space should be large enough for both the facilitator and youth to work comfortably. The type of activities conducted by the two will also influence spatial needs. Do you need a projector, stage, desks or writing surfaces? You also want to take into account meeting spaces with which the youth are familiar such as a schoolroom or library.

Transportation to and from the meetings should also be considered if the location is not within walking distance for youth. It might be possible to arrange for the district bussing

if school district personnel are involved. Another option is public transportation if it is safe, affordable, and accessible for the youth.

Establish some basic guidelines or rules that you believe are important for individual youth to follow. Some examples are: (1) leave the room neat and clean, (2) turn off the lights, and (3) make sure the doors are locked. Allow youth the opportunity to develop the more specific group rules (discussed in “Second Meeting”).

### **Points to Consider**

- **Youth with lesser self-determination skills and youth with less experience with the model will require more preparation and more time working through the model.**
- **Youth who experience difficulty making choices and making decisions may find this model particularly relevant to their needs.**
- **Ask open-ended questions while working through the model so you can obtain a greater depth of information from the youth.**
- **Use active listening skills and repeat answers back to youth to clarify meaning and understanding.**
- **Monitor youth activities carefully so that you know that they understand each question (and consequently each phase) of the model.**

### ***How Do I Implement the SDCDM?***

The SDCDM has been implemented with adults as well as youth on an individual basis. That is, one facilitator supporting one individual in meeting sessions. This is not to say that the model cannot be implemented in a group setting. For example, the SDLMI, the model upon which the SDCDM is based, is implemented at the classroom level, depending on the ability level of the students and the size of the classroom. A general

word of caution is warranted in that some individuals need more preparation and support in working through the model, especially the first few times. By facilitating the sessions on a 1-1 basis, you can ensure that individual youth will receive the attention they need working through the process of the model.

The following material contains a step-by-step description of implementing the SDCDM. We have included examples from a group of youth who previously have worked through the model. In addition, sample responses for each question will be provided. Individual goals will vary from youth to youth. The goals your youth choose may be different due to many factors, for example, their age, interest in working, and skill level. Despite any differences, you may find the examples useful.

During the first meeting, the facilitator will want to discuss the function and process of the SDCDM. In general, youth will gain an understanding of how the model will assist them in learning how to problem solve through setting, implementing, and achieving their own employment-related goals. The facilitator should review some the basic concepts of the model by providing a more cursory explanation of: (1) the facilitator's role, (2) problem solving and (3) goal setting.

- **Facilitator's Role:** The facilitator's role is to support the youth in working through the model by providing direction and clarification when necessary. The facilitator allows youth to self-direct learning and make decisions based on their own values, interests and beliefs.
- **Problem Solving:** Problem solving is a skill that allows a person to identify barriers to a goal, generate a number of solutions and implement solutions to change, evaluate the outcome that recognizes alternative if the person were to do it again.
- **Goal Setting:** Goals are something that an individual wants but does not have. A goal represents the discrepancy between where a person is and where a person wants to be. Goals are established by the youth with support from the facilitator.

Initially, it may be good to focus on a single goal so youth can direct their time and efforts to learning the process and function of the model. The facilitator can encourage the development of multiple, concurrent goals as youth become more proficient with the model. The number of concurrent goals will depend upon the youth. Similarly, it is important to encourage reasonable or fairly quickly attainable goals until youth are accustomed to the model and have experienced some success. All goals need to be important to the youth but complexity will depend upon the youth and circumstances. If initial goals are difficult and complex, the facilitator may have to help the youth restructure the goal so that the youth will have the opportunity to work on it and achieve it a timely manner. Early success in goal attainment will help encourage youth to take on more complex, long-term goals.

For the second meeting (if you have a small or large group) allow youth the opportunity to take ownership of the group. They can decide the (1) name of the group, (2) rules for the group, and (3) food and drink preferences. An example of group rules for a larger group might include (but is not limited to) the following:

### **Example Group Rules**

- 1. Be considerate of others.**
- 2. Don't speak while others are speaking.**
- 3. Whatever is discussed in the group stays in the group.**
- 4. Respect your facilitator and your peers: arrive on time and be prepared.**
- 5. Give constructive feedback to your peers.**
- 6. Work hard.**
- 7. No name calling, racial slurs, or derogatory comments.**
- 8. Respect others' property.**

There may be other aspects of the group for which the youth can assume responsibility. If they can assume as much control as possible over aspects of the group, they will gain a better understanding of the empowerment that occurs with being self-determined. If

you are working with only one person, you can still encourage him or her to develop guidelines and rules that are suitable for the type of session that you are accomplishing. For example, guidelines that are more empowering to the individual might be considered: (1) I will work hard, (2) I will complete my tasks during the week, and (3) I will respect the facilitator and arrive on time etc.

## ***Phase I***

### ***Question 1: What career and job do I want?***

One of the goals of the first question is for the youth and the facilitator to explore desired outcomes, identify the skills needed (and what the youth needs to do) to reach the outcome. Initially, youth may have very broad goals and may have difficulty narrowing down their focus. First, youth should be encouraged to identify what they have already learned and the facilitator should spend enough time with the youth so that they can explore their strengths and abilities. It is important for youth to reflect upon and assess their experiences so that they can more easily identify their abilities and skill areas they need to improve. This also provides the facilitator with information upon which he or she can build. For example, having youth discuss former work or volunteer experiences might give the facilitator and the youth more ideas from which to base a goal.

Remember that the questions serve as the foundation of the model. The facilitator and youth should actively discuss each of the questions under Phase 1, their meaning, and the goal setting and problem solving processes of the model. Actively listening to the youth during these discussions will allow the facilitator to support the youth in learning how to work through the model. We have provided sample questions and responses to guide you through the explanations of each of the questions and objectives.

**Objective 1.** Enable person to communicate career and job related preferences, interests, beliefs, and values.

**Sample Facilitator Statement:** *Tell me about some of the things you like to do.*

**Sample Participant Responses:**

*I like being around children and teaching them things like reading and writing  
I love to design websites.*

**Objective 2.** Enable person to identify and communicate strengths and needs as they relate to specific jobs and related careers.

**Facilitator:** *Can you give me examples of some of some of your experiences?  
What are some of your strengths in these areas?*

**Participant:** *I have some experience. I have babysat for five years.  
I am not so strong in writing skills.  
My computer experience is all self-taught. I would need to take web design  
courses.*

**Objective 3.** Enable and support person to prioritize career and jobs options and select preferred option(s).

**Facilitator:** *If you had to choose what you like best, what would it be and what  
would be the reason for your decision?*

**Participant:** *I have already completed coursework in early childhood education.  
I have worked with children longer than I have computers.  
I don't want to be in a job sitting all day long. I prefer a job where I am around  
people and children.*

**Question 2: What do I know about it now?**

In question 1, youth have considered what they feel their strengths are and have prioritized them by which ones they feel are most important in reaching their goal. These are the “needs” that are the basis for the answers in Question # 2. Question # 2 guides youth to think about what they already know about the goal (their current status in relation to the goal) and to identify if opportunities and barriers exist. By working through this question, the facilitator may gain more understanding about how much instruction the youth will need. For example, a youth might already have two “Early Childhood Education (ECE)” units completed, indicating that he or she might need less instruction in reaching a goal of working with children than a youth who has never worked with children or taken coursework.

**Objective 1:** Enable person to identify his or her current status in relation to prioritized job and career option(s).

**Facilitator:** *Where are you now in relation to your goal? What have you accomplished that has helped you?*

**Participant:** *I have completed two childcare courses, giving me 6 ECE units toward an assistant teacher position.  
I babysat children for over 5 years and have references in that area.*

**Objective 2:** Enable person to identify knowledge/skills/needs of job/career option.

**Facilitator:** *What are some of the skills you need to perform this job?*

**Participant:** *I learned how to prepare a few lessons.  
I know how to work with parents.  
I need to learn more writing skills so I can write better lesson plans, letters to parents, reports etc.*

**Objective 3:** Assist person to gather information about opportunities and barriers in their environments pertaining to prioritized job and career option(s).

**Facilitator:** *What are some obstacles or barriers that would keep you from performing this job?*

**Participant:** *I still need to finish a few more courses to get ECE certification.  
I need to improve my writing skills so I should take a course.*

### **Question 3: What must change for me to get the job and career I want?**

This question supports youth in selecting a particular need by prioritizing all of the needs related to their job or career goal. Facilitators can assist youth by guiding them to weigh all of the possible options and potential solutions and then selecting the priority need. Once the priority need is selected, facilitators may need to instruct in additional skills or support in removing existing barriers.

**Objective 1:** Support person to prioritize needs related to job/career preference(s).

**Facilitator:** *Can you think of some things that you might need to work on in order to do this job? Which of those things do you see as a priority?*

**Participant:** *I need to work on my writing skills.  
I need to enroll in and complete 2 more courses.*

**Objective 2:** Enable person to choose primary need and decide if action needs to be focused toward capacity building, modifying the environment or both.

**Facilitator:** *Of the needs you thought of, which one do you want to choose to work on? Do you need more skills in this area?*

**Participant:** *I will explore how I can become a better writer because it will benefit me on many different levels.*

In this example, the facilitator did not need to instruct the youth in additional skills or acquisition of knowledge. The youth indicated that she needed to improve her writing skills because she knew she would need these skills for writing lesson plans, letters home to parents, and reports. The youth and facilitator weighed the options and recognized that she needed these skills not only for her job but that stronger writing skills would benefit her in other aspects of her life.

#### **Question # 4: What can I do to make this happen?**

The final question in Phase 1 provides the incentive for youth to develop a goal statement and the criteria necessary for achieving that goal. This needs statement is the precursor to the goal statement but serves as the foundation for Phase 2 and Phase 3 questions. Youth will use the statement in Question # 4 to create their action plan. It may be useful for the facilitator to provide instruction on how to write measurable goals, how to identify the steps that lead to the goal, and how to specify the criteria for determining progress toward the goal.

**Objective 1:** Teach person to state career/employment goals/objectives.

**Facilitator:** *Now that we have identified these other needs, what is your goal? Can you tell me some steps you will need to perform to reach this goal?*

**Participant:** *I will explore different avenues to improve my writing.*

Facilitators should keep in mind that individual youth will work through the phase at different rates so there is no standard for how long it takes someone to answer each of the questions. In summary, the means-end sequence of questions in the first phase lead youth to solve the problem “What is my plan?” in the second phase.

## **Phase 2**

The final question in Phase 1 prompts youth to identify their goal more closely and develop the statement that will lead them into their Phase 2 action plan. In Phase 2, youth determine their current status with regard to their goal. Their plan of action might include learning a new skill or modifying the environment to best suit the youth achieving his or her goal. Their plan of action becomes their learning plan. The role of the facilitator is critical here as many youth may not be aware of the particular skills they need or the specific instructional strategies needed to reach their goals. The action plan is designed by the youth and the facilitator serves as a support in the problem-solving process during this time. Ideally, the youth directs his or her learning plan and engages in self-directed learning strategies (e.g., self-scheduling, self-instruction, antecedent cue regulation) the facilitator's role is to support youth during these self-directed learning opportunities, to inform youth of options that exist in each phase, and to assist in identifying the best alternatives. Facilitators should always keep in mind that the function of the model is to enhance youth abilities to become causal agents in their own lives.

**Objective 1:** Enable person to identify alternatives to achieve career/employment goal.

**Facilitator:** *Think of and tell me some different ways that you could reach this goal.*

**Participant:** *I could have a friend show me how to write better.  
I could practice writing more.*

**Objective 2:** Assist person in gathering information on consequences of alternatives.

**Facilitator:** *Will these alternatives always work for you? What are some things that could happen if you choose to do it?*

**Participant:** *Writing more might not help me, I need to understand the basics of writing.  
My friend may or may not be a strong writer himself.*

**Objective 3:** Enable person to select best action alternatives.

**Facilitator:** *Let's discuss each of the alternatives. Which one is best for you?*

**Participant:** *I will call my school counselor and ask him to help me find a course at a junior college or something.*

### **Question 6: What could keep me from taking action?**

This question addresses the barriers and obstacles that might accompany the goal the youth has chosen. Identifying barriers (or problems) is an important part of the problem solving process because all individuals must learn to discover alternative solutions to a problem. Additionally, the youth is prompted to create ways to eliminate or remove barriers and bridge the gap between where the youth is currently and where he or she would like to be.

**Objective1:** Support person to identify barriers to implementing action alternatives.

**Facilitator:** *Can you think of some barriers that might interfere with your goal?  
Can you think of barriers that go along with or are associated with your goal?*

**Participant:** *I have no one to help me with my school work in case I have difficulties.  
Transportation may be an issue.  
Cost may also be an issue.*

**Objective 2:** Support person to identify actions to remove barriers.

**Facilitator:** *What do you think are some of the things that you can do to remove the barriers?*

**Participant:** *I can ask a classmate to work with me.  
I can take public transportation.  
I can ask about assistance through youth disability services.*

### **Question 7: What can I do to remove these barriers?**

This question calls youth to think about the types of supports they might need in achieving their goals. Again, some youth might require very little assistance in identifying employment supports while others may require the facilitator to instruct them

in specific skills and content areas. Another objective of this question is to support youth in learning youth-directed learning strategies.

**Objective 1:** Assist person in identifying appropriate employment supports to implement selected action alternative.

**Facilitator:** *Let's review some of these employment supports together. What are some other skills that you need and that you can build to reach your goal? Which of these supports seem like they would be helpful to you?*

**Objective 2:** Teach person knowledge/skills needed to implement selected supports.

### **Question 8: When will I take action?**

The fourth and final question under Phase 2 prompts youth to come up with a time frame for implementing the action plan. They must also design a self-monitoring plan to track and regulate their own progress. Youth should think about how much time per week they will work on their goal. Facilitators should consider using something like a calendar or activity book that serves as a visual reminder for the youth. Taken together, these four questions help youth to answer the problem posed in Phase 2, "What Is My Plan?"

**Objective 1:** Enable person to determine schedule for action plan to remove barriers and implement supports.

**Facilitator:** *In order to achieve this action plan, what tasks or duties are priorities for you? When will you get these things completed? Let's come up with a schedule that will assist you in implementing this plan.*

**Participant:** *I will call my school counselor on Monday and make an appointment to meet with him.*

**Objective 2:** Support and enable person to implement the action plan.

**Facilitator:** *What are some things you can do to help you move forward with the plan?*

**Participant:** *I will write down all of my questions and write down all of his answers.*

**Objective 3:** Enable person to self-monitor their progress.

**Facilitator:** *How will you know if you are making progress toward your goal? Let's determine ways that you will keep track of what you are doing and the things that bring you closer to achieving your goal.*

**Participant:** *I will write down my tasks and duties on the checklist. Once I complete them, I will check them off. I will look at what I have accomplished on a daily basis to keep myself better informed.*

The SDCCDM is recursive so if at any time (while asking and answering the questions) youth do not have a clear understanding of what they are doing, they should be encouraged to go back through the model and review the previous questions. In addition, if youth have not taken any action toward their goal, the facilitator and youth may need to review the process of the model and any questions or clarifications the youth may have.

## ***Phase 3***

### ***Problem to Solve: What have I achieved?***

This phase allows youth to self-evaluate progress toward their goals, which is critical to learning how to set goals. This phase is particularly important as it focuses greatly on youth's evaluating their progress and actions and determining if their actions or goals need revising. It helps youth to become more self-aware of their growth and progress within the model and subsequently, goal attainment. Facilitators should collaborate with youth and examine all of the information they have gathered and compare it to the initial information and criteria set for goal attainment.

### **Question 9: What actions have I taken?**

Youth should review with the facilitator what actions they have taken and what they have been monitoring.

**Objective 1:** Enable person to self-evaluate and articulate progress toward a goal.

**Facilitator:** *Let's review some of the steps you have taken to achieve your goal. How did these steps help you?*

**Participant:** *I met with my school counselor about locating a writing course. I wrote down all of the information about the writing course and met with the course instructor. She explained that I can get additional help with the work so I signed up for the course.*

### **Question 10: What barriers have been removed?**

In this question, youth are encouraged to identify the barriers that have been removed and initiate the evaluation of progress toward the goal. This question prompts the youth to recognize if they are meeting their goals and, if not, what they need to change to do so. If youth have removed some of the barriers they listed in the first phase, it should be listed here. For example, this youth felt that she would have a difficult time with the coursework so she identified that in question # 6. She removed this barrier by discussing the issue with the instructor. Furthermore, the youth plans on following up with that discussion and obtaining more information from an assistant or tutor.

**Objective 1:** Assist person to compare progress with their desired outcomes.

**Facilitator:** *Let's compare the progress you have made with the goal you want to achieve. What else can you do?*

**Participant:** *I will meet with the instructor again to determine accommodations and additional support needs (e.g., a tutor). Vocational Rehabilitation is covering the cost of this course. I will ride public transportation to the community college.*

### **Question 11: What has changed to enable me to get the job and career I want?**

Question 11 encourages the youth to think about what has changed about their goal. This question leads youth to think about the process of achieving the goal. That is, where they were in the beginning, relative to the actions they took and where they are now.

**Objective 1:** Support person to re-evaluate goal if progress is insufficient.

**Facilitator:** *Can you review what progress you have made? Let's discuss what you have done so far.*

**Participant:** *I called my school counselor and obtained information. I met the class instructor to determine if the class was right for me.*

**Objective 2:** Assist person to decide if goal remains the same or changes

**Facilitator:** *Are you making progress on your goal? Do you feel satisfied with where you are now?*

**Participant:** *Yes, I am making progress on my goal*

**Objective 3:** Collaborate with person to identify if the action plan is adequate or inadequate given revised or retained goal.

**Facilitator:** *Given what you feel you have accomplished, what would you like to do? Is the plan working for you?*

**Participant:** *I will keep working toward this goal and keep the plan as it is.*

**Objective 4:** Assist person to change action plan if necessary.

**Facilitator:** *Do we need to change the plan? If so, what are some things you can do to change how you are trying to reach your goal? Let's review those things.*

**Participant:** *I do not need to change the action plan because I am progressing in my goal.*

### **Question 12: Have I achieved what I want to achieve?**

The final goal provides youth with the opportunity to decide whether or not the goal was reached. Youth evaluate the goal they have set for themselves and determine if they need to undertake another course of actions.

**Objective 1:** Enable person to decide if progress is adequate, inadequate, or if goal has been achieved.

**Facilitator:** *How do you feel about your progress so far? Are you satisfied? Would you like to make any changes?*

**Participant:** *Progress toward my goal is good. I am satisfied with what I have accomplished.*

**Objective 2:** If this goal has been achieved, enable person to decide if a different goal is needed to achieve their employment or career goals.

**Facilitator:** *Tell me some things you can do to keep yourself on track with your goal.*

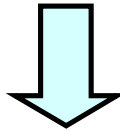
**Participant:** *I will meet with the instructor on a weekly basis to determine how I am progressing in the class.*

By asking this question, the youth is led to one of three conclusions: (1) My progress is adequate but I'm not quite there yet, (2) Progress is adequate and I have achieved my goal, (3) Progress has been inadequate and the goal has not been met.

Each of the three conclusions results in differing actions and facilitators should consider the following courses of action:

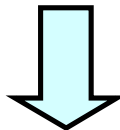
**1. Progress is adequate but I am not quite there yet.**

- Keep working on the current goal and current action plan and pick a date to repeat Phase 3.
- Revise action plan and return to Phase 1 if necessary. Implement Phases 1-3 accordingly.
- Return to Phase 2 to and revise action plan to implement new or revised strategies or to spend more time on implementation.



**2. Progress is adequate and I have achieved my goal.**

- Return to Phase 1 and select a new instructional need.
- Implement Phases 1 through 3.



**3. Progress has been inadequate.**

- Return to Phase 1 and select a new instructional need.
- Implement Phases 1 through 3.
- Return to Phase 1 and revise goal or criteria.

If the goal was met, facilitators should support youth in identifying another career-related goal and re-implementing phases 1 through 3.

If the goal is progressing but the youth needs more time, then the facilitator can work with the youth to revise the action plan and timeline. The youth should return to the beginning of Phase 3 to reevaluate progress.

If the goal was not met, facilitators should support youth in evaluating the utility of the goal in more detail, the criteria used to set the goal and the action plan that the youth implemented. Specifically, facilitators should guide youth into exploring why the goal was not accomplished (e.g., it was too general, too specific or the youth was not really interested in it), what the criteria were (e.g., fit well with goal, did not fit well with goal, too hard to measure) and, how the action plan should be adjusted (e.g., the timeline was too short, different criteria, or more skills instruction). Youth may need to revise their goals completely working through the phases completely or only slightly by returning to a previous phase and gaining clarification on a specific question. Part of the utility of the model is that it allows youth to take greater ownership of their goals and a larger role in their own learning processes.

### **Examples of Initial Activities**

There are three initial activities that are critical for youth to understand and should be implemented within the initial meetings (before Phase 1 begins). They are: (1) exploring individual interests, (2) exploring goals, and (3) exploring barriers or problems.

Facilitator discretion should determine at what place (in which meeting) to begin these activities. All three of the activities do not need to be implemented in a single session; they only need to be implemented before the Phases begin.

**The first activity should consist of the youth exploring their individual interests. Explain to them that interests are things that a person likes to do and that people have both similar and different interests. Ask the youth what they like to do after school, or what they like to do on weekends. You can make a chart of all the activities that the individual discusses. Allow youth various modes of communicating their interests for example, drawing, painting, performing a skit, or writing a poem.**

**The second activity should allow youth to explore “What is a Goal?” Explain to the youth that a goal is something that a person wants to learn or do. Discuss examples of goals and have youth relate these examples to their own lives. Use the interests that they developed in the previous activity as an example of explaining goals. For example, a youth might have stated that he is interested in fixing automobiles. A goal for this youth might be to visit a mechanic and learn more about the daily responsibilities of the job. Or another goal could be to find out what kind of education is required for this profession. This is a good way of illustrating how goals relate to interests.**

**Activity three consists of determining, “What is a Barrier or Problem?” Barriers are things that are in the way of reaching a goal and problems are related to the goal setting process (Palmer & Wehmeyer, 2002). Facilitators should encourage youth to talk about the barriers and problems that they face in their own lives and how those barriers have either made it difficult or kept them from getting what they want. For example, a barrier to going to medical school might be the cost each year. A problem one might face in becoming a doctor is not performing quite as well in science-based high school or college classes. Youth should be encouraged to provide their own examples. Remind them that problems are not necessarily bad things but are things that need to be worked out or changed.**

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