The Uniquely Abled Project

The Uniquely Abled Academy® Replication Guide

Element 2: Establish and Manage the Training Program

Exhibit 2.1NL: A Suggested Process for Establishing a Uniquely Abled Academy

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Note: Links have been deactivated in this public version.

Reference: *Element 2.1: A Suggested Process for Establishing a Uniquely Abled Academy*

This is a very high-level suggested outline for a process for establishing a Uniquely Abled Academy (UAA) for CNC machine operator training and placement. Anyone, e.g., a parent, and any organization, e.g., a company or non-profit, can be the "spark" that starts the process. It generally takes 6-12 months to establish a UAA from start to graduation of the first class.

The steps to establishing a UAA are described below. The UAA Replication Guide contains an extensive amount of information and resources on how to create and maintain a UAA.

Assumptions
- Training is for attendees with an autism diagnosis needing minimal support and for placement as entry-level CNC machine operators/machinists.

Determine Feasibility

The following Steps 1-4 are typically performed by Element Team 1 – Match the Individual to the Job.

1. Identify the target geographic area.
   a. Selection of a target geographic area should be based on a first estimate of the size of the target diagnosis population (level 1 autism) and of the demand for the target jobs (CNC operator). In general, one starts with a general target area, e.g., a city. Later, when a training facility is identified, a target area can be defined as a circle with radii not longer than a 1 hour travel time (by car or public transportation) from the training facility.
   b. Often young adults with autism are living with their parents, and thus the educational institution where the training will take place and the available jobs need to be within reasonable driving and public transportation access.

c. A target geographic area is typically no more than a 30-minute drive or 1-hour public transportation ride in diameter.

d. The target area generally includes the location of the family or organization planning to start the UAA. Thus, the target area may be modified as a Host School is identified.

2. Secure agreement with a Host School
   a. Identify and recruit an educational institution that will provide the training in CNC operation.
   b. The educational institution needs to be in the target geographic area.
   c. Identification can be done with a Google search, e.g., "CNC training in Glendale area". In California, many community colleges provide such training.
   d. Capabilities can be up to 10-15 trainees at a time, and ideally the CNC machines and instructors are available during the day. Some UAAs start with a cohort of 5-7. Most UAAs are 4-5 days/week, starting at 8 or 9am and ending 3 to 5pm to duplicate the industrial environment. The UAA training program generally lasts 13-16 weeks (equivalent to a college semester). The training personnel ratio is typically 5-1, e.g., a class of 15 would have one instructor and 2 teaching assistants.
   e. Ensure the cost of the training is not too high (since funding will be needed to ensure the program is free for the trainees).
   f. Enroll the head of the workforce training or CNC training at the educational institution in hosting a UAA. Their benefits include additional income and positive publicity.

3. Validate Demand
   a. Validate that there is a demand in the target geographic area for CNC machinists and operators.
   b. This can be done by a Google search, e.g., "CNC jobs in the Glendale area".
   c. You can also check with local companies who employ CNC machinists on the demand and availability of such jobs in the target area.
   d. Government and non-profit job placement organizations may also be a good source of information, e.g., Workforce Investment Boards and Job Centers.
   e. Ideally there are 100's of openings.

4. Validate Supply
   a. Validate that there is a sufficiently large population of individuals with an autism diagnosis requiring minimal support (the terms high functioning, Level 1, Asperger's, are also used) in the target geographic area.
   b. This can be done by checking with non-profit organizations and/or government agencies who serve those with autism.
   c. If you are a parent of an individual with autism, then you probably know

the organizations.

- d. Relevant non-profit organizations can be found by a Google search, e.g., "autism organizations in the Los Angeles area".
- e. The relevant government organizations are those oriented to supporting uniquely abled individuals. In California those include the Department of Rehabilitation and Regional Centers.
- f. A UAA graduates 20-40 entry level CNC machinists a year.

5. Hold Formation Team meeting.
    - a. A relatively small group suggests organizations for each Team to be invited to attend the first UAA Project Team meeting.
    - b. Decide on date of first UAA Project Team meeting and who is to invite each organization.
    - c. Recruit and finalize membership of **Element Team 2**.
        - i. Project Team Leader: leads the Project Team. Plans and moderates Project Team meetings.
        - ii. Host School representative (if not the same as the Project Team Leader)
        - iii. Social service organization representative
        - iv. Uniquely Abled Project representative
        - v. UAA Program Coordinator: point of contact for all applicants and students, manages all the applicant and student paperwork
        - vi. UAA Marketing Coordinator: accountable for marketing the UAA and recruiting activities for sessions, e.g., attends job fairs, prepares, and distributes flyers. Often same person as UAA Program Coordinator
        - vii. Administrative Support: makes sure Project Team Meetings notices are issued, etc.

        See *Element Team 2: Establishing and Managing the Training Program, Project Management*
    - d. Schedule Project Team Meetings (typically 2 hours every month until UAA is running smoothly). Note that it typically takes at least 6 months from first Project Team meeting to first UAA class.

6. Establish UAA Project Team

    The UAA Project Team is the group of individuals and organizations committed to establishing and operating a UAA. Each UAA is locally "owned" and independently operated and is designed for the local area.

    Distribute access to the UAA Replication Guide (on the UAP website) to all members of the UAA Project Team. The UAA Replication Guide, provides extensive information on the formation and operation of a UAA. In addition, the Uniquely Abled Project (UAP) provides coaching and consulting to licensed UAAs.

At the first UAA Project Team meeting, memberships for each of the following teams are established.

- **Element Team 3**: Marketing and Selecting Trainees Recruiting, Assessing and Selecting Students, Marketing & Communications
    a. Marketing and recruiting potential attendees, including open houses
    b. Selection of attendees
    c. Support for attendees filling out forms
    d. Record keeping
    e. On-boarding of attendees
    f. Graduation and Program Evaluation so the Recruiting function knows how things turn out and can adjust recruiting and communications.

- **Element Team 4**: Provide A Vocational Training Curriculum - Teaching and evaluating CNC and CMM Skills
    a. Based on Host School's existing courses, scheduled so all courses can be completed within a single semester.

- **Element Team 5**: Provie A Job Readiness Curriculum - Teaching and evaluating Job Readiness Skills
    a. Often called "soft skills"
    b. Includes industrial behavior and activities relative to securing a job (resume, interviews, job fairs, etc.).
    c. Potential support from other UAAs, resource being developed by UAP.

- **Element Team 6**: Provide Resources for Instructors - Coaching Instructors on how to Teach Uniquely Abled population.
    a. Potential support from other UAAs, resource being developed by UAP.

- **Element Team 7**: Provide Job Development - Job Placement and Coaching of Students and Employers
    a. Identifying job vacancies, meeting with potential employers, coaching potential employers on how to select UAA graduates as employees.
    b. These functions are often primarily provided by government agencies and non-profits who have this as part of their function.

- **Element Team 8**: Support Employment
    a. Employment of an UAA graduate by an employer.
    b. May include implementing apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.
    c. Coaching employer concerning onboarding.
    d. Providing coaching to managers of UAA graduates.
    e. Attending onboarding session and then answering UAA graduate questions.

    f. Providing job coaching as needed.

    g. Some of these functions are often primarily provided by government agencies and non-profits who have this as part of their function.

- **Element Team 9**: Provide External Support Systems
  a. Ensure parents are included in the operation of the UAA, are coached in the "uniquely abled" perspective, and consulted as needed.
  b. Review and provide information on transportation. Ensure each UAA trainee has adequate transportation to and from the UAA and to and from their job.
  c. Ensure other external support systems are available as needed.

- **Element Team 10**: Provide Funding
  a. Funding requirements generally include:
      i. Tuition, student fees, and other educational expenses such as books, supplies, parking permits, etc.
      ii. Cost of job readiness training
      iii. Salary of Program/Marketing/PR Coordinator
      iv. Design and printing of marketing and recruiting collateral
      v. Cost of Open House(s)
      vi. Cost of the Job placement services
      vii. Cost of the Job Coach.
      viii. $10,000 UAP Licensing Fee
  b. To date, the UAAs have been free to all attendees. Normal payments are still made to the Host School and suppliers.
  c. Funding often comes from government and foundations.