



Job Ready Services

November 2011 Issue

Our Services:

- Functional Capacity Evaluations
- Work Conditioning
- Job Analyses
- Fit for Duty Testing
- Employment Testing



Are Accommodations Putting Your Employees at Risk? (No More Mr. Nice Guy)

Mr. Jones has been working for ABC Company for 25 years. He is a loyal, hard-working employee, however he is 66 years old and of course, he is **unable to do all of the things he used to be able to do at work**. Mr. Jones' co-workers have noticed some problems and some areas where Mr. Jones needs a little extra help and they are happy to pitch in, because they really like Mr. Jones and don't mind helping him. They also know that if they don't help him, the job may not get completed, and they don't want to be responsible for that or to get Mr. Jones into trouble!

EEOC and ADA both say that employers do not have to hire or retain individuals who are unsafe to perform the essential functions of their job. Federal guidelines are in place for employers to not only protect their employees from injury, but also to protect themselves from the costly consequences of employees getting injured. Although the employer's intent for the case above is to help the employee to retain his job, it may be at the risk of having him injured, or worse yet, permanently disabled. Furthermore, turning a blind eye to some observable difficulties in performing their job tasks may put other employees at risk of injury in their attempt to help the unsafe co-worker.

A few things need to be in place before setting a policy or protocol for dealing with these types of situations:

1. An accurate **job analysis**, listing the true **physical demands** of each job. Does the job description list the job specific tasks and what is required to do those tasks physically? (e.g., "Employee will lift a 160 lb. keg and place it on a 39" shelf")

2. **Objective Information about Employee's Physical Abilities**: Once a "trigger" is identified (i.e., an employee either mentions a problem doing part of their job or they are observed as having difficulty in doing their job, such as limping or "questionable balance in ascending steps"), the employee is asked to provide information about whether they are safe to perform all of their job tasks. It is important to obtain objective information about that employee's physical abilities and determine whether they match the job requirements.

What if a problem is identified after testing?

1. It is **NOT** a worker's comp injury if a problem is **identified**. There has been no injury at that point, so, now it is up to the employer and

employee to discuss the problem. Is it something that can be resolved through health insurance or FMLA benefits? How about a work conditioning program to improve strength, endurance or eliminate or reduce a physical deficit?

2. Give the employee a **deadline for "re-testing"**. Perhaps the problem can be resolved during that time, allowing the employee to return to regular job duties, if he/she is capable of doing so as a result of re-testing.

3. Perhaps an ADA accommodation process is in order. If no alternatives are available to allow an employee to **return to work safely**, then termination may be the last resort.

Having that job analysis and a functional testing program in place will allow employers to deal with employees' safety issues "across the board" in an **objective, fair manner**. This does not mean employers must stop being "Mr. Nice Guy" – it may mean they will be "Mr. Nicer, Fairer, More Objective Guy."

For more information about a functional testing program, please contact Job Ready Services.

TWO December Lunch & Learns!

Thursday, December 8
12:00pm – 1:30pm



Work Conditioning: Putting the Work Into Rehab

Speakers: Mark Dufault, PT and Ernie Lopez, Exercise Physiologist

What should an effective work conditioning program look like? What's the difference between work conditioning and work hardening? How can you quantify the value of work conditioning and show cost savings? How can work conditioning enhance return to work and eliminate the need for an FCE? Learn the value of work conditioning in facilitating return to work.

Job Ready Office

Cost: \$10.00

Credits Pending Approval: CCM, CRC (1.5 hrs)

See demonstrations and the step by step process of a work conditioning program!

Tuesday, December 13
12:00pm – 1:00pm

Neuromodulation

Speaker: Dr. Godbout from Carolina Back Institute

Job Ready Office

Cost: \$10.00

Credits Pending Approval: CCM (1 hour)

To Register for Either or both Lunch & Learns, click here:

<http://www.jobreadyservices.net/index.php/contact/lunch-and-learn-registration/>

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We're also on LinkedIn!

Be sure to follow
Job Ready Services

Happy Thanksgiving from the Staff of Job Ready!

We are blessed to have you as our customers!

Debra Lord
Michelle Morgan
Ernie Lopez
Shea Peterson
Julie Dubas
Mark Dufault
Kathryn Willamor

